

The Rifle that Took the Smithsonian's Giant of Kumaon

BY DWIGHT VAN BRUNT

*Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?*
—William Blake, *Songs of Experience*

The yellowed newspaper clippings and fading photographs tell a remarkable story. It was in November, 1967, that David Hasinger, Dr. Karl Jonas and their wives traveled to India to hunt tigers. Beyond the slightest doubt, they were mindful of Jim Corbett's famous adventures, for they had arranged to hunt his Kumaon District in the foothills of the Himalayas bordering Nepal and China. One of the things they probably didn't expect was that they would actually hunt within sight of Corbett's home.

Slated to last 15 days, Hasinger and Jonas were told that only one of them might anticipate a shooting opportunity, yet their hunts were successful beyond measure. Supported by a team that included two experienced professional hunters, 10 elephants and their handlers along with some 40 beaters, they hit it hard. Hunting from elephant-back and waiting on platforms lashed in likely trees, half the hunt passed before a tiger gave either of them a chance.

The Philadelphia story
**Our hunter bags
Biggest tiger ever**

BY RUTH SELTZER
Inquirer Staff Writer

In the big game world's tiger-hunting division, Philadelphia's David J. Hasinger has broken a record. He recently shot a tiger that was the largest ever taken in India. The tiger was measured and weighed by the Forestry and Game Commission of India. It weighed 857 pounds and measured more than 11 feet in length. These statistics were sent to New Delhi and the tiger was officially certified to be the biggest on record. The United States Embassy was notified.

This was David Hasinger's first big-game hunting trip in Asia. He is president of the African Safari Club of Philadelphia. And he is president of Paul & Beekman, Inc. We chatted with the Hasingers, who live in Germantown, soon after their return from their record-breaking tiger hunt. With Dave and Jane Hasinger on their expedition to India went Dr. and Mrs. Karl C. Jonas. This wasn't the first time that the two couples have hunted in far-away places together. In 1966, the Hasingers and the Jonases hunted in Africa.

Dr. Karl Jonas shoots a tiger, too



When they flew to India on their tiger-hunting expedition, they said they'd be lucky if they got one tiger. But they got two. Dr. Jonas shot a tiger on the 8th day — 12th beat. It measured 9 feet, four inches.

Dr. and Mrs. Jonas, who now live in Potomac, Md., moved there a year ago from Philadelphia. Dr. Jonas is chief of surgery of Doctors' Hospital Medical Center in Washington. Mrs. Jonas' father was Dr. W. W. Babcock, of Philadelphia, who was emeritus professor of surgery at Temple University School of Medicine. The Jonases lived in Villanova.

"Hunting in India is more like Africa than any other place," Jane Hasinger told us. "It's so lonely. It's so hot. It's so far from the moment, it's so close to the moment. The hunt took place in the foothills of the Himalayas, 35 miles west of New Delhi, about 100 miles south of the Chinese border. The hunt was led by Shamsher Jung, directed the hunt and to be a host and an exceptional hunter.

Said Mr. Hasinger: "It was the latest edition of the Miller's annual New Year's Eve classic to which they invite their most intimate and oldest friends for dinner, a few in later for supper and toast the New Year in a sea of champagne."

Mr. and Mrs. David J. Hasinger, of Germantown, Pa., are pictured in North Carolina with their giant tiger. The tiger was shot by Mr. Hasinger on recent hunting expedition, was officially certified to be the biggest ever shot in India. Mr. Hasinger is president of the African Safari Club of Philadelphia. This was his first tiger. It measured 11 feet, 11 inches.

David Hasinger's Winchester pre-64 Model 70 375 H&H Magnum and a newspaper clipping from *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, which featured an article on his hunt in India.

On the eighth day, Dr. Jonas' luck changed. Pressed by the beaters, a tiger came out of the 15-foot-tall grass right at him. His shot was taken at just 12 feet—into the tiger's open mouth—and dropped the big cat in his tracks. Measuring 9 feet,

4 inches, the tiger occasioned a festive celebration with the villagers.

Four days later, Hasinger killed a tiger that would rock the hunting world. The huge cat was said to have "terrorized livestock and residents for a full year."



Dr. Karl Jonas carried this pre-64 Model 70, a Super Grade African chambered in 458 Win. Magnum.