

HILLIS TELLS A BEAR STORY

The demonstration of rifle and shot gun shooting by the Remington representative, W. A. Hillis of Portland, which took place here Monday afternoon, was witnessed with much interest by the local sportsmen of Independence. His demonstration showed what can be done by using modern guns and modern ammunition. All of

his guns are of the automatic type. His line of work is to demonstrate the accuracy and reliability of the Remington guns and the U. M. C. ammunition. Some of the best demonstrations were made when small disks, an inch and a half in diameter, were tossed into the air and were caught with his rifle singly and two at a time. The same demonstration was made with marbles and small clay balls which he hit with equal accuracy, easily dispatching two of them when tossed into the air at once. A small block of wood, six inches in diameter, was thrown into the air which he put five bullets through with the rifle before it reached the

ground. This is a demonstration intended to show the rapidity of operation together with the accuracy of his guns. One of the prettiest demonstrations showing the power of the gun and ammunition was made when he took an ordinary tin can filled with water and sealed, on top of which was set a jelly bottle filled with confetti. A shot was put through the can with a soft nose bullet the concussion from which sent the jelly bottle about forty feet into the air and before it reached the ground he shattered it with a bullet while the confetti floated down like snow over the crowd. To show the rapidity with which the guns can be fired he takes the gun empty, loads it with clips containing five shells and fires fifteen shots within ten seconds. To do this the gun is loaded three times.

In talking of his work Mr. Hillis, while in Independence, said to a reporter of the Enterprise:

"I am sent out to demonstrate practically the ammunition and guns of the Remington people. I am the only man west of the Rocky mountains doing this work. My territory extends from Alaska to New Mexico. Last winter I was in Alaska and British Columbia. This winter I was in California doing demonstration work."

In talking of his experiences while in Alaska he told the following story which will show the remarkable protection the Remington rifle afforded him on one occasion:

"Last May while in Alaska I went out bear hunting with D. W. King, the Ballastite powder man, of San Jose, California, and a guide. The country in which the hunt took place was mountainous and the cliffs were precipitous and to get over them was next to impossible. Getting into the bear country and locating camp we scoured the country with our field glasses. The atmosphere of that country is so clear and glary that one can see ten or fifteen miles with the assistance of glasses. The nights there are almost as light as day at that time of the year and one can see to shoot almost as well as in daytime. About three weeks after we had established our camp we were out one day with our glasses when we located four grizzlies. They were up above us on the mountain side. We started the climb in pursuit of them about nine o'clock in the morning, and after five hours' toil we got above them and on the windward side. At our point of vantage we were within forty yards of them. There were two lying down like pigs asleep and the others were standing upright boxing each other like prize fighters. I said to King: 'Let's take a picture of them,' for we had our cameras with us. King got one exposure which failed to focus properly and while I was trying to focus my camera a whirlwind came along bringing a gust of snow with it. I kept my eye on the big ones which were lying down

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when one of them reared up and poked her nose in our direction. The next moment they were out of our field of vision. King went up the ridge and I scrambled down to the bench to where I had seen them. Just as I came to this point I commenced to shoot from the ridge behind and then I knew that they were at the head of the gulch. King fired the second shot I saw the bears running down the mountain. Just as I dropped on my knee the big one stood up and I fired. I put two shots in o him and then dropped back to the three standing in a row behind him. I shot one shot each at the three when they all disappeared over the brink. This was all done in less than ten seconds. In about half a minute we saw three of them rolling down the mountain end over end in the snow about a quarter of a mile below us, but the fourth one did not show up. I surmised that he was somewhere in the neighborhood of where the others had gone over the cliff, so I took a stand on a high point where I could command the surrounding country and told the guide to take the bear trail. It had gone only a short distance when he discovered that the wounded bear had gone into a cave near where he was last seen. When I came up to the mouth of the cave I found about four feet of snow banked up against the bottom of the cliff through which was a big hole dug through the snow into what proved to be the den of Messrs. Brain. We could hear the bear inside groaning and breathing heavily but could not see him. King was posted to command the mouth of the cave while I proceeded to dig the snow away from the entrance. After digging a passageway I took a candle and with my Remington crawled cautiously into the mouth of the cave. I had scarcely entered when I discerned, through the dim light, the eyes of the bear moving from one side to the other. Getting a careful bead I let go a charge from my rifle and backed out of the cave. After a short wait and hearing no sounds from the cave we were convinced that he had been done for. We lunched here and rested, for we were tired out from the exertions of the day's hard work. Then I prepared to enter the cave again, against the protestations of King and the guide. When we came inside of the cave it proved to be about thirty feet across and fully as deep. The bear was found in the farther end of the cave with the whole top of his head blown away. He weighed about 800 pounds and was almost more than the three of us could drag out. He was finally rolled out and down the mountain side to join his vanquished brothers. In the basin at the foot of the mountain we got the four of them together and took photographs of them there in the snow."

Mr. Hillis tells this story with pardonable pride, for, indeed, he displayed bravery and daring on this occasion of which Mr. King never tires of boasting. It is a true bear story and an account of it was published recently in "Outing" magazine.

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