

From the JAWS of the BEAR that WALKS like a MAN

STORY OF JIM CRISTIE the CANADIAN TRAPPED
HERE RECOVERING
AFTER his BATTLE
with a GRIZZLY



THE RIGHT SIDE OF JIM CRISTIE'S
HEAD

We had examined Jim Christie's scalp, had seen the plainly-marked scars—horse-shoe shaped like a grizzly's upper jaw on one side, ragged and long on the other, and on the top, straight across like a knife slash—the scars that had allowed his skull-covering to drape his neck like a cape during the terrible hike to camp. We had looked at his lower jaw which had hung down against his chest; we had seen the mark of the bear's tusk in his arm and in his thigh. And then Jim Christie said, in a matter-of-fact way, for he is a man of the silent places who imagines nothing.

"The queer part of it to me is the fact that the old cuss charged on me, and then that he didn't use his paws. I never heard tell of a silver-tip acting that way before."

A bit more pow-wow about the surgery, the kindness of Dr. Hasell and Dr. Jones, and the nurses at the hospital where Christie has been treated, and then he told us—without embroidery or fancy-work of any nature—the story of an adventure with a grizzly bear the like of which does not exist in the annals of bear hunting. He talked straight ahead in the same undramatic manner that the average man would use in relating to a sympathetic companion how his rheumatism had spread from his small toe to his left shoulder blade. The story contained the explanation of the fact that Christie had been for months almost a nervous wreck and that he was sent from Dawson, Yukon Territory, to the Jubilee Hospital, in Victoria, B. C., to be put back into working shape again.

Christie came from Carman, Man., where he has relatives living now, and went into the North in '08. He never worked for wages; he prospected in summer and trapped in winter all over the North, and he learned the country as a child learns the A B C's. Some of the time he acted as guide for government parties, and it was on one of these trips that he met Agnes Deans Cameron's party away up on the headwaters of the Mackenzie. On another occasion Christie took a geological survey outfit across the unknown North from Dawson to Edmonton, and then came down to Carman to visit his folks. Meantime he had struck up a pal-ship with George Christfield, and when he went back North he and Christfield grubstaked and lit out for the Rogue River, setting up camp at a point about 350 miles east of Dawson, in the heart of the wilderness.

During these years of his apprenticeship in the North, Christie had learned much about the silent places, had trapped much and hunted much, and a grizzly bear was about as fearsome a thing to him as a bot is to a plough-horse. That is to say, something unpleasant to be brushed aside. Christie held this attitude towards grizzly bears when he struck out over a light snow about the middle of last October along the course of the Rogue River, to look up the trapping possibilities. Two years before a horde of lynx had infested the country and small furs were scarce. The first day out Christie shot a moose and hid it in a ground cache to be called for later. He explored up river for two suns and then circled back toward camp. His trail led him across his out-track, and he decided to have a look at the cache. When he got within sight of it he found a pack of timber wolves hard at work excavating, and he took a shot at one of them. It was this shot, which missed, that saved Christie's life. For two days he had

body and although the bullet was soft-nosed and driven by a powerful charge, it didn't stop him for a second. Christie pumped his gun like lightning, but the bear was within four feet of him before he could send another bullet crashing into the massive head. On the crack of his second shot Christie jumped aside and felt for his knife. But as he jumped his foot struck a snag. He fell—and before he touched the snow the bear was on top of him.

"He didn't use his forelegs," said Christie, in telling of it. "He just naturally started in chewing. The shock of the fall had taken the wind out of me for a minute, and when I opened my eyes things looked sort of bad. I was right between the old boy's legs and he was just drooling on me. When I moved my hand he let out a grunt that would make your hair curl, opened his enormous jaws and took my head in his mouth. I felt something give, and I thought it was all off. I thought he had gone through my skull and would reach my brain. With that I swung my right arm up and tried to get it into his jaws to pry them loose, because usually a grizzly is like a bull dog, he just gets a hold and hangs on. I got my arm in all right, but I pried so hard that I snapped it off. This seemed to disconcert Old Nosey, for he let go my head and bit through my hand. With another snap he broke my jaw and tore my eye. Then I thought sure it was all off. He was snapping like a fox terrier with the fleas, and every time he snapped he clamped his jaws on my skull. The finish was just about due, and I was so blind and weak that I didn't give a hang when the bell rang. Then, suddenly the old boy let go my head and sank his tusks into my thigh. I was trembling with pain and shock, and I guess I

him wouldn't let him do that without a fight, and against what seemed impossible odds, the man began to win his way home.

On figuring matters out, Christie remembered that his partner, Christfield, would not think of looking for him if he didn't show up for two or three days; because the arrangement had been that Christie should be away for some time. Christie also remembered that there were no medicines at camp, because he and his partner had not moved all of their stores yet. His own common sense told him again and again that he was only giving himself needless agony to try to reach camp; that he would die on the trail or soon after he got home at most. But the something inside of him wouldn't let him lie down and invite the wolves.

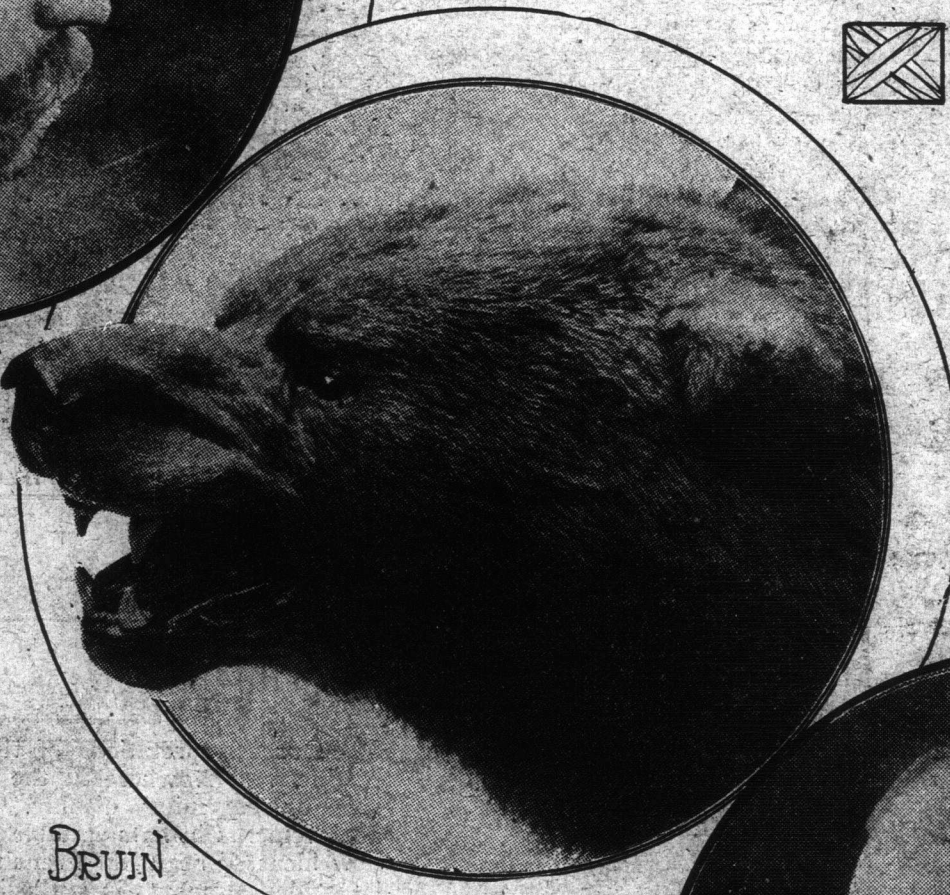
Half an hour elapsed before Christie could get on his feet. Once there, he tottered about like a drunken man. The first move was to try to staunch the flow of blood, but the wounds were so many and so varied that this was almost impossible. Christie couldn't use his right arm at all, and his left arm was strained. Using this arm as best he could, he pulled the torn pieces of scalp together and bound it tightly with his neckerchief. Then he put his jacket over his head, lifted his lower jaw into place and caught the ends of his jacket under his chin. In this fashion Christie set out on the seven mile tramp over the river ice to camp. On the way, as a precaution, he made a painful detour of half a mile to a deserted prospector's cabin to leave a message. He knew that Christfield would call at this shack sooner or later. Christie wrote a laborious left-handed note and left it in the cabin. In the note he told whomsoever found it that he had fought with and been mauled by a bear, that he was starting for camp and that if he didn't arrive there, his body would be found on the ice of the river, while a dead grizzly would be found at the moose cache. Then, Christie set out in the cold to stagger to camp.

Fighting with himself, dragging his legs, which became knotted and cramped from loss of blood, battling with the insistent desire to sit down and die, the man toiled over the rough ground, to camp. He arrived at the lonely shack in the late afternoon. His partner was away, Christie did not know for how long. He crept inside and pitched headlong into a bunk. There he lay, too weak to move, hour after hour. Darkness had fallen before Christfield came in. He knew that Christie was away home, for he had seen the bloody trail the wounded man left.

"What's up, Jim?" were Christfield's first words when he opened the door.

Christie told him briefly of the fight and the result. "Take a shot of Scotch before you light up, George," he said. "You'll need your nerve before you look at me."

Christfield did as he was bid, and then lighted a lantern. The sight of his partner



BEUIN

packed his Ross rifle through the scrub without having to use it, and when he missed the wolf, he noticed that the sights had slipped down. He stopped at once and adjusted them properly, dropped his pack and snow-shoes, and went on to the cache. When he got there he learned what had attracted the wolves.

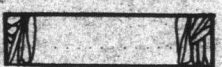
The earth about the cache was thrown up and rooted about as if a dredge had been at work, and, leading from the cache straight over the river, across an open bar, was a trail as big as a house. Christie knew as soon as he saw it what had happened. Grizzly tracks a foot long were plain in the snow all about, and the mark made by the moose's body dragging in the snow formed a path like a city street. Christie needed that meat and the longer he looked at the empty cache the sorer he got. Finally he decided to punish Old Nosey, to teach him to kill his own moose and leave other folks' meat alone, and it was with this decision that got Christie into trouble.

A brief examination of the trail showed that the track was fresh, had been made within the hour, in fact, and sure that he would come across the bear in a very short time, Christie set out to follow the trail. As it turned out afterwards, the grizzly could see him crossing the river and was lying in wait for him in the scrub above the opposite bank. The wolves had undoubtedly been pestering him, and he was in a very nasty frame of mind.

Knowing nothing of this, and probably caring less, Christie pushed on up the opposite slope of the river and into the brush. The bushes and small trees here were so thick and close that he could not pass through them without great difficulty. He kicked out of his snow-shoes and was shouldering his way through the growth when he heard a sudden ferocious snort not thirty feet distant, and next moment he saw an enormous silver-tip, measuring four feet from heel to shoulder, at least nine feet in height and probably weighing 1,000 pounds, coming at him with the speed of an express train. The bear's fore legs were as thick as the thighs of a big man, and he had a mouth like a cave. The thick scrub gave him not the slightest bother; he came along just as if it wasn't there.

Christie had little or no time to think, but action with him was second nature. Almost in the same second he heard the snort he threw up his rifle and fired. The shot struck the bear, at a range of twenty feet, full in the

THE
LEFT
SIDE OF
JIM
CRISTIE'S
HEAD
SHOWING
THE MARKS
OF A BITE
from the BEAR.



lay for full a minute half doped before I realized that the fight was over and that Old Nosey was dead. The whole affair didn't last fifteen seconds, and the two bullets, one right through the body and the other in the head, had taken effect at last. I couldn't help wondering why the bear hadn't hit me a swat with his paw. If he had one swat would have finished me. For the matter of that, one crunch of his jaws would have been plenty if he hadn't been weakened by the shots. He was dying when he reached me, but it takes those silver-tips the dence of a time to die."

Christie, when he tells the story, touches lightly on the events which followed the death of the bear. When the pain and the cold brought him back to full consciousness, the prospect that lay before him was one calculated to daunt the stoutest. The snow was red with blood for four feet surrounding the scene of the struggle. Christie's clothes were saturated with it and he was fast becoming weak. His scalp was draped down from his bare skull at the back and on both sides, like the flat of a patent cap; his lower jaw fell down limp; his left eye was torn so that he could not see—would never see, he thought at the time; his right arm was broken and torn; his thigh was bitten through, and his right eye was blinded with blood. All in all, with camp seven miles away, Christie thought the best plan would be to pick out the softest spot, crawl into it, and die. But something inside

almost knocked him out. Christie could talk only with great difficulty owing to his fractured jaw, but when Christfield came close to him he showed him where the worst wounds were. "Look me over, George," he instructed his partner, "and see if I'm worth the saving." At this time Christie had a haunting fear that his brain had been injured and that, while he might live, he would not be right in his mind. If this proved to be the case, he had made up his mind to die quick and get it done with. Christfield's hasty investigation proved that, except for one spot, the skull had not been pierced; and that Christie's brain was not affected.

There were not medicines other than Scotch whisky at the camp, and Christie tried to drink some of the liquor. Holding his jaw with his hand, he had his partner hold the bottle to his mouth; but he could not swallow in this manner. Eventually the difficulty was solved when Christfield poured some of the whisky into a shallow basin along with some cold tea. Christie put his head right into the basin and drank. This revived him and he felt stronger.

By this time the two men had decided that the only thing to be done was to have Christie taken as soon as possible to Lansing, a lone trading post fifty miles away, over rough country. Accordingly Christfield rested until about midnight, and then set off for an Indian camp about seven miles distant. He returned

at daylight with two dog teams and Indian mushers. One of the toboggans was rigged into a rude caribou and Christie, now so sore and stiff that the least move was agony, was tucked in among blankets and furs.

The journey to Lansing, Christie says now, was the most terrible feature of the entire incident. The trail, or rather the course, for there was no trail, lay through very rugged country. The snow was not yet deep enough to make good sledding. Time and again with the dogs in full progress, the sled would strike a sunken log and bound high; again it would strike bare ground and jerk suddenly; at other times the half-broken dogs would stop, and start again with a terrific jerk that stretched the hauling throngs to their utmost. The slightest motion meant pain to Christie; the sudden rude jerks and starts were hell. The blood, which had been stopped to some extent, began to ooze from the wounds again, and at every jolt of the sled the man felt as if his head would come off. Even the bliss of unconsciousness was denied him, and he lay hour after hour in exquisite agony, feeling the life ebbing out of him, growing steadily weaker and weaker, and praying for speedy death.

On the afternoon of the fourth day after the fight with the bear, the dog teams reached Lansing. Lansing consists of a small stockade and one or two buildings, and is kept by a trader named Ferrell, a personal friend of Christie. There was no physician nearer than Dawson City, but Ferrell had some skill as an amateur, and an endless store of antiseptics. He bound Christie's head and his jaw and set his broken arm and then, for two months, he and Christfield nursed the injured man.

The wonderful vitality of the man, heritage of the open and the simple life, began to evince itself now, and although his nerves were fairly shot to bits, Christie began to recover. His torn scalp grew together of its own accord with plaster-cast or stitches; his jaw hitched itself into a semblance of its proper shape, although it had to be tinkered with later; and the arm knitted together.

On New Year's Day, Christie, now as good as new, to use his own expression, was ready to start for Dawson. The journey by sled this time was pleasant compared to the trip from the Rogue River to Lansing. Christfield, overjoyed at his partner's rapid recovery, accompanied the party as far as Mayo, and then turned back to hold down the camp on the distant Rogue alone until Christie was ready for work again. Christie reached Dawson City on January 17. The physician he saw there had nothing more to do than tap an abscess that had formed in Christie's cheek. He advised him, however, to go out to Victoria as soon as possible and place himself under the care of Dr. O. M. Jones. Consequently Christie came south for the remainder of the winter. His arm had to be reset and his jaw needed attention before it could be made to close properly, but Christie will be ready for business again before the summer of 1910 is far advanced.

"Nervous about bears?" he said, with a smile, in reply to a question; "no, not particularly. I reckon I'll take it out on the next old silver-tip I hit when I get back there on the Rogue."

Christie is still wondering what made Old Nosey charge on him and then fail to use his enormous arms. "I've shot bears and bears," Christie said to the writer, "but I never heard tell of a grizzly acting like this one did, and if somebody else told me the story I've just told you, I wouldn't believe him on oath. Usually I don't monkey with bears, and they leave me alone, but this fellow was the exception that proves a good rule."

GOLDWIN SMITH ON LITERARY STYLE

Professor Goldwin Smith, himself a consummate master of style, thus spoke on style in his inaugural address as Regius professor of history at Oxford, in 1859:

The style of the classical historians, at least of those we read here, undoubtedly is a model of purity and greatness, and far be it from us to disregard style in choosing books of education. To appreciate language is partly to command it, and to command beautiful and forcible language is to have a key, with which no man who is to rule through opinion can dispense, to the heart and mind of man. To be the master of that talisman you need not be its slave. Nor will a man be a master of it without being the master of better things. Language is not a musical instrument into which, if a fool breathe, it will make melody. Its tones are evoked only by the spirit of high or tender thought; and though truth is not always eloquent, real eloquence has always the glow of truth. The language of the ancients is of the time when the writer sought only to give plain expression to his thought, and when thought was fresh and young. The composition of the ancient historians is a model of simple narrative for the imitation of all time. But if they told their tale so simply it was partly because they had a simple tale to tell. Such schemes as Latin Christianity, European Civilization, the Reformation, the French Revolution, are not so easily reducible to the proportions of artistic beauty, nor are the passions they excite so easily calmed to the serenity of Sophoclean art. Nor are all the moderns devoid of classical beauty. No narrative so complicated was ever conducted with so much skill as that of Lord Macaulay. No historical painting was ever so vivid as that which lures the reader through all that is extravagant in Carlyle. Gibbon's shallow and satirical view of the church and churchmen has made him miss the grand action and the great actors on the stage. But turn to the style and structure of his great work, its condensed thought, its lofty and sustained diction, its luminous grandeur and august proportions, reared as it is out of a heap of materials the most confused and mean, and ask of what Greek or Roman edifice, however classical, it is not the peer?

Education

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