

Holcomb's Narrative on Canadian Big Game Hunt

by Mrs. Freda Holcomb

We left on our Canada hunting trip the first of October. We traveled through the Okanogan Valley where all the large apple orchards were loaded with apples. We were to meet our uncle and aunt Chris and Ellena Wyckoff from Wallowa, Oregon at Cash Creek Canada, Sunday. We stayed at Prince George Sunday night. This town has tripled in size since we were there in 1963. Large office buildings, stores, motels and beautiful homes were all around.

Our destination was Burns Lake, Canada. We arrived there Monday where we met our guides Kenneth Stearns and wife, Georgina and Charley Morus.

Only residents of Canada can hunt without a guide. They gave us our instructions and we picked up our hunting license and tags for moose, caraboo, and goat. The grizzly bear season had closed the Saturday before.

We drove to Francois Lake to visit Mr. and Mrs. Slim Bohna of Wallowa, Oregon who spend their summers in Canada and have a cabin on Lake Burns. This lake is around 100 miles long and the water is very clear and blue. We noted that all the lakes and streams in Canada are free of debris. Bohna went with us hunting. He had helped our guides build their hunting

camp this summer.

We left Wednesday morning and drove 84 miles in the pickup to Lake Tahtsa, Charley was there to meet us in the boat. We loaded our gear and went 10 miles up the lake. The lake was beautiful with mountains and trees on both sides. At the dock we loaded our gear on a two wheel trailer hitched to a brush buggy, we walked and rode four miles on a trail through the timber. We got to camp around 4 p.m. where Georgina and Kenneth had lunch ready for us.

This was Georgina's first hunting and vacation trip. She left her children with her mother. She did the cooking and was a wonderful cook, hot rolls, cinnamon rolls, raised doughnuts, pies, cakes and all the other good food one doesn't expect out in the wilderness.

The cook house was a brand new log cabin 16 x 30 feet. We had a tent house to sleep in fixed up real comfortably with stove, wash stands, cots, a table and chair.

After lunch we all went to a meadow south of the cabin. This was the largest meadow in a chain of meadows about a mile long and 3/4 mile wide. It was covered with four or more inches of water all over it. All the meadows in this area are very wet with tall grass in them. We all sat in different



places around the edge of the trees to watch for moose and caraboo. We learned later that the caraboo had migrated to the lower meadows in the valley, they stay in this area in the summer and had moved out earlier than usual. These are timber caraboo about the size of our elk and stay together in groups of eight or more. We sat in this meadow morning and night for five days.

Thursday, Chris, Slim, Charley and I took the brush buggy and went to a small lake we had passed on our way in to camp the day before. We followed a trail off the main trail and picked up a few tracks but nothing too promising. Wilbur and Kenneth went to the smaller meadows and wandered through the timber but had no luck.

Friday Wilbur, Slim and Kenneth with packs on their backs left camp bright and early for the high mountains south and west of camp, which was about a 15 mile round trip on foot. Early in the afternoon they saw 16 head of goats stretched out in the sun on the south side of one of the higher mountains. They worked their way around close to them and Wilbur bagged a big nanny. Her horns were 7 inches long. She had long white silky hair and weighed

in at about 250 pounds. They dressed her out and divided the meat and started back to camp (next year the guides hope to have a cabin at the top of this mountain). At 6 p.m. we heard a shot across the meadow letting Charley know he was to come after them. They were three tired men when they got to camp.

Saturday morning we had our first heavy frost so we all went back to the little lake again, Wilbur got a glimpse of a bull in the brush, Chris and I saw a cow across the lake.

Sunday still no moose. Monday the men went by boat to a couple of smaller lakes to

hunt. About 5 p.m. Ellena and I went to the meadows (the guides kept assuring me I'd see a moose). About sundown this old cow came out in sight and I shot her. (cow season opened Saturday) The men got home just at nightfall, we took the lanterns and dressed her out and left her till morning. We at least knew now we wouldn't come home without any game.

That night it started raining and snowing, which was what our guides had been waiting for, this makes the moose start moving around.

Tuesday morning Slim got a big bull in the west meadow.

They had just got it dressed out and started after the cow when a big bull crossed the lower end of the meadow where I got the cow. Kenneth came after Wilbur so he went to the west meadow. Wilbur waited for a couple hours when he finally heard this big bull come grunting out of the brush, he sounded like he had plenty of troubles. Wilbur waited till he was closer and nailed him. The bull was all bruised from fighting, and had a big gouge in his hind quarter. His underside and front leg were all bruised and the point on the left antler was broken off. They brought him in and had just got him dressed when they heard a shot down in the meadow. Chris had shot another big bull. By the time we got to him it was nearly dark. We had filled our tags all within 24 hours so everyone was happy.

Wednesday morning they started to the lake with a trailer load of meat and when about two miles from camp the brush buggy broke an axle. Kenneth, Charley and Slim went to town to get another vehicle and didn't get back until Friday noon. With a new Tarri Jet it took them two hours to trail this up the lake. It is a four wheeled amphibian rig. They hitched this to the trailer and drove about 100 yards and the motor went out on it. They came back and got Georgina and she, Kenneth and Charley went to town again.

Saturday morning Wilbur went to see if the meat was ok, Slim said the grizzlies usually get the scent of meat in four or five days. Sure enough there was a little black bear. He had taken one of the hearts. We tried to get a picture but he seemed to be camera shy and retreated into the timber.

At noon Kenneth, Charley and Peter came for us in a helicopter. Peter took Slim and Wilbur and all our personal gear in the pickups. They were to meet us twelve miles down the road. They took one load of meat down in a sling attached to the helicopter. Ellena and I went the next trip with the rest of the meat. This was my first ride in a helicopter and was a big thrill. We flew over the meadow where we had killed our moose and the lake we had hunted around. We arrived at the meeting place just as the pickups did and then had an hours wait for them to pick up the meat.

We got back to Slim's place late that evening. Mrs. Bohna had a kettle of stew ready for us as she had heard in town they were flying us out.

Sunday morning we started for home. This was a great experience for us, as well as the guides (we were their first party to take out hunting). Kenneth had worked for the Land

Management and Charley for the Forest Service. This area next to Tweedsmuir Park was open for guide licenses and hadn't been hunted with a guide for ten years. They have a good set up for moose, caraboo, goat and grizzly.

FFA Members

Earn Degrees

Approximately 80 FFA students from Nyssa, Ontario and Vale attended the greenhand initiation, sponsored by the Nyssa FFA chapter, Oct. 28.

Students totaling approximately 50 received their green hand degree. This degree is given to students in their first year of FFA who have met certain requirements. Those from Nyssa receiving greenhand degree were Gene Bair, Craig Froerer, Mark Jensen, Jerry Robbins, David Blaylock, Doug Wynn, Mike Fitzsimmons and Wesley Cleaver.

Approximately 30 students received chapter farmer degree. This degree is given to students in their second year of FFA who have met certain requirements.

Nyssa students receiving a chapter farmer degree include Dwayne Ulrey, Dave Bench, Dennis Chamberlain, Frank Rodriguez, Scott Goodell, Carl Cleaver, Kent Cleaver, Randy Froerer and Nico Hopman.

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