Tiger Fitz shot attracts a flock of superstitious India natives who believe touching the beast will make wishes come true

The Spectacular Tiger

By GRANCEL FITZ

The man who's hunted all North American big game takes tiger lessons

WE WAITED until dusk to leave the palace in Hyderabad, for in India the April sun can be brutally hot. The Nawabzada Fazluddin Khan drove the station wagon I rode in. Willie Caesar followed us with the jeep and its heavily loaded trailer. Our route out of the city led us through the sizable town of Warangal a few hours later, and along toward midnight our headlights picked up the first jackal that trotted across the road in front of us. In the next 15 minutes we saw two more.

"There's an old superstition here that seeing a jackel means good luck," the young prince told me. That was interesting, but this tiger expedition was already something special to me, no matter how my luck developed.

We stopped an hour later, and the prince's personal servant produced a surprisingly complete meal from vacuum containers which had kept each kind of food at its right temperature. Then we left the main road and turned into a rough, narrow track that led through the jungle for another 50 miles to the Singaram forest block, where my hunting was to be done.

The road soon got so rough the station wagon needed its four-wheel drive, and the last thing I expected to find at such an hour and place was a traffic problem. But it wasn't long before we met a train of

Cords on tree are charms to protect travelers from tigers

Stone shrine at rest house has carved image of monkey god

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at least 20 bullock carts, each loaded with a big log of teak. The wild-looking, nearly naked drivers had quite a time giving us room to pass. It was a sight beyond the merely picturesque. The full moon cast enough shadows from the trees to make it almost theatrical.

In the next hour or so we met two more trains of about the same size. With these delays, it was 4:30 a.m. when we drove into the open clearing in front of the Singaram forest rest house. Servants with gas lanterns greeted us. We were hardly out of the car before we were handed glasses of cold limeade and installed in canvas deck chairs to relax. The white-uniformed servant who gave me the drink turned out to be my personal "boy," which means that he was to double as my butler and valet. Never before, I reflected, had I seen a butler/valet on a shooting trip.

Two men, Hafiz and Dastagir, came over and sat down with us, along with William Caesar, who is the Eurasian head shikari (hunting guide) for the prince's father. Hafiz is also a head shikari, or the equivalent of a full-fledged African white hunter. Dastagir, who was in charge of camp arrangements, had been a lieutenant of cavalry and aide-de-camp to the Nawab before Hyderabad was absorbed into India in 1948. When the introductions were over, the men began a long report. But as this was in the Urdu language, I soon got up to look around.

The rest house was of a type rarely seen in this part of India. It was built on stilts in the Burma style, so the living quarters were reached by climbing a sort of ship's ladder to the end of a veranda across the front. I found that the part behind the veranda had been divided by a wall of woven palm leaves to make separate rooms for the prince and for me. We had our private bathrooms that were similarly screened off, each with its commode, tub, and washstand. Later, whenever I wanted hot water, I simply yelled "Boy," and the water was brought up the servant's ladder at the back. The earthen floor, laid on closely set poles, had been covered with carpets, even on the veranda, and handsome Persian rugs were spread beside our mosquito-netted beds.

When I went back to my deck chair, the conference was nearly over. Willie, Hafiz, and Dastagir went off to the separate hut in which their cots were placed, but I noted that the first two soon took a jeep and drove away.

"What's the story, Kutub?" I asked the prince. His father, the Nawab Zaheer Yar Jung, had suggested that I call his son by that family nickname.

"We have wonderful news," he told me. "I sent the men in three days ago to get things ready. For the last two nights they've had bullocks tied out for bait in different parts of the block, and each night a bullock has been killed. The big tiger killed one of them."

"The tiger your father spoke about?" I asked. The Nawab had told me in Hyderabad of an especially big and long-famous tiger that ranged in this area.

Kutub nodded. "The villagers say he is about the size of a buffalo. Of course they exaggerate. But he made a kill the night before last, and they know where he dragged it. If he kills again tonight, we'll have a good chance to get him."

This was encouraging, but the most impressive part to me was the planning behind it. I knew how important that could be on any shooting trip. I've been on more than 40 big-game hunts in the past 30 years, and the best-planned trips have usually produced the best trophies. It's not all luck.

"How many men do you have in this camp?" I asked.

"I don't know, but I'll try to count them up. Aside from our valets and the three men you've met, we have a chef and his assistant. We have a mechanic and a submechanic to look after the station wagon, the two jeeps, and their trailers. Then there are perhaps six men from the village of Singaram to do the laundering, carry water, and sweep up. We have a few local guides and trackers here, and there are two more shikaris in other villages, farther out in the block. You might call them shikaris of junior grade. They tie out the bullocks and check up every morning to see if there has been a kill. So each of them needs his local guides and trackers as well. The villagers know the habits of every tiger that visits their jungles."

This trip, sponsored by OUTDOOR LIFE, gave me my first look at India. Though I'd hunted every kind of North American big game sportsmen try for, the type of tiger hunt I was now involved in was lavish beyond my most extravagant dreams. It had always seemed to me that I was in the lap of luxury on a Rocky Mountain pack trip staffed by a guide, wrangler, and cook.

The Nawabzada Fazluddin Khan (Kutub) directing tiger drive

Tiger that mauled this bullock killed two others in herd

"You should have come to shoot with my father when Hyderabad was still independent," Kutub added. "In those days, after a big camp had been put in, we traveled to the nearest point in our private railway cars. We had three of them, and each could take eight guests and eight servants. When we left the railroad we were met by a fleet of motor cars that took the party to the shooting base. My father likes luxury in the field. I can't begin to guess how many servants we had in camps like those.

"We used to be welcomed by all the local officials when we left the train," he continued. "We had the whole district to shoot in, with no limit to the game we could take. Now, on this trip, we must stay within a single forest block, and they've given us permission to kill only one tiger."

In these days, I reflected, the Nawab doesn't have the fabulous income that he and a very long line of his ancestors once enjoyed. So Kutub, his heir apparent, has started a business of outfitting visiting sportsmen.

With all the excitement, we'd overlooked the fact that we hadn't been in bed for 22 hours. In another hour the sun would rise. We called it a day.

Only a couple of hours later we were up again. The bustle of camp activity in the hot sunshine was hushed to let us rest, but it roused me anyhow. My boy brought a pot of tea to my bedside. When I'd bathed and dressed, breakfast was served at a table on the veranda. Kutub and I chatted a while, waiting for what I could only think of as news from the front. It wasn't long coming. Willie Caesar, red-eyed because he hadn't slept at all, showed up with the jeep in midmorning.

Near the village of Dudaklapalli, eight miles away, the big tiger had killed another bullock and dragged it into an extensive patch of jungle. If undisturbed, he'd lie up there until nightfall. Willie had circled the patch, to make sure the tiger hadn't left it, and since they could tell just about where the kill had been taken from the character of the terrain, Hafiz was busy planning a highly complicated drive. The direction of the proposed drive, or "beat," had already been decided. So had the placing of the machan, which is an elevated shooting platform. The other details were explained to me later.

"We will need about 150 men," Willie told Kutub. "If we can get them by 1 o'clock, we can beat the tiger out."

The prince took this staggering estimate so calmly

Trophy Hunter

● *Grancel Fitz, shown above with his first tiger, is a dedicated trophy hunter with a long list of "firsts" to his credit. He was the first sportsman to hunt all the 25 classes of legal North American big game. He remains the first and only hunter to collect as many as 15 different North American big-game animals with record-class heads.*

A Mexican Coues deer shot by Fitz in 1934 was a world record at that time. A grizzly he shot in British Columbia in 1953 tied the world record set in 1890. His Alaska brown bears still ranks No. 4 on the all-time list.

An elk killed by Fitz in 1930 was a world record by the old-fashioned standard of antler spread, but Fitz erased his own record in that category by helping devise the scoring system adopted by Boone and Crockett Club in 1950.

A frequent contributor to OUTDOOR LIFE, *Fitz has also taken many photographs used on its covers—including this month's.*

This trip to India, sponsored by OUTDOOR LIFE, *gave Fitz his first crack at overseas big game.*

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continued

Villagers hired to drive tiger line up to get instructions

Fitz climbs to machan as beaters start drive intended to push

that we didn't even hurry to get started. To me it was incredible that such a mob of men could be enlisted and brought to a spot in the jungle in hardly more than two hours.

When the station wagon was brought out we drove to the camp of one of our junior shikaris, beyond the cluster of huts that was Dudaklapalli. After a brief conference with him, in Urdu, Kutub drove away. Willie and I were left to sit on a villager's bed in the welcome shade of a big tamarind tree, and it was there that my education in tiger hunting began.

"You'll use the Nawabzada's special machan this afternoon," Willie said, "but the usual machan is a bed such as we are sitting on, turned upside down and tied in a tree."

I had examined the bed. The hardwood frame was strung with tough brown cord as tightly as a snowshoe, leaving fairly large, diamond-shaped openings that would keep the sleeper cool. But he would have to lie on it doubled up, for it was only five feet long and 3½ feet wide.

"Somehow, this machan business bothers me a little," I said. "It doesn't seem quite right to be up there out of harm's way."

Willie was astonished.

"Don't tell me that a tiger can't climb a tree," he said. "He doesn't need to. A tiger can spring into any machan with no effort at all. What is more, sir, his jaws can be a quite effective crushing machine."

In the Central Provinces, Willie had once been present when a machan was placed at the unusual height of 18 feet, to let the hunter look over the wall of a ruined temple. That hunter was killed. The tiger sprang against the leaning tree trunk on its way up, then it bit so deeply through the machan's lacings and the man's buttock that the pelvic bone was crushed. When the tiger fell back, most of the man's entrails went along. The victim died within an hour.

The height of a machan, Willie went on to explain, is calculated to give the best possible view into the space where the tiger is likely to appear, with no thought of safety. It may be as low as six or eight feet.

Under certain conditions a hunter can see better on the ground; he then simply conceals himself behind a tree or a bush. "But I don't like that," Willie added. "Nearly always, a tiger will see you on the ground before you see him. He may slip away unnoticed, or break back through the beaters. From a machan your chance for a shot is much better, because the tiger doesn't expect danger from above. He doesn't rely on his sense of smell. When you are quite silent, and do not move, he may walk right under a low machan without spotting you."

The next question to be cleared up was how Kutub could get that many beaters so quickly. While I knew India was densely populated, it hadn't occurred to me that villages were scattered everywhere in this comparatively remote jungle. In the next few days I found that it was impossible—in this district, at least—to travel more than three or four miles from any spot without crossing a cart track, and you couldn't follow it for an equal distance without coming into a village of some size.

Tiger beating is a tradition with these natives, who jump at the chance as soon as they learn that a hunt is on. The nobles of Hyderabad have been hunting this way for generations, and in a region where barter is the

cat into clearing under his stand

Shikaris keep potential whisker-stealers away from dead tiger at top right

Woman believes she will end headaches by bumping her head against tiger's

usual means of exchange, a beat brings the villagers some actual cash.

Risky business for unarmed men? Yes, but they know their tigers. When one turns back on a line of beaters, they swarm up trees while he's making up his mind to charge, or they run together to form noisy groups, leaving a wide avenue for that tiger to escape. They must never let the tiger feel completely surrounded or he will kill some of the men in breaking through, but he is very rarely dangerous to a crowd of beaters when he sees a way out.

Although Kutub was gone for hardly more than a hour and a half, some beaters from the nearer villages had walked in to meet us before he came back. The rest were on their way. Hafiz and Willie would assign them to their places in the beat, so Kutub and I drove to the Singaram base camp for lunch while the details were worked out.

When we returned, all the beaters were squatting in a long double line, receiving instructions, and they soon started off toward the jungle where the tiger was lying up. Kutub, Willie, and I climbed into a jeep and went ahead. I hardly recognized Hafiz until he came over to wish me luck. As he was going into the beating line himself, to keep an eye on developments, he was barefoot and pretty well stripped down.

Leaving the jeep nearly half a mile from where the machan had been placed, we walked very quietly to the big mutti tree beside a typically narrow jungle road, or cart track, where a few men were waiting with a ladder. But before I climbed into the machan, which was about 12 feet from the ground, Willie outlined the plan.

He explained that a map of the beat would look very much like a horseshoe, with the cart track extending across the open end toward which the tiger would be driven. The opening was a bit more than 100 yards wide, with the machan in the middle of it. The curving front of the horseshoe would be the advancing line of beaters, and this would include about half of all the villagers Kutub had recruited. We couldn't see those fellows, for they were going to their starting position beyond a dry stream bed, or nullah, that was 200 yards away. The remaining men were being posted in trees to form two converging lines of "stops," which would stretch from each end of the beating line to the opening on the cart track. If the tiger headed toward either side, the stops would make just enough noise to let him know where they were. He would then *(continued on page 114)*

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turn back to go in the desired direction.

"The tiger will probably walk out about there," Willie said, indicating a fairly open space 40 yards in front of the machan. "He'll be wanting to pass the machan on your right, to get into the nullah in the thick jungle just behind you. When you see him, don't be in any great hurry. He may stop and look back toward the beaters. If he does, that's the time to shoot."

As Kutub and I climbed the ladder, I was marveling at this knowledge of a tiger's reactions. It seemed that these men could look at the cover and pinpoint the spot where the king of the jungle would appear.

Willie went off to another machan, near the end of the stop line to our left, from which he could see how things progressed. The men took down our ladder and hid it in the brush. Then, to let the tiger know they were going, they talked rather loudly as they walked out of sight along the road.

"Now," Kutub whispered, "get comfortable where you can swing to shoot up or down the cart track, if you have to, and cover everything in between. When you pick your spot, I'll find another."

The machan was no bigger than the little native beds, but wooden pieces were set in the angles of a rail which connected its foot-high corner posts, and the rear ones could be used for seats. However, if I sat back there, I felt that my swing might be hampered by the heavy ropes from which the machan was suspended at the ends. After a good bit of squirming, I sat near the center of the tightly stretched webbing of the floor, facing the right front corner. If necessary, I could still swing far to my left. When I was settled in this position, Kutub took the right corner-post seat in the back.

"What do you want me to do about shooting?" he asked.

"Don't do anything if I drop the tiger, or if I wound him so that I can get in a quick second shot," I said. "If it looks as though he might get away after I hit him, then let him have it. We don't want a wounded tiger loose in the jungle."

"But what if you miss him completely?"

"I won't," I assured him. The idea that I might miss a walking tiger at 40 or 50 yards had never entered my mind.

"They've been missed before," he persisted. "We might as well get that settled too."

"Well, if I miss him completely, don't shoot at all. I certainly don't want you to kill my tiger for me."

Kutub nodded thoughtfully. "You'll be lucky if you get this one," he told me. "Others have tried before, and failed. I once tried for him myself, but I've never seen him yet."

After that we loaded our rifles and kept completely motionless as we waited for the beat to begin. Kutub's rifle was a heavy English double-barreled job. I had the bolt-action, scopesighted .30/06 that has served me so well in North America.

Sitting there in silence, I studied the terrain carefully. A substantial tree stood just across the cart track, directly in front of the machan. Its trunk blocked off a small part of the view, but otherwise I could see surprisingly well. In this hot time of year, before the rains, the trees showed so few leaves that most of the jungle seemed as open as a New England woodlot in November. The forests in this part of India are of teak and mixed hardwoods, and the leaves fall because of heat and drought rather than cold.

There was a sudden burst of sound from somewhere in the thickets behind us.

"That's the call of a sambar deer," Kutub whispered. "It smells the tiger, and it's telling the whole jungle about him. He might try to slip out ahead of time. You'd better be ready."

With my thumb on the safety of the rifle, I was as ready as I'd ever be.

A moment later a troop of big gray Hanuman monkeys came tearing out of the beat area, their long curving tails held high as they raced across the cart track and into the dense growth along the nullah back of the machan. Only a couple of minutes after that, we heard the tom-toms and the shouting which meant that the beat had started.

This brought action with startling speed, in more ways than one. Almost immediately we heard the distinctive sound of a stop in his tree, far back in the line to our left. Very soon another stop sounded off, much closer. Then, in hardly more than a minute, the tiger showed up exactly where Willie predicted he'd appear.

There was only one trouble with Willie's script. This magnificent old-timer had been in beats before, and he wanted no part of another one. Instead of strolling from the cover and stopping to look back, he came out galloping, straight across to our right. I know, now, that he was moving only half as fast as a tiger can run, but the time he was making would be the envy of an Olympic sprint champion.

My rifle came up quickly. Swinging with him, I had the scope picket set in front of his chest as I started the trigger squeeze. I was trying for a high shoulder shot that would knock him down. But that shot was never triggered. I barely stopped it in time to keep from plunking the bullet into the big tree that stood just across the road.

Flipping the barrel past the tree trunk, I waited an instant to pick him up again on the same line, and this didn't match the tiger's ideas. Partly hidden behind the tree, he turned toward us so sharply that he'd pass only a dozen feet to the right of the machan.

The shot he now offered wasn't the kind you can linger over, but neither was it a difficult one. I swung the rifle down as he came galloping in, planning to nail him in the spine at the base of his neck. And then fate took a hand—which really means that my position in the machan hadn't been chosen as well as I'd thought. Almost at the end

of my fast downward swing, my left forearm hit the foot-high rail in front of me, and I couldn't stop the trigger squeeze. The last "sight picture" I registered, before the shot went off, showed the scope picket just above the tiger's back.

By the time I'd bolted in a new cartridge the tiger was passing the end of the machan, where the supporting ropes were in my way. From my seated position, I couldn't get to the back in time for another shot.

Kutub, turning on his corner-post seat, had the huge beast in his rifle sights as it bounded down the steep side of the nullah. It's easy to imagine how his trigger finger must have itched, but I'd asked him not to shoot if I missed. And Kutub, who's as fine a sportsman and shooting companion as I've ever known, held his fire.

In one jump, after it landed in the sandy stream bed, the tiger vanished behind the branches of intervening trees.

"I think he's hit," Kutub said. "He stumbled at the bottom of the nullah bank. He'd be too sure-footed for that if he's not wounded."

The notion that my shot might have hit was hard for me to grasp, but it added one more thought to my thoroughly mixed-up state of mind. There was the crushing realization that I'd made a mess of the show, after a great number of men had teamed up to put a remarkable trophy in front of me. At the same time I felt strangely elated by the sight of the tiger himself. In his jungle home, any tiger comes close to being the most spectacular animal in the world, and my first glimpse of this incredibly massive specimen had given me an impression of dramatic power, speed, and potential deadliness that was just beginning to come through.

Kutub told me that he'd seen a few that were a little longer, but that this tiger was close to a record for bulk. Kutub ought to know. He has bagged nine tigers, including one that was three inches better than 10 feet long, and he has seen many others shot by his father and their guests.

Though they heard the rifle, the beaters couldn't be sure the tiger had come out. So they kept working through the cover for nearly half an hour before they reached the cart track. Willie Caesar returned, the ladder was brought to our tree, and we promptly found a few drops of blood where the tiger had been when my shot was fired. The nullah bank showed more blood, and we could see scattered drops beside the widely spaced pug marks that led across the sand and into the dense thicket at the far edge. I knew, then, just how thoroughly I'd fouled things up.

As we looked at that deep strip of heavy jungle along the nullah, where sudden death might be waiting, Willie questioned me carefully about where the bullet had been placed. I couldn't help him much. My arm had struck the rail at an angle, glancing downward and to the right. The shot must have been released a split second after

that disconcerting impact. I was only sure that the blocked swing hadn't carried down to the middle of the tiger's broad back, for a spine shot would have dropped him.

"It's too late to follow up this evening," Willie said at last. "I shall try to recover your tiger for you in the morning."

"I'll be along," I told him.

Willie wasn't too keen about that idea. Perhaps he was thinking that a hunter who missed a close-range shot in the open was likely to become a casualty if he faced a charging tiger in dense brush.

But I was with him next morning. It was a thrilling experience till we found that the tiger had stopped bleeding very quickly, and had left the area with only a superficial flesh wound. We heard a few days later that he'd been seen near a village several miles from that jungle. Those men had noted that he wasn't crippled in any way.

"There are many more tigers here," Willie said. "A shoot in Hyderabad is a failure unless a tiger is bagged, no matter how many head of other game may be taken. We'll have baits put out this evening, and find you another tiger. But I'm afraid it will not be as big as this one."

That, I knew, would be too much to expect.

Game animals in India move around very little during the daylight hours, and we followed the same pattern as we waited for a new tiger kill to be reported. After our tea at daybreak, or even earlier, we drove out in a jeep to some area that seemed promising. Usually we were back in about three hours for breakfast at the rest house, where all our meals offered a choice of either American or Indian food. Through the middle of those days we bathed, slept, and lazed around on the veranda. Kutub wore pajamas and I settled for slippers and shorts as we did our best to keep comfortable in the 100° heat. Late in the afternoons we went out again to see what we could find. We found plenty of other game, but no tigers.

Our next skirmish with a tiger came just five days after our first tiger beat, and Kutub missed this action. There was an American jazz concert in the city that he was very eager to hear, so he wasn't in camp when Willie, Hafiz, Dastagir, and I came back from a morning hunt to learn that two of our bullock baits had been killed and the tigers located in widely separated jungles. One of the bullocks had been dragged off by two tigers that were together. When I asked if the pair might be a tigress and her cub, the messengers insisted that all three tigers were big.

"The two together are a tiger and his mate," Willie said, "and they are in the same jungle where His Highness the Aly Khan shot his tiger when he was our guest. I think we'd better try it there. It's a place that can be beaten out quickly. If we have no success, we may still have time for the other jungle. That one calls for a much longer beat, and there's more chance for the tiger to slip away."

Dastagir came up with a hamper of lunch and some cold beer. When the jeep's trailer was attached, we started off. Along the way we stopped briefly at two villages to spread the word, and then, close to the place where the bullock had been staked out, the jeep was parked under a shady tree while Willie and Hafiz went on to size things up. They learned that the tigers were still in the cover, so we drove to a couple of nearby villages to enlist more beaters. This time I went along to see how it worked. There was nothing to it. After a brief chat with the village headman, the job was done.

It wasn't quite 2 p.m. when Willie and I climbed a primitive ladder to the machan. As in the earlier beat, there was a cart track in front of us, and although the jungle across it showed fairly heavy cover, there were no nearby trees to obstruct any part of the view.

The prince's special machan was still at Dudaklapalli. We hadn't detoured to get it. So this one was the usual native bed, without the corner-post seats and their connecting rail. I found that it, too, was decidely uncomfortable. Everybody in Asia is used to sitting on the floor. I'm not, and I thanked my stars I didn't have to try keeping motionless in a machan all night, waiting for a tiger to return to his kill. That's the commonest way of hunting them.

For the first time I was carrying a new rifle, a Winchester .375 Magnum. My son had presented it to me to use, later on, if I encountered elephants or seladangs (wild buffalo) in Indo-China.

I still felt that my .30/06 was strong enough medicine for any tiger. A rifle that can make one-shot kills on Pacific walrus and big Kodiak bears has ample power if the bullet is well placed, and that's necessary with even the largest calibers. However, the .375 had shot beautifully on targets and I wanted to try it in the field.

Almost as soon as the beat began, a peacock with a huge tail was flushed. He was something to marvel at as he flew strongly over our heads and on out of sight. In the next few minutes the mingled din of yelling and tom-toms grew steadily closer. The inevitable tension was building up. But I was still thinking about the peacock when I suddenly saw a third of a tiger, just where Willie had told me to expect one. The edge of it was all that showed as it came toward us behind the trunk of a big tamarind, about 70 yards from the road. I waited for it to walk out into the open space beside the tree. It didn't. For a moment that richly colored patch of hair was still, then it slipped back and disappeared.

Willie's instant mutterings may have been in Urdu. I couldn't understand them, but I knew they were angry words. I learned later that Willie was fuming because one of the "stop" men in the trees had also seen the tiger, and had gone into action much too soon. He had turned the tiger back.

What had promised to be a quick

and simple beat immediately turned into a slow one. We heard sounds that were mixtures of growls and roars as the two tigers threatened the beating line. Then came some periods of complete silence followed by brief bursts of pandemonium from beaters who apparently herded together. In a little while, though, the line was formed again. It moved slowly toward us until the tigers put on a second demonstration, and the whole show was repeated.

When the beat was finally resumed, the line came on with much noise and an equal amount of caution. Those beaters sounded quite close, but I couldn't see a moving thing except four peahens that had walked into a tiny open patch to feed, without showing the slightest concern.

There was no warning at all before that tiger flashed out. From a clump of low bushes, off toward our right, the big cat came streaking without a sound, straight toward the cart track. The speed of its rush was something I had to see to believe. Somebody has claimed that a tiger can cover 100 yards in a trifle over four seconds. I'll never doubt it.

I had the rifle sights swinging fast a couple of feet ahead of the tiger as I squeezed the trigger, but that shot connected 18 inches too far back. And while the 300-grain Silvertip bullet broke the tiger's spine, slamming it down instantly, sheer momentum carried the great cat 20 feet farther in a tumbling skid. It stopped right in the middle of the road. There it reared high on its forelegs and was knocked flat by my second bullet, which finished it at once.

Somehow I can't remember what Willie said in congratulation, or my reply. Probably I was much too excited. But I recall that he asked me not to shoot the other tiger if it showed up, for we had the single specimen my license permitted.

The unseen beaters continued to do their stuff. This was a wise precaution, but a wasted effort, for the other tiger had escaped. When the men began to appear, I looked again at the striped beauty in the cart track, 30 yards away. Then it struck me that the rangy, outstretched form wasn't particularly massive.

"Willie," I asked, "is that tiger a female?"

"Yes, but it is a very large one. Many full-grown males are no bigger. It's a pity, though, that you didn't bag the tiger we had in our first beat."

It's true that the first tiger was a truly superb specimen, but if he'd dropped to my shot I'd have missed the unforgettable thrill of following him up. We'd been prepared for a charge at any instant—until we found he'd gone on. As things now stood, we'd had two tiger hunts instead of one, and the tigress was just as big as Willie claimed. Before skinning, she was 8 feet 7½ inches long under my steel tape.

Something else impressed me when the trip was finished. As a supplement to the tiger shoot, I had also bagged two leopards, a sloth bear, a nilgai, a

blackbuck, and two axis deer. It had all been done in 12 days of actual hunting, under conditions of sheer luxury. The bill of my 15-day booking was $1,603, including license costs. That's less than I've sometimes paid in the Yukon or Alaska.

Transportation wasn't excessively high, either. My round-the-world tourist airplane ticket came to less than $1,400 and it let me use 14 different airlines in visiting 16 countries before I came home. If necessary, though, I could easily have been home in less than a month from the time I left. All in all, this struck me as the biggest hunting and travel bargain a man could want. THE END

(Mr. Fitz's next story in this series will be "India's Crazy Bear")

Planning India Hunt

Make arrangements with an outfitter based in India (names and addresses can be had through travel agencies or from ads in OUTDOOR LIFE) at least six or eight months in advance. Outfitter will suggest best time of year for hunting various animals. It varies according to how and what you want to hunt.

Hunter seeking passport to India must have had smallpox vaccination within three years, yellow fever shots within six years, cholera shots within six months. Fitz played it safe by taking additional shots for typhoid, paratyphoid, tetanus, and typhus. He also took a supply of Aralen to ward off malaria and amoebic dysentery.

Fitz, who lives in New York City, simply turned over his rifles (a .30/06 and a .375 Magnum) and ammunition to an international shipping firm in New York three months before he planned to leave. The shipping company crated the rifles and ammo and sent the package by steamship to the outfitter in India. The company's India agent handled all formalities about permits for the firearms. Cost for all this, $55.

Air freight is faster, a little more expensive. When his Asian hunts were over, Fitz sent his rifles from Hong Kong to New York City by air freight. The bill was a bit less than $70.

A tourist-class plane ticket to Hyderabad, India, and back costs about $1,300. Fitz chose to spend $110 more for a round-the-world ticket. It took him to Glasgow, London, Paris, Munich, Zurich, Rome, Beirut, Karachi, Bombay, Calcutta, Rangoon, Bangkok, Phnom Penh, Saigon, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Honolulu, and San Francisco, with stopovers allowed at various points.

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