



THREE SHOTS KILLED THIS BIG MALE LION. IT WEIGHED 500 LB.



WILDEBEEST IS A SWIFT, OXLIKE ANIMAL OFTEN CALLED A GNU



A FULL-GROWN BABOON WAS KILLED WITH ONE SHOT BY VIRGINIA



ORYX, AN ANTELOPELIKE ANIMAL, WAS KILLED AT 250 YARDS

# SPEAKING OF PICTURES...

## ... A 14-YEAR-OLD BIG-GAME HUNTRESS POSES WITH HER TROPHIES

Virginia Walton Brooks, 14, got back from her hunting trip in East Africa just in time for school. Her safari had been a great success. In addition to the assorted animals shown on these pages, Virginia had bagged a Grevy's zebra, a kongoni, two hyenas, four common zebras, a waterbuck, a jackal, two gerenuks, two topi, two dik-diks, a klipspringer and a bat-eared fox. She also shot a lot of sand grouse and missed an eland.

Virginia went to Africa with her father, Mr. Berry Brooks, last April. Mr. Brooks is a Memphis, Tenn.

cotton man who has hunted big game most of his life, in Alaska, Mexico, Canada and the U.S. Last winter he decided to try a trip to Africa and take Virginia and Mrs. Brooks along. They flew to Nairobi, East Africa, hired a complete safari—two white hunters to act as guides and 15 native bearers—and set off on a 4,000-mile trip over the veld.

Virginia, who had practiced with a .22 rifle at home, took to hunting naturally. With her first shot she killed a waterfowl, which did not count. Next she killed a Thompson's gazelle. Virginia managed

to kill 13 of her animals with a single shot, but it took more to kill the elephant (*right*), which weighed six tons and was one of the biggest shot in Kenya since the war. Virginia found it in a mudhole where it was playfully spouting water. She crept up to within 25 yards and it charged her. She shot it in the throat. The elephant fell to its knees, and Virginia shot it again. When it got up and ran, she shot it behind the ear. Then, as it writhed on the ground, she killed it with a shot in the spine. She is going to mount the head and use the feet for wastebaskets.



GRACEFUL THOMPSON'S GAZELLE WAS HER FIRST REAL TROPHY



RHINOCEROS WEIGHED TON AND A HALF, WAS STALKED FOR HOURS

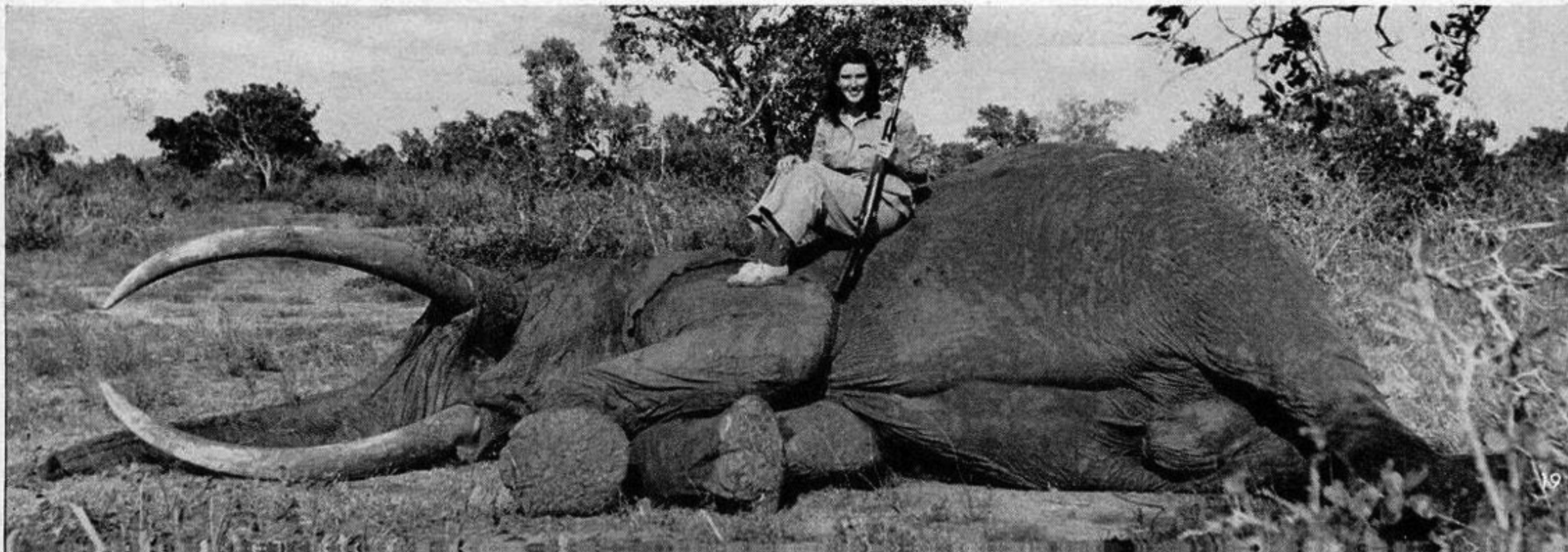


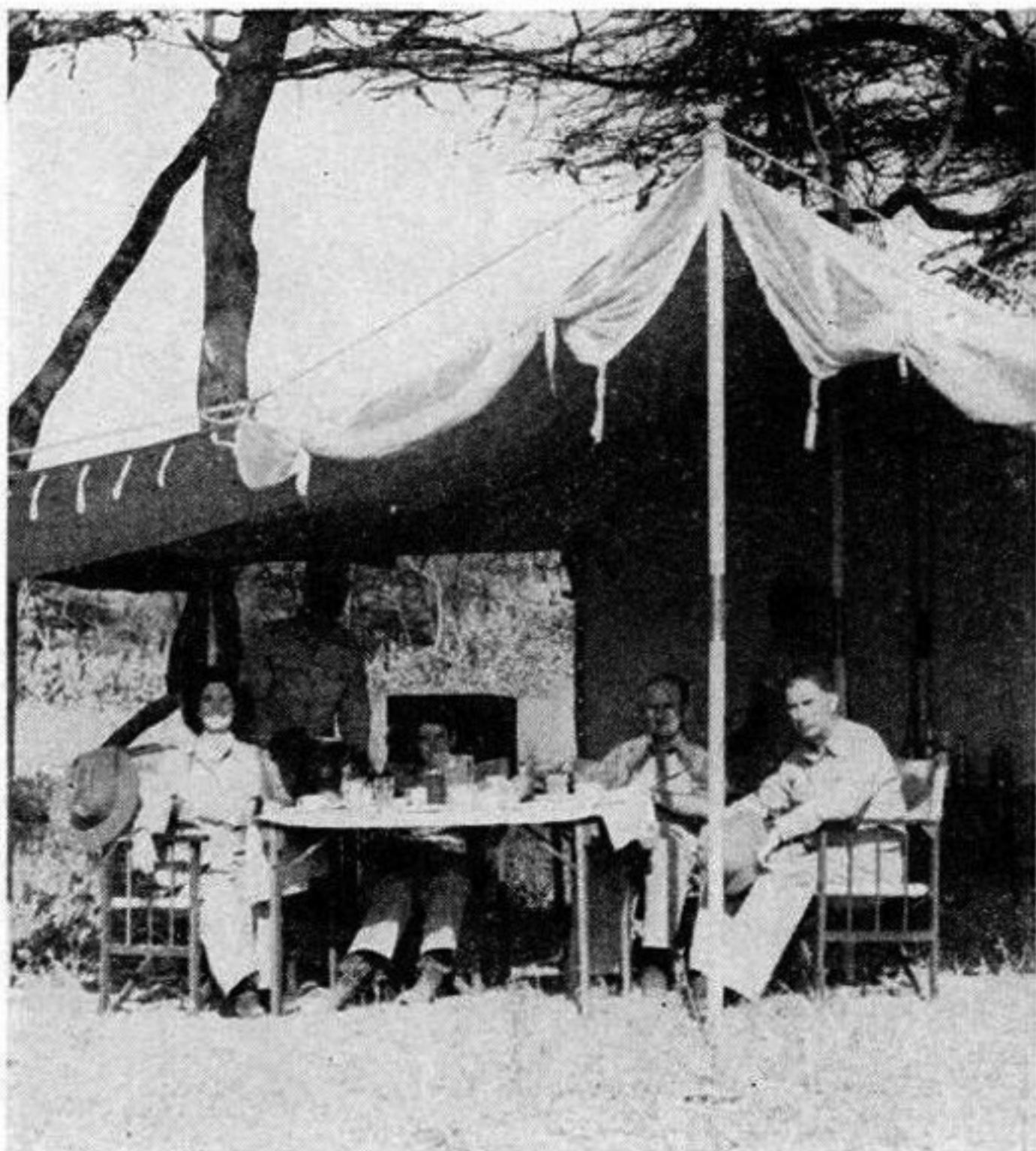
IMPALA'S RECORD HORNS WERE 24 INCHES FROM TIP TO TIP



THIS CHEETAH WAS RUNNING AT 40 MPH WHEN VIRGINIA KILLED IT

VIRGINIA SITS ON THE SIDE OF HER ELEPHANT, WHICH SHE NAMED DONALD AFTER HER FAVORITE WHITE HUNTER. DONALD KEPT





**ON SAFARI** the Brooks family set up tents at intervals and used them as headquarters. Here they sit in one and have lunch, served by native bearers. At the table (left to right) are Mrs. Brooks, Virginia, a hunter and Mr. Brooks.



**COLOSSAL NERVE** is held up to the camera by Virginia. It was taken out of one of the tusks of her elephant, weighed 25 lb. The ivory tusks together, without their nerves, weighed 200 lb., ranked with the biggest ever seen in Kenya.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

### 14-YEAR-OLD HUNTRESS

Sirs:

Your photos of 14-year-old Virginia Brooks posing beside her bag of big game (*Speaking of Pictures*, *LIFE*, Sept. 29) lacked but one picture to make it a perfect series. That would be one of her holding up the head of her father after she had sportingly shot him, surely his just deserts for giving her such a bringing-up.

Why is it in our whimsical so-called civilization considered murder to kill a human, but sport to kill defenseless birds and animals?

JEROME ZERBE

New York, N.Y.

Sirs:

Here is a copy of a letter I wrote to Mr. Berry B. Brooks, Virginia's father, in Memphis:

"At a time when most of the great societies of animal life in America are being threatened, some even with extinction, it seems highly regrettable that your young daughter should have recently been featured in the press as killing 28 animals of various species of African wildlife.

"The decimation of animals that has been going on, especially in recent years, is causing great consternation among all people who are informed of the situation and who believe that the conservation of the magnificent fauna of that continent is desirable and urgent. Our institution is in possession of a large amount of information which indicates that the question of the protection of the animals of Africa is a critical one.

"The hope of your daughter, as quoted in the newspapers—'I want to go on hunting all my life'—if to any degree fulfilled, would deny to her the true happiness of acting as a protector when protection is needed. . . ."

FAIRFIELD OSBORNE  
President

New York Zoological Society  
New York, N.Y.

Sirs:

I am sure that the citizens of Memphis are very proud of little Virginia Walton and her papa, Mr. Brooks, for their good deeds in Africa. When I was only 13 years old I beat a baby fox to death with no weapon other than a club. All of my neighbors thought I was cute.

ROBERT C. STUCKERT

Cleveland, Ohio

Sirs:

. . . It is unfortunate that *LIFE* depicts this young girl as a Diana heroine. Killing wild animals on the plains of East Africa is not hunting; it is slaughter. It requires no more prowess than shooting a tame deer in a corral or a pet cow on a New Hampshire hillside.

ARTHUR STONE DEWING

Newton, Mass.