

***E. N. WOODCOCK***



***FIFTY YEARS  
A HUNTER  
AND TRAPPER***

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# **Fifty Years a Hunter and Trapper**

**Autobiography, experiences and observations of Eldred Nathaniel Woodcock during his fifty years of hunting and trapping**

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## PREFACE.

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Sometime early in the spring of 1903, a letter was received from a man in Pennsylvania and published in H-T-T,

which a few weeks later brought to light one of the truest and best sportsmen that ever shouldered a gun, strung a snare or set a trap--E. N. Woodcock.

Some of the happenings are repeated and all dates may not be correct, for be it remembered that Mr. Woodcock has written all from memory. It is doubtful if he kept all copies of H-T-T, therefore was not sure if such and such incidents had been written before. In most cases these are somewhat different and as they all "fit in" we have used them as written and published from time to time.

Much information is also contained in the writings of Mr. Woodcock and whether you use gun, steel traps, deadfalls or snares, you will find something of value. The articles are also written in a style that impresses all of their truthfulness, but, so written that they are very interesting.

Those of our readers who have read his articles will be glad of this opportunity to get his writings in book form, while those that have only read a few of his more recent articles will be pleased to secure all.

Perhaps the following editorial which appeared in H-T-T will be in place here:

"Although crippled with rheumatism, there is an old hunter and trapper living in Potter County, Pa., whose enthusiasm is high and his greatest desire is still to get out over the trap lines a few seasons before the end of the "trail" of life's journey is reached. May that desire be fulfilled is the earnest wish of the H-T-T as well as thousands of our readers, who have read the writings of this kind-hearted and wide experienced hunter and trapper, as they have been penned from his home near the Allegheny Mountains.

It is with pleasure that we publish in this issue the "Autobiography of E. N. Woodcock as a Trapper." During his half century with trap and gun, he has had some narrow escapes and experiences, but not the many "hair-breadth escapes" that some claim, but which only occur on paper. Mr. Woodcock is a truthful man, and you can read his autobiography knowing that it is the truth even to the minutest detail."

The autobiography was written by Mr. Woodcock at the request of the Editor of Hunter-Trader-Trapper in the spring of 1908 and published July of the same year. We are glad to add that since that time, Mr. Woodcock has enjoyed several hunting and trapping expeditions. Some were in his home state--Pennsylvania--on same grounds, or at least near those he camped on many, many years ago. He also took a couple of trips into the south--fall of 1911 and 1912. He was in Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia and the Carolinas. An account of these hunts is given in Chapters XXX, XXXI and XXXII.

In May, 1912, the Editor of Hunter-Trader-Trapper visited Mr. Woodcock and family at their home some four miles from Coudersport, Pennsylvania. Mr. Woodcock, though physically not large, is a wonderful man in the "ways of the woods." He is not given to exaggeration or boasting like many a man who has followed the Trail and Trap Line. Every word that he says or writes can be put down as truthful beyond a doubt.

At this time, (May, 1912) he was afraid he would never be able to get out on the trap line again, as he was suffering from rheumatism and heart trouble. Towards fall he became

better, and enjoyed the sport, which for more than fifty years has been his--may he be spared to enjoy many more.

By noting the dates as given in connection with various articles published, it will be seen that Mr. Woodcock shortly after 1900 began to point out the need of protection to game and fur animals. After a life on the trap and trail of more than fifty years, such advice should be far reaching. Mr. Woodcock is a man of unusual foresight and knowing that he is nearing the end of the trail, wishes to forcibly impress the needs of protection.

By referring to a good map, you will be able to see the location of many of Mr. Woodcock's hunting, camping and trapping trips, as he generally mentions State, County and Streams.

Very few men have had wider experience than Mr. Woodcock. He knows from more than a half century much of the habits and characteristics of animals. He gives his reasons why marten are plentiful in one section and are gone in a few days. His reason too, looks plausible. He describes trapping wolves in Upper Michigan about 1880, also beaver. Tells how he caught the "shadow of the forests" as wolves are often called by trappers--they are so hard to trap. By reading of his many experiences you will not only enjoy what he says, but will get facts about bear, deer, fox, wolves, mink, marten and other fur bearers that you had never thought of.

This man, while on the "trail" upwards of fifty years, so far as known never killed out of season or trapped unprime furs.

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# **A WORD FROM MR. WOODCOCK.**

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The editor of HUNTER-TRADER-TRAPPER has requested a foreword of introductory to FIFTY YEARS A HUNTER AND TRAPPER OR EXPERIENCE OF E. N. WOODCOCK, saying that so many have enjoyed my articles, which have appeared from time to time in HUNTER-TRADER-TRAPPER, extending over a period of some ten years, 1903 to 1913, that same are to be published in book form.

I was born at Lymanville, Potter County, Pennsylvania, August 30, 1844. From early childhood, my nature led me to the Forests and Streams. I have hunted in many of the states of the Far West including the three Pacific States--California, Oregon and Washington. I killed my first panther or cougar in the mountains of Idaho on the headwaters of the Clearwater river. My first real experience in wolfing was in Southeastern Oregon. I met my greatest number of deer in Northwestern California.

I have trapped of late years, in nearly all of the states east of the Mississippi river and also on the White River of Arkansas; also trapped bear and other fur bearing animals and hunted deer in Northern Michigan, also forty years ago.

Another sport which I enjoyed was the "pigeon days." I have netted wild pigeons from the Adirondack Mountains in New York state to Indian Territory--now Oklahoma--trapping them in the states of Michigan, Indiana, Missouri, Pennsylvania and New York.

My nature led me to the Trail and Trap line from early childhood and I have trapped bear and hunted deer in the mountains of Pennsylvania for more than 50 years--half a

century--and my picture with my two foxes on my shoulder shows me on the trap line for the season of 1912-13.

March 1, 1913.

E. N. WOODCOCK.

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## **CHAPTER I.**

# **Autobiography of E. N. Woodcock.**

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I was born on the 30th day of August, A. D. 1844, in a little village by the name of Lymanville, Potter County, Pennsylvania. Lymanville was named after my grandparent, Isaac Lyman, or better known as Major Lyman, having held office of that rank in the Revolutionary War. It is from this limb of the family that I inherited that uncontrollable desire for the trap, gun and the wild.

At a very early age it was my greatest delight to have all the mice, squirrels and groundhogs and in later years young raccoons, young fox and every other varmint or wild animal that I could catch or could get from other sources, and at times I had quite a menagerie.

I began trapping at a very early age, the same as many boys do who live out in the country where they have an opportunity. My father owned a grist mill and a sawmill. These mills were about one-half mile apart and it was about these mills and along the mill races and ponds of these mills that I set my first traps for muskrats, mink and coon. Before I was stout enough to set a trap which was strong enough to hold the varmint, it was necessary for me to get some older person to set the trap. I would take the trap to the intended

place and set for the particular animals I was in quest of, whether mink, coon or rat.

In those days clearings were small, woods large and full of game. Deer could be seen in bunches every morning in the fields and it was not uncommon to see a bear's track near the house that had been made during the night. Wolves were not plenty though it was a common thing to see their tracks and sometimes hear them howl on the hills.

Like other boys who lead an outdoor life, I grew stronger each year and as I grew older and stronger my trap lines grew longer and my hunts took me farther into the woods. Finally as game became scarcer my hunts grew from a few hours in length to weeks and months camping in a cabin built in the woods in a section where game was plenty.

At the age of thirteen while out with a party of men on a hunting and fishing trip, I killed my first bear. While I had now been out each fall with my traps and gun, it was not until I was about eighteen years old that I took my first lesson from an old and experienced trapper, a man nearly eighty years old and a trapper and hunter from boyhood. The man's name was Aleck Harris. We made our camp in the extreme southeastern part of this (Potter) County in a section known as "The Black Forest" and it was here that I learned many things from an experienced trapper and hunter that served me well on the trap line and the trail, in the years that followed.

It was here that I made my first bed in a foot or more of snow with a fire against a fallen tree and a few boughs thrown on the ground for a bed. At other times perhaps a bear skin just removed from the bear for covering, or I might

have no covering other than to remove my coat and spread it over me. This I have often done when belated on the trail so that I was unable to reach the cabin and was happy and contented.

It was here I first learned to do up the saddles or the carcass of a deer in the more convenient way to carry. It was here that I took my first practical lessons in skinning, stretching, curing and handling of skins and furs. I also learned many things of traps and trapping and to do away with sheath knives and other unnecessary burdens on the trap line. In my younger days I preferred to "go it alone" when in a country that I was familiar with and many a week I have spent in my cabin alone save for my faithful dog, but as I grew older and became afflicted with rheumatism I have found a partner more acceptable.

I have met with many queer circumstances while on the trap line and trail, yet I have never met with any of those bloodcurdling and hair-breadth escapes from wild animals which are mostly "pipe dreams". Perhaps the nearest I ever came to being seriously hurt by a wild animal was from a large buck deer. It was in November and on a stormy day. I had killed a doe and was in the act of dressing the doe and was leaning over the deer at work. I was within a few feet of a fallen tree. Hearing a slight noise, I raised up to see what caused it, when with the speed of a cannon ball a buck flew past me, barely missing and landed six or eight feet beyond me.

The deer had come up to this fallen tree on the track of the doe and seeing me at work over the doe, became angered and sprung at me and only my straightening up at

the very instant that I did saved me from being seriously hurt or perhaps killed. I sprang over the log. The deer stood and gazed at me for a moment. His eyes were of a green hue and the hair on his back all stuck up towards his head. After gazing at me for a moment the deer walked slowly away. The suddenness of the occurrence so unnerved me that I was unable to shoot for some minutes though my gun was standing against the tree within reach.

At another time I was somewhat frightened by what I supposed was a dead bear suddenly coming to life. I had caught the bear in a trap and it had got fastened in some saplings growing on the steep bank of a small brook. I shot the bear in the head, as I thought, and it fell over the bank in such a manner that his whole weight was held by the leg that was fast in the trap. I was unable to release it from the trap where it was hanging as I had no clamp to put the trap springs down with, to release the bear's foot. I had set my gun, a single barrel rifle, against a tree without reloading it.

I cut the bear's paw off close to the trap which allowed the animal to roll down the bank to level ground. I had begun to rip down the leg that had been caught in the trap. A lad of about ten years was with me having accompanied me to attend the traps that day. The lad stood looking on when all of a sudden he said, "See him wink." I stopped my work and glanced at the bear's eyes and sure enough he was winking and winking fast, too, and almost before I knew it the bear was trying to get onto his feet. My gun was unloaded and the lad was screaming at the top of his voice, "Kill him! Kill him!" But what was I to kill him with? Nothing

came to my mind at first except to use my gun as a club but I did not like to break it.

In a moment I thought of my hatchet which I had taken from the holster and laid on the bank where I had cut the bear's foot off to release him from the trap. I grabbed the hatchet and one good blow on the head put a stop to the rumpus and nobody harmed, although the boy was badly frightened.

At another time I might have got into trouble with a bear also caught in a trap. I was quite young at this time. I had gone some ten or twelve miles from home and set a trap for a bear. The trap was rather a poor one with a very light chain for a bear trap. I had only set the trap a few days before yet I thought I must go and look after it, but it was more the desire to be in the woods than it was of expecting to have a bear in the trap at that time. I did not take a gun with me, only a revolver loaded as I had no more balls and this was before the days of fixed ammunition.

When I came to the trap there was an ugly bear in it and he had the clog fast in some roots and among some fallen trees. After firing one shot at the Bear's head, which I missed, I then shot the two remaining balls into the bear's body with the only effect of making him more determined to get at me. I now cut a good club determined to put a quietus on Bruin in that manner but after landing several blows my knees began to feel weak. I gave up the job and returned home leaving Bruin in the trap feeling as well as he did when I first found him, so far as I was able to see. But when I returned the next morning with help and now with a regular gun we found Bruin nearly dead and helpless from

the shots that I had given him the day before from the revolver.

I have met with other circumstances not quite so fascinating as those just related. At one time a young companion and I were camping and trapping several miles from home and several miles from a road. One day while we were some ways out from camp setting traps my friend became suddenly very ill. It required no skilled doctor to see that it was a case that must have help at once. I started with my friend to get to camp. While my companion was not as old as I, he was larger and heavier. I worked along with him, half carrying him, while he would support himself as best he could. I got him within about a mile of the cabin when he completely gave out and could go no farther and with all my pleadings I could not get him to try to go any farther, but he promised that if I went after help that after resting he would work his way to camp.

Seeing that there was no other way to do, I left him and started for help. It was now dark. My way was over a road of about twelve miles and nearly all the way through a thick woods and part of the way without a road other than a path. When I reached the cabin I stopped long enough to build a fire so that the cabin would be warm when my companion got there if he did get there at all, which I doubted.

I took a lunch in my hand and started for help. I would take a trot whenever the woods were sufficiently open to let in light enough so that I could see my way. I got to my companion's home about midnight and we were soon on the way back with a team and wagon while my companion's father went after a doctor to have him there when we got

back with the patient. We drove with the wagon as far as the road would allow, then we left the wagon and rode the horses to the camp.

When we reached the cabin, contrary to expectations, we found my companion there but very sick. We lost no time in getting him onto a horse and starting for the wagon where we had a bed for the patient to lie down on. We got home about eight o'clock in the morning. The doctor was waiting for us and he said as soon as he looked at the man that it was a bad case of typhoid fever. He was right, for it took many weeks before my friend was able to be out again.

When game began to get scarce, that is when game was no longer found plenty right at the door, I began to look for parts where game was plentiful and accordingly, with three companions, I arranged to hunt and trap on Thunder Bay River in Michigan, where deer and all kinds of game, we had been told, were plenty and also lots of fur bearers. This we found to be quite true but the state had passed a law forbidding the shipment of deer. We did not know this when we left home and two of the boys soon got discouraged and returned.

It was while hunting here that I had another trip of twenty miles through the woods over rough corduroy tote road in the night after a team to take my companion (Vanater by name) out to Alpena to have a broken leg set. He was carrying a deer on his shoulder and when near camp it was necessary to cross a small stream to get to the cabin. We had felled a small tree across the creek for the purpose of crossing. There was three or four inches of snow on the log and after my companion was across the creek and just

as he was about to step from the log he slipped and fell, striking his leg across the log in some manner so that it broke between the knee and ankle.

After getting my companion to camp and making him as comfortable as possible, I took a lunch in my knapsack and with an old tin lantern with a tallow candle in it, which gave about as much light as a lightning bug, I started over the longest and roughest twenty miles of road that I ever traveled in the night. Sometimes I would trip on some stick or log and fall and put out my light but I would get up, light the candle in the lantern again and hurry on all the faster to make up for lost time. I made the journey all right and was back to camp the next day before noon where we found my companion doing as well as could be expected under the circumstances.

We got my companion out to Alpena where the doctor set the leg and in the course of two or three weeks he was so far recovered that he was able to return to camp and keep me company until he was able to again take up the trap line and trail.

Some years later I again went back to Michigan and hunted deer and trapped on the Manistee, Boardman and Rapid Rivers, but I found game and furs had become somewhat scarce in that part so I next went with a partner to upper Michigan. At that time there was no railroad in Upper Michigan and but few settlers, after leaving the Straits, until near Lake Superior and near the copper and iron mines.

I have tried my luck in three of the states west of the Rocky Mountains. In the Clear Water regions of Idaho there

was a fair showing of big game, with a good sprinkling of the fur bearers, including a bunch of beaver here and there. (Beaver protected.) I heard men tell of there being plenty of grizzly and silver tip bear but I saw no signs of them. In California a trapper told, me of a large grizzly coming to his shack in the night. He said that he was cooking venison and that he had the fresh meat of a deer in the shack and he thought that the bear smelled the meat was what brought him there. The man said the bear smelled around the shack awhile and then began to dig at one corner of the shack and soon pulled out the bottom log. The man kept quiet until the bear pulled out the next log and put his head in through the hole when he put a ball between the bear's eyes that fixed Bruin too quick. (A bad case of nightmare.) I think it doubtful if there is a grizzly bear or at least very few now to be found south of the British Columbia line.

My best catch of bear in one season with a partner was eleven. Years ago I caught from three to six bear each season but late years I have not caught more than one to three. I think that of late the heavy lumbering going on through Northern Pennsylvania had something to do with the catch of bear.

The timber in Pennsylvania is largely cut away now leaving bark slashings which make fine shelter for bear and wildcats and both animals were apparently quite plenty I would judge from the number caught in this section, fall of 1907. Deer are very scarce in this state, perhaps the most to be found are in Pike County.

I can lay claim to one thing that but few hunters and trappers can do, that is for forty years I lost only two

seasons from the trap line and the trail and each time I was detained by rheumatism. Once being taken down with sciatica while in the camp trapping and hunting, and it held me to my bed for several months hard and tight. I still have the greater part of my trapping and hunting outfit, and am still in hopes to be able to get out on the line and pinch a few more toes.

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## **CHAPTER II.**

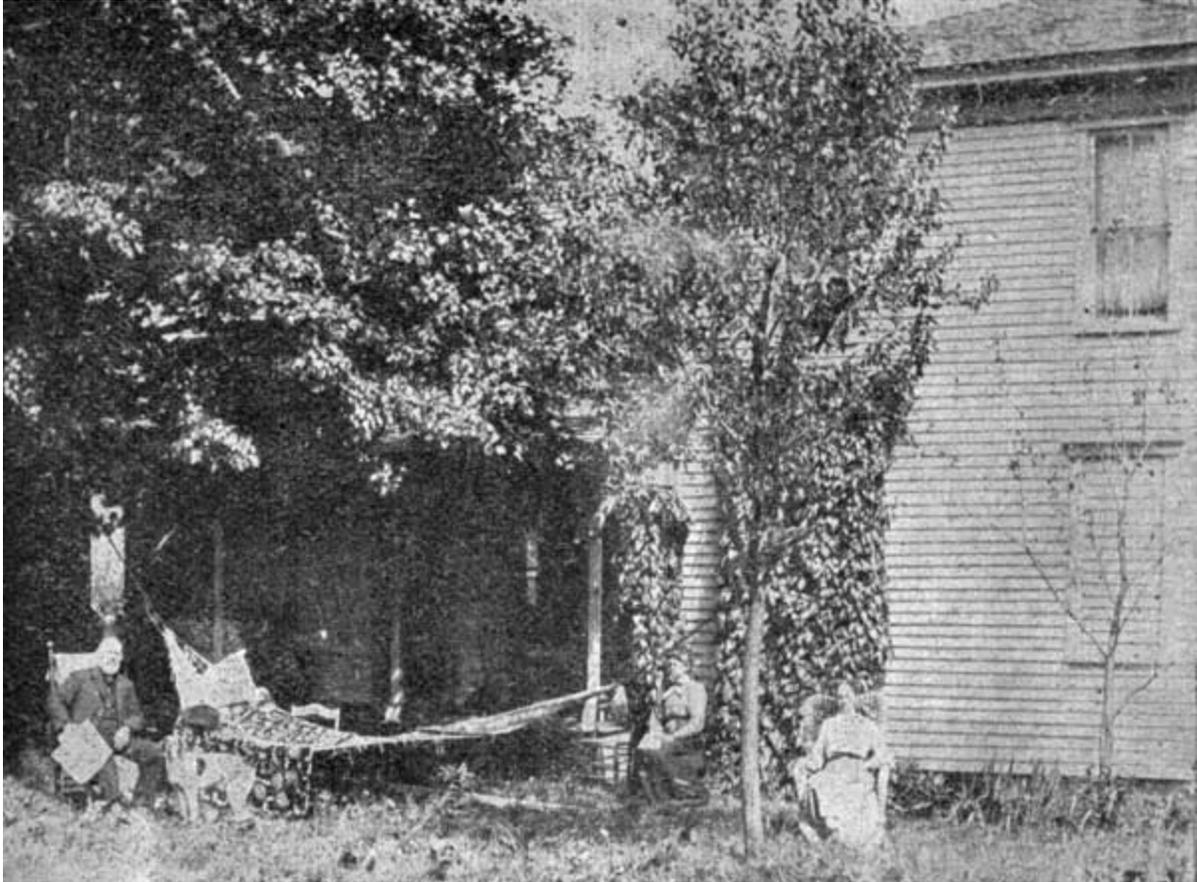
### **Early Experiences.**

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As I promised to write something of my early experience at trapping and hunting, I will begin by saying that I am now living within one mile of where I was born sixty years ago (this was written in 1904), and that I began my trapping career by first trapping rats in my father's grist mill with the old figure four squat trap. I well remember the many war dances that I had when I could not make the trap stay set; but I did not trap long inside the mill for father also ran a blacksmith shop and always kept a good man to do the work in the shop. I was soon coaxing the smith to make me a steel trap, which he did. I now began catching muskrats along the tail race and about the mill dam, but the spring on my trap was so stiff that when I found the trap sprung or found game in it, I was obliged to bring the trap to the house and have some one older than I to set it. Then I would carry it back to the creek and set it. Well this was slow work and I was continually begging the blacksmith to make me more traps with weaker springs so I could set them myself.

After much coaxing he made me three more which I was able to set and then the muskrats began to suffer. Let me say at that time a muskrat skin was worth more than a mink skin.

Boys, I was like a man in public office, the more of it they have, the more they want. So it was with me in regard to the traps, but I could not coax the blacksmith to make any more. An older brother came to my aid in this way: he told me to go to town and see the blacksmith there and see if I could not sell some charcoal to him for traps, and he, (my brother) would help me burn the coal. Now this burning the coal was done by gathering hemlock knots from old rotten logs and piling them up and covering them like potato holes, leaving a hole open at the bottom to start the fire. After the fire was well started the hole was closed and the knots smoldered for several days. Well, the plan worked and by the operation I became the possessor of five more traps. By this time the vicinity of the mill dam and race was no longer large enough to furnish trapping grounds, and I ventured farther up and down the stream and took in the coon and mink along with the muskrat.



**WOODCOCK, WIFE, SISTER-IN-LAW, RESIDENCE  
AND HIS DOG MACK.**

We had a neighbor, Washburn by name, who was considered a great trapper, for he could now and then catch a fox. As time passed by, I began to have a great desire to get on an equal with Mr. Washburn and catch a fox. I began to urge him to allow me to go with him to see how he set his trap, and after a long time coaxing, he granted my request. I found what everyone of today knows of the chaff bed set. You may now know that it was not long before I had a bed made near a barn that stood well back in the field, and after much worry and many wakeful nights I caught a fox and I thought myself Lord Jonathan. As time went by, and by chance I learned that by mixing a goodly part of hen

manure with plenty of feathers in it, and mixing it with the chaff, it was a great improvement on chaff alone. Next I learned of the well known water set. However, I perhaps set different from the most of trappers in making this set. Well as all trappers learn from long years of experience, so have I, and those old-fashioned sets are like the squat traps, not up-to-date. I will now drop the trapping question for a time and tell you how I killed my first deer.

Just outside of the clearing on father's farm and not more than fifty rods from the house was a wet place, such as are known to these parts as a "bear wallow." This wet place had been salted and was what is called a "salt lick." In those days it was not an uncommon thing to see six or eight deer in the field any morning during the summer season--the same as you will see them in parts of California today. It was not an uncommon thing for my older brother to kill a deer at this lick any morning or evening, but that was not making a nimrod of me. I would beg father to let me take the gun (which was an old double barreled flintlock shot gun) and watch the lick. As I was only nine years old, they would not allow me to have the gun, so I was obliged to steal it out when no one was in sight, carry it to the barn and then watch my opportunity and "skipper" from the barn to the lick. All worked smoothly and I got to the lick all right. It was toward sundown and I had scarcely poked the gun through the hole in the blind and looked out when I saw two or three deer coming toward the lick. I cocked the old gun and made ready but about this time I was taken with the worst chill that any boy ever had and I shook so that I could scarcely hold the gun to the peep hole. It was only a moment when

two of the deer stepped into the lick, and I took the best aim I could under the condition, and pulled the trigger. Well of all the bawling a deer ever made, I think this one did the worst, but I did not stop to see what I had done but took across the field to the house at a lively gait, leaving the gun in the blind.

The folks heard the shot and saw me running for the house at break-neck speed (this of course was the first that they knew I was out with the gun). My older brother came to meet me and see what the trouble was. When I told him what I had done, he went with me to the lick and there we found a fair-sized buck wallowing in the lick with his back broken, one buck shot (or rather one slug, for the gun was loaded with pieces cut from a bar of lead); one slug had struck and broken the spine and this was the cause of the deer bawling so loud as this was the only one that hit.

The old shotgun was now taken from its usual corner in the kitchen and hung up over the mantle piece above the big fire place and well out of my reach. This did not stop my hunting. We had a neighbor who had two or three guns and he would lend me one of them. I would hide away hen eggs and take them to the grocery and trade them for powder and shot. Of course the man who owned the gun got the game, when I chanced to kill any, for I did not dare to carry it home. It was not long until father found that I was borrowing Mr. Abbott's gun, and he thought that if hunt I would, it would be better that I use our own and then he would know when I was out with it. He took the old flintlock to the gunsmith and had it fixed over into a cap lock, and now I was rigged out with both gun and traps.

I will now tell you about the first bear that I killed. I was about thirteen years old, and it was not so common a thing for one to kill a bear in those days as it is now (1904), for strange as it may seem, bears are far more plentiful here today than they were at that time.

Two of my brothers and three or four of the neighbors went into the woods about twelve miles and bought fifty acres of land. There was no one living within six or seven miles of the place. They cleared off four or five acres and built a good log fence around it. They also built a small barn and cabin. Each spring they would drive their young cattle out to this place, stay a few days and plant a few potatoes, and some corn. About once a month it was customary to go over to this clearing and hunt up the cattle and bring them to the clearing and salt them, then have a day or two of trout fishing, watch licks and kill a deer or two, jerk the meat and have a general good time.

I was allowed to go on one of these expeditions, and the first night the men watched one or two licks and one of the men killed a deer, but I had to stay in camp that night with a promise that I should watch the second night.

During the first night we heard wolves howl away upon the hills. The next morning the men talked very mysteriously about the wolves and said that it would not be safe to watch the licks that night, that no deer would come to the licks as long as the wolves were around. I took it all in and said nothing, but was determined to watch a lick that night. Finally one of the men, John Duell by name, said that I could watch the lick that he had and he would stay in camp. The one that I was to watch was only a short distance from

the clearing. When the sun was about one-half hour high, I took the old shot gun, this time loaded with genuine buck shot and climbed the Indian ladder to the scaffold which was built about twenty feet from the ground in a hemlock tree.

I sat quiet until sundown and no deer came. I thought I would tie the gun in the notches in the limbs, which brought the gun in proper range to kill the deer in the lick, should it come after dark. I got one string tied around the barrel and the limb when a slight noise to my left caused me to look in that direction and I saw a dark object standing in the edge of the little thicket, which I took to be a black creature I had seen down near the clearing when I came to the lick. My thoughts were that I would tie the breech of the gun fast to the limb, and then I would climb down and stone the animal away, so I went on tying the gun fast. On looking up I saw that the supposedly black heifer had turned out to be a black bear, and that it was going to go above the lick and not into it. My knife was out in an instant and the next moment I had the strings that held the gun cut. I raised it carefully to my face and about this time the bear stopped, turned his head around and looked back in the direction he had come. This was my chance, and I fired both barrels at his head and shoulders, and immediately there was a snorting, snarling, rolling and tumbling of the bear, but the maneuvers of the bear was no comparison to the screams and shouts that came from me. I was still making more noise than a band of Indians when Mr. Duell arrived on the scene and took in the situation. The other men who were watching other licks thought I had surely been attacked by the wolves by the unearthly yell I was making and the whole

party were soon on the ground. The bear was soon dressed and the men gave me the cognomen of the "The Great Hunter of Kentucky" and so ended the killing of my first bear.

I am still in hopes to take the pelts from one or two this fall and winter and later, I will tell of some of the incidents I have seen and experienced while trapping and hunting among them. Perhaps, how a brother of mine got a tenderfoot to ride the carcass of a deer down a steep and hard frozen mountain when there was about two inches of snow on would be interesting.

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## **CHAPTER III.**

### **My First Real Trapping Experience.**

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When I was about eighteen, I received a letter from a man by the name of Harris, who lived in Steuben County, New York, wherein he stated that a Mr. Lathrop had suggested me as a suitable party to go with him to the region known as Black Forest. This section extends through four counties, the southern part of Potter and Tioga counties, and northern part of Clinton and Lycoming counties, Pa. Every reader knows or has heard of the Black Forest region.

This section was and is still (1910) known as a good bear country. I thought it strange that Mr. Lathrop, a man of much note as a hunter, would recommend me, merely a boy, to go with Mr. Harris and into a region like the Black Forest. As Mr. Lathrop lived about four miles from our place I lost no time

in going there to learn who this Mr. Harris was. I was informed that he was an old hunter and trapper about eighty years old and that he wanted a partner more for a companion than a hunter or trapper. Mr. Lathrop had met Mr. Harris while on a fishing tour on the Sinnamahoning waters during the summer and said that he knew nothing of Mr. Harris otherwise than what he saw of him at this meeting and to all appearances he was a fine old gentleman. I showed the letter to father and asked what I should do about it and he replied that he thought I could spend my time to a better advantage in school, but he did not say that I could not go with Mr. Harris. I therefore wrote him that I would be ready at the time mentioned which was the twentieth of October.

Mr. Goodsil, the gunsmith in town, had been at work for some time on a new gun for me. Now that I was going into the woods to hunt in earnest, I was at the gun shop nearly every day, urging Mr. Goodsil to finish my gun which he did and in plenty of time. After I got my gun the days seemed like weeks and the weeks like months. I was constantly in fear that Mr. Harris would not come. But promptly at the time set, in the evening just before sundown, a man with a one horse wagon loaded with bear traps and other traps of smaller size and with one of the worst old rack-of-bones of a horse that I had ever seen, drove up to father's place, stopped and inquired if Mr. Woodcock lived there. I immediately asked if he was Mr. Harris, as I had already guessed who the man was. He replied that he was and said that he took it that I was the lad who was going with him.

Mr. Harris said that "often an old horse and a colt" worked well together and that we would make a good team. While we were putting his horses away I asked him what he intended to do with the old horse and he replied that he brought him along so that if we got stuck he could hitch him on and help out. The other horse was a fine horse and I was at a loss to know what Mr. Harris meant.

During the evening I thought father and Mr. Harris talked on every other subject rather than hunting but I managed to put in a few questions now and again as to what we were to do when we arrived at the great Black Forest.

Mr. Harris was a tall, broad-shouldered man with a long beard nearly as white as snow. We were up early the next morning and on our way before daylight. Our route was over the road known as the Jersey Shore turnpike but after the first four miles we went through an unbroken wilderness for twenty miles, save only one house, then known as the Edcomb Place, now called Cherry Springs. The next place, ten miles farther on, was a group of four or five shacks called Carter Camp, but known now as Newbergen. This was in the year 1863 and the conditions over this road are the same today only the large timber has been mostly cut away and there is no one living at Cherry Springs. Five miles farther on we came to Oleana, where there was a hotel and store, owned by Henry Anderson, a Norwegian, who came to this country as the private secretary of Ole Bull, the great violinist, and it was here where the much talked of Ole Bull Castle was built.

Beg pardon, I guess I am getting off the trap line. We stopped at the hotel for the night and the next morning

purchased supplies sufficient to last during the entire campaign, consisting of lard, pork, flour, corn meal, tea, coffee, rice, beans, sugar and the necessary salt, pepper, etc. I remember well when Mr. Harris ordered fifty pounds of beans and asked me if I thought that would do? I replied that I thought it would. In my mind I wondered what we would do with all those beans. But now I wish to say to the man going into camp on a long hunting and trapping campaign, don't forget the beans as they are bread and meat.

We are now within about ten or twelve miles of where we intended to camp, which was at the junction of the Bailey and Nebo Branches of Young Woman's Creek. It was about the middle of the afternoon of the second day we were out and Mr. Harris said that here would be a good place to build the camp. We got the horses out as soon as we could and Mr. Harris picked out a large rock; one side had a straight, smooth side and was high and broad enough for one end of the shanty and there was a fine spring close by. Mr. Harris pointed to the rock and said that there we had one end of our camp already as well as a good start towards the fire place.

He told me to begin the cutting of logs for the other two sides and the other end. We cut the logs a suitable size to handle well and about twelve and fourteen feet long. Mr. Harris did the planning while I did the heavy part of the work.

That night we slept under a hemlock tree and were up the next morning and had breakfast before daylight and ready for the day's work. We could see scuds of clouds away