

Yukon Sleeping Giant Dreaming of His Hectic Past Trails Strewn With Memories of Wild Adventure

All Along the Route the Visitor Is Entertained With Stories as Full of Thrills as Any the Post Service Ever Told Us About.

By EDITH G. BAYNE

"THE Yukon," said our stage driver, "is like one of these here new western towns that's had a big cyclone. You go there a little while and ask the folks to tell you something about it and they look at you and say: 'What cyclone?'"

On the face of it this isn't what you could call an apt simile. Rather is the Yukon like a lady with a hectic past or like a slumbering giant sleeping away the years till some wizard's pick shall again stir him to life and open up to an eager world a new flood of gold. The great white silent land dreams on, and if at times the giant groans in his sleep may it not be because of some audacious movie company with ubiquitous camera who come prowling about every now and then in search of atmosphere, trying in the name of art to reconstruct for a modern and indifferent generation something of the romance and glory of that other day?

Of atmosphere there's aplenty, but it's not the kind you need go hunting for with a lens. In fact, atmosphere is just what the Yukon at this somnolent season has nothing else but.

Dramatic incidents of the gold rush have become the merest commonplaces held to be scarcely worth retelling. On the second day out from White Horse we had nearly finished a roadside lunch when the driver of the stage casually remarked that we were eating our pemmican over the grave of a murderer.

He told the tale with a curious air of constraint that we didn't understand—until near the end.

From some distant point far north along the Dawson trail a mounted policeman had brought his prisoner, McGivern by name—at least that will do as well as any other—through bush and tundra to this spot where they came suddenly upon two children lying under a little clump of trees and apparently asleep. Closer examination showed that they were all but unconscious as a result of hunger and exposure and that they were suffering from the terrible trail thirst. Evidently the little fellows either had been abandoned or had in some manner gotten astray from their party—probably had run away just for a but in any case there they were and the policeman was in a quandary.

Policeman's Tragic Choice

He faced a tragic choice. He had but one horse—and the prisoner couldn't walk because of a broken leg. The horse could carry McGivern or the children but not McGivern and the children. They had used the last of their drinking water some miles back and were still many miles from more or from any human habitation. Haste was essential if the lives of the little ones were to be saved.

Which should he save, the prisoner or the kiddies? He had sworn to take McGivern alive. He regarded this as his duty. He had got his man.

McGivern, too, faced a grim problem. He had already made more than one futile attempt to escape, but had had no chance to use the small automatic he had concealed in his boot. It was the children's lives or his—and he wanted to live even though he knew the hangman's rope awaited him a few brief weeks hence.

McGivern looked at his captor bending over the boys. The mountie's back offered a tempting target—

He stooped, and with his manacled hands drew the automatic from his boot. He raised it—very slowly. One of the children retained just enough consciousness to observe him, and from half-shut eyes watched him, dazed and too weak to utter a warning.

But something in the boy's face caused the policeman to swing round just as the shot rang out. He reached the saddle in time to ease his prisoner to the ground.

He stood staring down at the smoking hole in McGivern's shirt, just above the heart, and at the hard face now relaxed in a look of peace. He raised his hand and removed his hat.

McGivern had squared his account. "He was buried right where he died," the stage driver finished, and added, as he speared another chunk of pemmican from the can: "I was one of the kids."

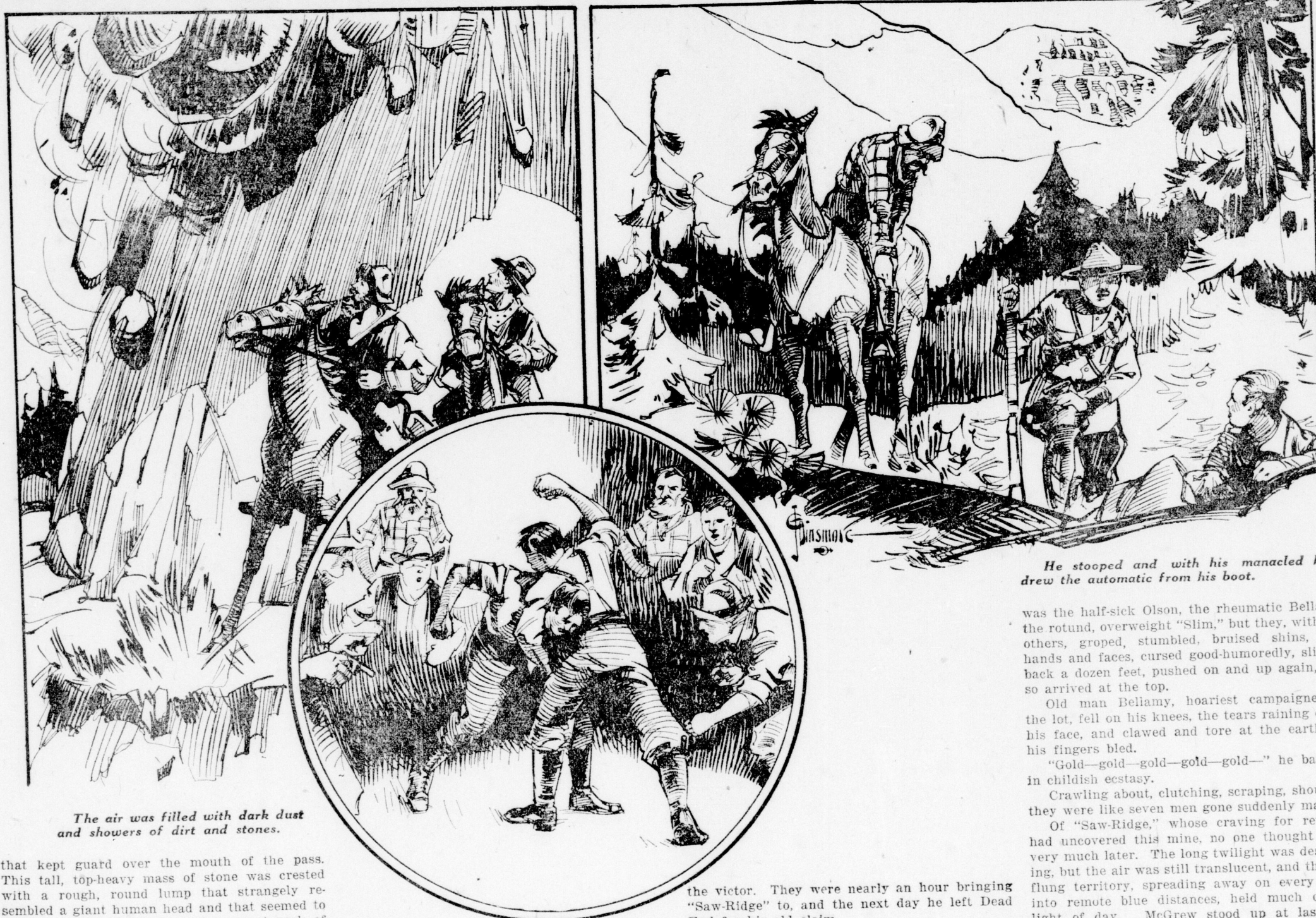
But here and there may be found some not unwilling old timer, or alleged old timer, who may be prevailed upon to spin a yarn or two, plain or embroidered, for the amusement of the sojourner from "outside." To the latter is left the task of separating the chaff of fiction from the wheat of fact.

Stock Story to Greenhorn

THESE the stock story of the greenhorn adventurer dying of hardship and despair along the trail whose body was found, when the snow had melted, lying on a magnificent vein of quartz. There's the tale of the soft-hearted prospector who, after weary months of seeking and never finding, killed his huskies rather than see them starve, and then, before turning the gun on himself, began to dig a grave for them, and lo! with the first thrust of the spade in the earth—gold, beautiful gold, oodles of it! There are various modified versions of the plot of "The Spoilers," stories unending of the charm, beauty, wisdom, wit and winsomeness of Lovely Lil of the Hot Poker Saloon, who thwarted a gang of villains in their dastardly attempt to sell her cad a salted mine and who married a poor young fellow who later became an overnight millionaire. But the story of the seven stickers of Dead End Camp—a sticker being one who sticks—can be vouched for.

This is the tale of the seven and the luck of Dead End Camp.

Dead End lay in a valley between two mountain spurs and at the junction of these with the main range. The traveler with normal eyesight could see it while yet afar off as he mushed along the trail, recognizing the spot by the strikingly peculiar rock formation, a landmark familiar to every prospector, in the shape of a watch-tower



The air was filled with dark dust and showers of dirt and stones.

One of the carters sneaked forward, and drew "Saw Ridge's" knife from his bootleg, and somebody else took his revolver away.

here devil spade's turned up. "One of us," he added, gently, "is a Jonah."

His mild blue eye wandered over the group. Some of them laughed, some cursed, but instinctively each of the seven cast a glance of suspicion on his fellows, one by one.

There was fat little Olson, watching the dishes. There was fat little Johnny Standing, known generally as "Slim," picking his teeth with his cheap knife, there were the Carter brothers from 'way down Nova Scotia way; there was the dour McFadden, only twenty-three, but bearded, stern, unsociable, whom Bellamy had surprised one night crying into his pillow, a woman's picture under his rough cheek, aye, crying for his mother and he letting on 'twas the tooth-ache!

And there was "Saw-Ridge." Nobody knew his real name, and he had received this appellation by reason of an old claim he had had further south on a ridge of rock that was serrated like a giant saw. Of this claim he was ever boasting, calling himself many kinds of a fool for giving it up. An inveterate gambler, an ugly fighter when roused, and a good deal of an enigma was "Saw Ridge."

The old man again shuffled the cards, the rest watching him with varying degrees of eagerness. Far more credulous than a young miss in love, more pathetically superstitious, is the gold prospector, young or soundhearted.

"I've told all our fortunes," said the old man, "and this now is the camp's fortune so everybody make a wish."

"What's the use makin' wishes when they're always the same anyway?" "Saw-Ridge" growled with one of his ugly oaths. "Count me out—I'm through!"

A stranger comin' t' Dead End!" the old man mumbled, adding forcefully: "The dag-gummed fool!"

The next morning Billy McGrew mushed in to the camp. The new comer had a vast and irrepressible optimism and a packload of grub-stake, and while they regarded him as the world's prize innocent they made him welcome. He stuck around for three weeks without apparently bringing any luck to Dead End and then came the fight with "Saw-Ridge." The latter had been to the fort for supplies and had beaten the huskies all the way back so that the poor brutes lay whining and exhausted in the snow, some of them with great welts and the blood frozen on deep cuts along their bodies. Up to that moment young McGrew had been merely a frank-eyed, cheery, easy-going youth, full of foolery and as lazy as they're made but now he became all in a moment a hurricane of wrath with two hard-hitting fists. Sweet was the prospect of a little real excitement and the other six stood back and allowed the pair to mix it without let or hindrance, the balance of sympathy resting with the younger, lighter man. One of the Carters "snuck" forward and drew "Saw-Ridge's" knife from his bootleg and somebody else took his revolver away for it was suspected that he mightn't play fair. McGrew aimed to draw as much blood as "Saw-Ridge" had drawn from the dogs and he did—mostly from his opponent's nose. It was a memorable scrap. Every moment it seemed as though McGrew couldn't last another five seconds. Yet, bleeding, torn, disheveled, with both eyes blackened, he was at last proclaimed

the victor. They were nearly an hour bringing "Saw-Ridge" to, and the next day he left Dead End for his old claim.

Finding a Hill of Gold

THE story, such as it is, might have ended here for the others had determined finally to quit the place too but Olson, the Swede cook, fell ill of the quinzey and they stayed by him loyally till he should recover. It was during the period of his recuperation that the rather amazing sequel occurred.

The trail to Dawson ran beside Watch-Tower Rock, hugging the cliff for about a hundred yards with the river, swollen and rapid at this season, foaming and dashing along its turbulent course to the sea, on the other side. At one point where the trail skirted the base of the hill there was a margin of a few feet between a safe foothold and certain drowning.

The seven owned two piebald pintos and took turns using them. Late one afternoon old man Bellamy and young McGrew were returning from an expedition downstream, tired, hungry and dispirited—even the buoyant youngster knew days of discouragement now—when McGrew's horse began suddenly to walk lame.

"She's picked up a stone," he said and dismounted. The old man reined in also. They had entered upon the hundred-yard shelf-like section of the trail lying between Watch-Tower Rock and the river and had stopped within a few yards of the great rock itself.

McGrew's foot had just touched the stirrup again and the elder man was gathering up his reins when a dull, heavy report, almost like cannon, startled them. It seemed to come from the clouds directly above them but the day had been clear and fine and they knew this to be impossible. Looking up they saw a puff of smoke and the next instant rolling downhill a great boulder. The air was filled with dark dust and showers of dirt and stones and so that the earth about them seemed to tremble so that the two men were convinced that nothing less than a quake was taking place of a glacier bounded along the jagged fissure of a glacier track and with a thundering crack like close thunder struck the trail not four feet away and leaped into the water. The watchers were sprinkled very thoroughly from head to feet and covered with dirt.

When they looked upward again they saw that the giant head of the Watch-Tower was gone!

Then it was that the old man seized McGrew's arm and whispered the name "Saw-Ridge."

"A neat shave for us, young feller," he observed with his mild, cackling laugh, "but it was you he was out t' git! Draw in close to the brush an' keep an eye south," he directed.

A few minutes later they saw the long, ungainly figure of their late camp companion mounted on a yellow cayuse riding southeast.

McGrew never was able to tell what it was made him dismount and climb the rock, then and there. The departure of the head lowered it by a number of feet and had the effect of making the ascent seem very easy, and perhaps that was the reason. Or it may have been that he was curious to see just how this deft bit of blasting had been accomplished.

When the patient Bellamy heard his wild hallooing, he could only conclude that the finer air of that altitude had gone to his head. The old man was a trifle deaf, but he made out at last what the boy was trying to tell him.

"The paystreak! The paystreak! Gold! Gold! Gold!" shouted, shrieked and screamed McGrew.

Bellamy galloped at top speed for the camp, and before the sun had set the seven were at the spot, where luck had disclosed myriad veins of quartz, dull yellow intermingled with rock and dirt, glorious color their eyes had so long sought in vain. Where the giant head had rested every man's dream came true.

How they had climbed, those men! There

was the half-sick Olson, the rheumatic Bellamy, the rotund, overweight "Slim," but they, with the others, groped, stumbled, bruised shins, tore hands and faces, cursed good-humoredly, slipped back a dozen feet, pushed on and up again, and so arrived at the top.

Old man Bellamy, hoariest campaigner of the lot, fell on his knees, the tears raining down his face, and clawed and tore at the earth till his fingers bled.

"Gold—gold—gold—gold—gold—" he babbled in childish ecstasy.

Crawling about, clutching, scraping, shouting, they were like seven men gone suddenly mad.

Of "Saw-Ridge," whose craving for revenge had uncovered this mine, no one thought until very much later. The long twilight was descending, but the air was still translucent, and the far-flung territory, spreading away on every hand into remote blue distances, held much of the light of day. McGrew stood up at last and pointed.

They gazed long, and after a time discerned a tiny speck distant on the dun plain to the south. It moved. They judged that it was traveling at a fair rate of speed. No need to ask what it was. Truly had it been said, "The wicked flee when no man pursues."

When a Cougar is Riled

OUT of Dawson they'll show you the spot where the cameraman of a movie company was attacked by cougars. This would seem to refute the notion generally entertained that this animal won't attack humans, providing you can believe it.

"Maybe the cats thought the camera was some sort of new-fangled machine-gun," said the grave old soundhound who related this yarn. "They weren't hungry so much as they were riled, but they sure did maul that poor crank-turner!"

The company had been working all day, and just before dusk came down they knocked off. The cameraman was removing the tripod from the ledge of rock overlooking the scene when two cougars sprang at him from the brush—



Golf Tee on "Stilts" the Latest

THE slotted-club controversy is mild compared to the storm of argument raised in British Major H. L. D. Gillies during the recent Oxford-Cambridge tournament at Rye; an adjustable tee. The apparatus consists of a bit of rubber tubing about six inches long, stretched over a stick of equal length. By using the open end of the tube to hold the ball and pulling it up or down on the stick the tee can be adjusted in height according to the force and direction of the wind.

Lower photo shows two of the tees, adjusted at different heights for comparison, and one of them in use.

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"Nope, they didn't kill him," the old timer hastened to explain, "they only tore him up till he looked like the pattern of a rag-carpet, an' one of his ears was chewed up some an' he bled a lot an' got some gangrene, too, an' the picture was cancelled, an' I guess maybe forever after that company went round telling its friends there were worse terrors up here than Old Man Zero!"

Specimens of the taxidermist's art are about the worst you may encounter, however. Nearly every house and shack boasts a cougar-skin complete with head, but the hunting down and capture of the brute is another story. Cougar hunting has a technique all its own.

The Yukon cougar or mountain lion is a terrible and beautiful creature measuring sometimes nine feet from nose to tail-tip and a rich tawny in color. You're not in the least likely ever to meet him face to face—except at a zoo—because his specialty is rear attacks. When the silvery streaks of the Northern Lights begin to lengthen, then it is that he slips out of the violet shadows of the hills in search of his supper. Loping along the shoulder of a rocky butte and down into the hollow of a valley and along the dried bed of a mountain stream, he trails the elusive deer. The cougar is powerfully-framed, lithe-limbed, swift and vicious, and his great muscles combine strength with amazing lightness. He crawls along through the close-matted wild grass till near enough to a grazing herd, and then he crouches for the death-spring.

An Awesome Hunger Cry

HE has selected, perhaps, a female deer and her fawn. But very likely a wild old bull moose sentinelled on a little rise, erect and watchful, spies the great cat's involuntary waving tail and gives the alarm. Then away gallops the herd, and the cougar must seek his supper elsewhere.

Next he makes for a water-hole, where the caribou go to drink, and waits there, tense and watchful. He prefers deer meat, but caribou is his second choice. Deer keep away from thickets when danger may lurk, but caribou are less cautious, or, rather, believe in keeping close to cover. Though the cougar still hunts with the best results, he sometimes gives himself away with his awesome hunger cry which sets the forest folks scampering in all directions.

Perhaps he finds the kill of some other animal, but when he has driven the snarling wolf away there's nothing but picked bones. He remains hungry in his lair so long as the sun shines, but when the valley has become a mysterious sea filled with shifting purple twilight he sallies forth, often accompanied by the missus and the kids. The family stalk a herd grazing near a fir thicket. Fully thirty feet the cougar may leap, landing on its victim with left fore-paw gripping the nose, the right with its raking claws sinking deep into the deer's shoulder, and his terrible howl searching for the jugular vein.

For himself the cougar selects the heart, lungs and a few other choice tid-bits, leaving the rest of the carcass for his family. But the female cougar often brings down a deer on her own account, and after a vast gorge they all retire for a three days' sleep.

Attacking a bear is something else again. A seasoned sportsman in the party told of a cougar vs. bear scrap he witnessed when hunting last year. He was lying on a shoulder of rock that commanded the valley where a family of cougar were feasting on caribou.

The scene of approaching bears set them all crouching in the grass, and after a moment, out of the bush lumbered a huge brown she-bear with one cub. From muzzle to bob-tail she was fully seven feet, an animal well equipped to take her own part. She and the cub advanced eagerly toward the redoubt caribou.

Battle of Cougar and Bear

THE male cougar waited till she had come close enough, and then he sprang straight for her shoulders. At the same instant the young male cougar tackled the cub. With a yell of rage the bear tore herself free and turned on the animal that was mauling her baby, but he was a chip of the old block. He leaped, spoiling her rush, and tore a jagged strip from her neck. She then went for the cougars and bowled her over neatly. The row continued for some minutes, and then a great he-bear came plunging out of the bush. He was a superb brute, cinnamon-brown, fat and muscular, and looking like five hundred pounds of bad reputation. Things looked pretty dark for the cougar family.

Head-on the bear and cougar met, but one powerful swat from the former sent the big cat spinning. He picked himself up and charged again; with neither cry nor growl, but only an angry hissing, he lashed out with furious, fraying claws. The female bear and the cougars had been mixing it meanwhile, and the former, dying, made one last splendid effort and ripped open the yellow flank of her enemy, then rolled over beside her cub. The wounded cougars, still filled with battle lust, turned with flashing eyes and bared teeth to the aid of her mate. Twice he had been repulsed by the massive fore-paws of the cinnamon bear, but at the third spring he stuck, plowing deep into the thick neck with teeth and claws.

Howling with pain, the bear reared himself and danced about, trying to shake off the cougar. In the end he did, but not before he had received a rake of the ugly claws that set the blood streaming over his eyes from half-a-dozen gashes.

The cougar, his long body doubled back on its haunches, his nose wrinkled in a savage snarl that bared his horrible fangs, crouched for another spring. His mate crouched by his side with the same deadly intent. From the formidable pair came low-throated, rumbling growls. But the bear didn't wait for that double-barreled attack. He had had more than a sufficiency. Half-blinded, nostrils blowing and snorting prodigiously, he wheeled, and with a final hoarse grunt broke into a clumsy gallop across the valley.

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Hunter Bags Rare Moose

S. W. O'LEARY, prominent big game hunter, of Philadelphia, is shown in the above photo with the rare black moose he killed while on a hunting expedition north of Tracy, New Brunswick. This specimen weighs a thousand pounds; it's hide is especially valuable, as black moose are rarely seen.