



THUG OF THE THICKETS—The wild boar is rated by hunters as one of the ugliest customers on four legs to tackle.

Hunting America's Meanest Critters

By Warner Ogden

BACK when plumed knights wielded lance and sword for ladies fair, a sport of kings was the wild boar hunt.

This savage and stout-hearted adversary was a true test of royal mettle, and royalty carefully protected this beast with the curved, sharp tusks. Norman kings once forbade anyone to kill the wild boar without royal permission.

Boar hunting is now an annual event down in the wilderness of mountains at the Tennessee-North Carolina border. Genuine wild tuskers, imported from the Ural Mountains in 1912, give hunters a thrill. The herd was multiplied until it is now estimated at more than 700.

At first, the annual hunts were only for wild boars, but black bear hunts were added. Both are held on the 87,000-

acre Tellico Wildlife Management Area of the Cherokee National Forest, near Tellico Plains, Tenn. The hunts there are supervised by the Division of Game and Fish of the Tennessee Department of Conservation and the United States Forest Service.

Among those who made application to hunt bears was Mrs. Patsy Irons Pearce, 21-year-old bride, whose husband is an engineer in the Army. "Since I can't go with Ed to kill some Germans and Japs I decided to take a crack at bear to replenish the community meat supply," she said. "I have been shooting since I was a little girl and I really expect to get a bear. I can hardly wait for hunting time to roll around."

Officials say the Prussian wild boars are "considered the most ferocious beasts in the United States." One girl, at least, who knows from experience and doesn't dispute that statement, is Mrs. Edith Haas Padgett, whose record of killing a 500-pounder has not yet been equaled.

She was strolling with rifle in

hand through the mountain laurel when she heard underbrush crackle. She saw a ferocious-looking beast, with razor-like tusks, powerful shoulders, and the form of a giant hog. It was making a popping sound with its teeth, rubbing the upper on the lower, sharpening them.

Quietly, the girl raised her rifle and took aim. The bullet thudded through the animal's tough neck. The boar reared up on its hind feet, spun around and plunged into the bushes. Quickly the girl pulled the trigger again. The second bullet tore through the beast's heart. The boar rolled over.

EDITH was chosen as a guide on the first official wild boar hunt in 1936. When forestry men went to notify her that she had been selected they found her shooting off match heads with her rifle, just for practice. But there have been other Dianas of the hunt in the wilderness.

One of the most unusual of these is Mrs. Ed McNish, who shot three steel-tipped arrows into a 200-pound tusker while her husband looked on with bow drawn for protection if the enraged animal should turn on them.

The first hunter to kill a wild boar in the official hunts was Dr. Graeme Canning of Knoxville, at that time a University of Tennessee professor. Dr. Canning and his guide, Homer Bryson, struck the boar's trail about two miles from the mile-high Beaver Dam lookout. They followed the trail for a mile and a half and found two boars rooting in the briar patch.

"I fired on him with my rifle," Dr. Canning related. "He fell down, shot through the upper shoulder. We advanced on him and finished him with two shots in the head. We removed the fore and hindquarters." Always a scientist, Dr. Canning insisted on cutting up his boar on the spot, for scientific inspection.

Another time, M. A. Roper, grocer of Kenton, Tenn., and his guides, Zeke and Ben Ellis, beat off the wild charges of a 235-pound Prussian boar. Their dogs had picked up a scent and finally cornered a boar in a field. The boar charged Ben Ellis, who fired in an attempt to protect himself, but the shot struck a tusk. Zeke Ellis, hearing the baying of the dogs, raced to the field. The wounded and infuriated boar turned and charged him, knocking him to the ground. Grabbing the remaining tusk, Zeke started fighting off the animal. At last Mr. Roper saw a chance to fire at the 235-pound boar, without injury to Zeke.

V. F. Colvin, who had a fire lookout near the Haley's Hell section, in days before the official hunts, was out with Lige and Harve Thompson one day. They saw a big wild boar up under a rock cliff.

Dogs rushed up to the boar. A few quick turns of his head and he ripped several dogs with his tusks. But one dog, keep-

ing clear of the tusks, followed the boar. Colvin fired nine bullets into the beast but that didn't stop it.

"When I shot him through the head, he got up on his three legs, looked around, shook his head and came up the hill toward me," said Colvin. "I ran and tripped over some rocks. I thought I was done for then. Just as the boar was almost upon me, my dog caught him and jerked him back. That saved my life. The hog was dead when I went over to it. There were nine bullet holes in its body."

AMONG other thrills during the annual hunts was that of Carey House and Hugh VanDeventer of Knoxville. A wild boar came out of a thicket on the wooded slope of Beaver Dam Bald. In wild rage it charged the hunters. A guide sprang to a tree, but the hunters stood their ground. They fired two heavy shotgun slugs and five bullets from a high-powered rifle into the boar's tough body. Even that didn't stop him at the moment.

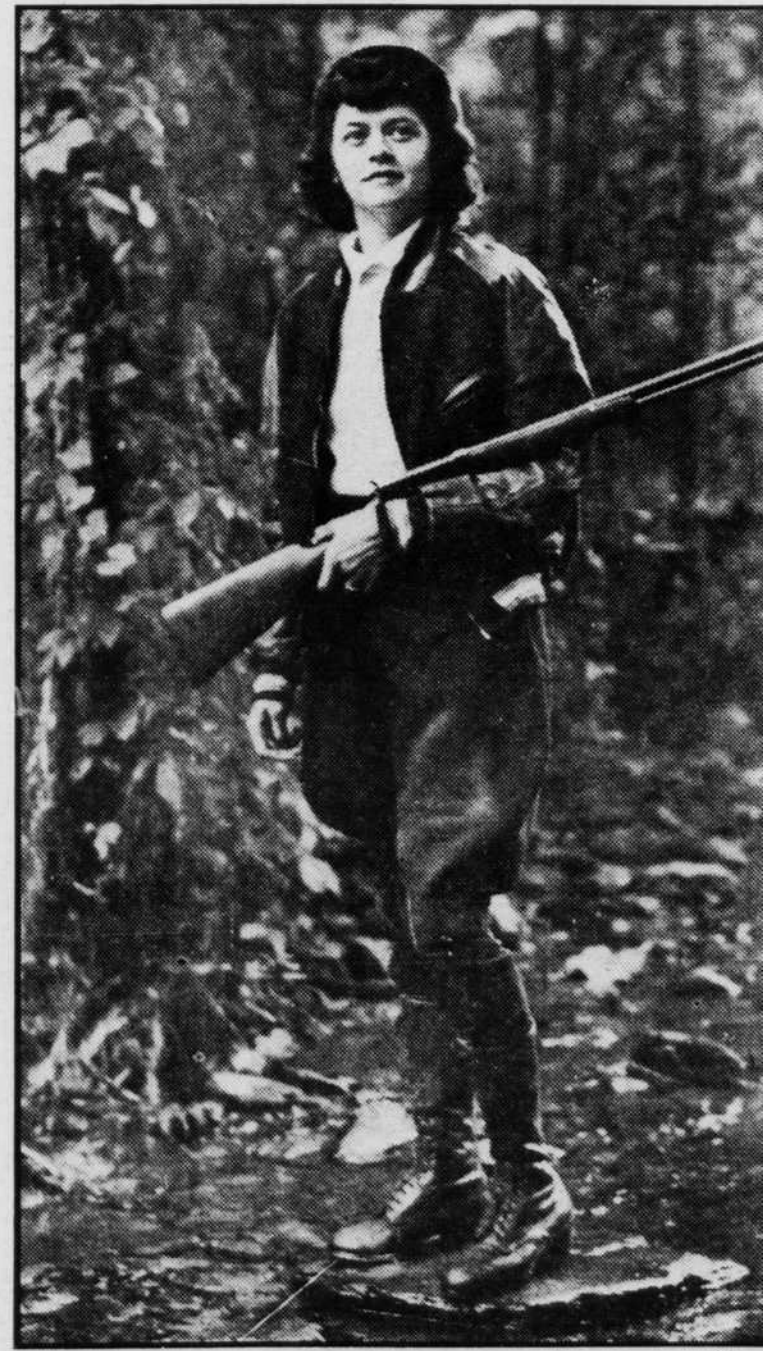
"He was right on us and coming fast when he suddenly dropped," said Mr. House. "He was so close that we were unable to shoot during the latter part of his charge for fear of hitting each other."

The European wild boar was one of a species imported by a group of English sportsmen, headed by George Gordon Moore of New York, in 1912. A clubhouse and other buildings were built near Hooper's Bald in North Carolina. A high fence was built around a large tract, in which various game species were liberated. Later the boars escaped into the woods and roamed the mountains.

Dogs have always been required to bay the formidable creatures. Philippus mentions that a special breed of hounds was used against boars. Four breeds of boar hounds were also enumerated by Xenophon. The Platt hounds are a breed established in North Carolina years ago by the Platt family. These dogs have keen noses, deep chests, and are prized for their ferocity.



STEADY NERVES are needed to kill wild boar with steel-tipped arrows as Ed McNish does.



MODERN DIANA is Mrs. Patsy Irons Pearce, who hunts the most fierce game without fear.

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BBC's Brains Trust Knows the Answers



BRITISH BIOLOGIST Dr. Julian Huxley, who had charge of protecting London zoo against air raids, helped plan first Brains Trust program.

By Donald McCullough

WHAT is known today as the Brains Trust, was evolved in London in December, 1940. It was a gloomy moment in Britain's history. All over the country hundreds of thousands of men were on guard against invasion. Dumped in outlandish spots and suddenly cut off from any intellectual interests, some of them began to get very bored. It seemed obvious that broadcasting might help.

Letters to the British Broadcasting Corporation showed a surprising number of service listeners keenly interested in the pursuit of knowledge. So the B. B. C. decided to start a program on the lines of the highly successful American program "Information Please." But in the Brains Trust the aim was to achieve informal discussion of listeners' questions by experts, each knowing almost everything about something. The president was called the Question Master. He was chosen for knowing practically nothing about anything. I was the Question Master. It did not sound too promising, even in theory, and the first broadcast was most depressing. In those days, incidentally, the title was "Any Questions?" "Brains Trust" is really only a nickname.

The first session began right in the middle of the London Blitz. B. B. C. studios had been hit. People were working under conditions of strain and were short of sleep. Wherever you walked in the streets you could feel broken glass grinding under foot. As I stumbled into a dark and stuffy underground movie theater, just converted into an emergency studio, that I felt sorry for the troops supposed to listen. I also felt fairly sorry for myself.

Then, in a few minutes, I met three people. The first had a square, cheerful, red face and a kindly voice. His name was Commander Campbell—a sailor—decorated for bravery in the last war while serving in the Royal Naval Reserve. The next arrival was a small man with a gray beard, bright eyes and large boots with heavy nails. He wore rustic tweeds—his tie was an outrage—and he carried a vast haversack. "My name," he said, "is Joad." I must say I never dreamed that within a few months millions of people were going to listen in rapt amazement to his whirlwind expositions of philosophy.

Then Dr. Julian Huxley arrived. He was looking extremely harrowed and tired. It turned out that he was at the time in charge of the arrangements to protect the London Zoo against air raids. The Zoo had just been bombed, and a stallion zebra had escaped—and rounding up any kind of zebra in those days was a delicate and exhausting business.

WE settled down in a draughty corridor to discuss procedure, and having worked out a rough scheme, we went down into a studio. There we found a large dance band complete with crooners. We knew that by some curious ruling the Brains Trust was being feted by the Vaudeville Department of the B. B. C., but I must confess the idea of being accompanied by a dance band had not occurred to us. Actually the idea had not occurred to anyone. The band had merely been sent from some other studio that had been put out of action. They were quite sympathetic, but pointed out that it would be easier for us to get a few professors moved

along than for them to shift their drums and xylophones. So we meekly started off in search of another studio. In those days we were unknown and very humble.

In due course the Brains Trust settled down again in another underground retreat very late, rather cold, and by now fairly irritable. We huddled round a microphone with seven questions. The lights popped in and out and off we went. One of the first questions was: "What are the seven wonders of the world?" No one knew, and by this time I don't think anyone very much cared. We struggled on in a series of furious silences, punctuated by periods when everyone would talk at once, creating a tidal wave of wisdom that swamped the microphone and paralyzed the engineers. We knew it was the first broadcast of its kind. We felt certain it would be the last. We reckoned the troops would say that the war was bad enough—straight. In any case we assumed that "Any Questions?" would soon die of starvation because there wouldn't be any.

But we were quite wrong. Even after the first effort we got 15 questions and we thought that was grand. The following week we got 30. Within a month we were getting 30 a day. We began to get things arranged better and the questions shot up a hundred a day. At the present time we get well over three thousand a week. In view of the present cost of postage this is quite impressive.

THE Brains Trust was originally planned to bore the Forces mildly from 5.30 to 6 on Wednesday afternoons. In response to floods of letters, it was transferred to 5.30 on Sunday—an important and popular time. Then it was increased to three-quarters of an hour and recorded programs were sent out on the Home wave length a few days later. Today, in various forms, it goes all round the world. That is the story of a new experiment in the sharing of knowledge—by question and answer—education without tears. It is a success story.

Today the Brains Trust is a national institution. I have presided at Brains Trusts on the technique of air fighting—where the "professors" were all about 22 and looked about 15—where each of them had destroyed dozens of enemy fighters or acres of German industries, and where the most exciting arguments took place on the most restful way of dealing with Italian and German pilots.

Brains Trust movies have been started. The first one broke all records at the Odeon in London's Leicester Square. The only snag is that in some movie theaters they cause so many arguments among the audiences that they have to be taken off the screen. But that is not the end. In fact, it is not even the end of the beginning. But it is rather a significant story of an experiment in sharing knowledge—carried out at a time when Britain had quite a number of other things in hand.