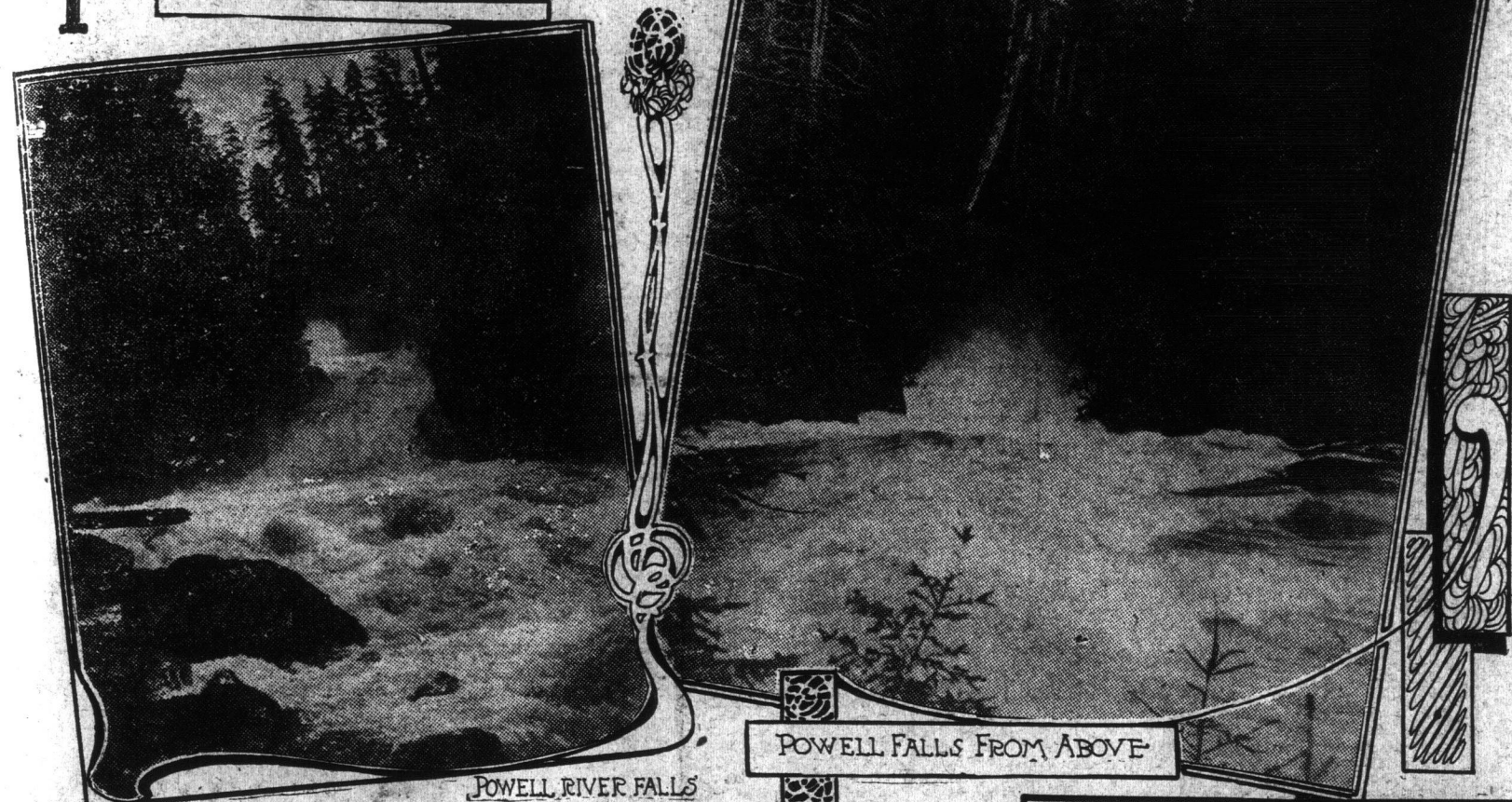


HALF A DAY'S SPORT ON POWELL LAKE



POWELL FALLS FROM ABOVE

(By Richard L. Pocock.)

JUST opposite the Northern end of Texada island, in the gulf of Georgia, Powell river enters the sea, the outlet of a lake of about thirty miles in length, which, by a caprice of Nature, has just missed being one of the numerous arms of the sea which cut into the coast line of this province.

From the sea to the lake is a bare half-mile, while, in the last few hundred yards of its short course, the river falls some hundred and twenty feet, thus forming a barrier to any fish and effectively preventing their run from salt to fresh water and vice versa.

Some years ago it fell to my lot to make an exploration of this lake which, save to a few prospectors and timber cruisers, was known to very few white men, and the greater part of which was represented on the official map of the province by a dotted line signifying that it was unsurveyed and its limits undefined.

I was not out on a hunting trip, but was there for business purposes, but accompanied as usual by the weapons of the chase, so that when I did get a chance to use them, it was an even greater satisfaction to find what excellent sport was to be had in a short time.

Landing on the beach from the old S.S. Comox, the good friend of many an old-timer on the coast (and I believe still doing excellent service,) we were forced to stay a day or so to get a canoe, which we purchased from the Indian village of Sliammon and packed on our shoulders above the falls and the log-jamb to the lower end of the lake. In the river and the lake were, and doubtless still are, countless fine trout, easy to capture and delicate of flavor, and we took full advantage of this fact.

As I said, we were not on a hunting expedition and had little time to spare, but the account of one afternoon's hunt in the country of the lower half of the lake will suffice to give some idea of the wealth of game that was to be had for the trouble of hunting it.

It was the first day on the lake; an early start had been made in calm weather, but, as the sun climbed the heavens, the wind freshened, until by a little before noon we were shipping small seas in our heavily loaded dug-out, and were glad enough to turn into a little bay for shelter, and make camp until the wind should moderate sufficiently for us to proceed on our voyage of exploration up the lake.

After the pork and beans, I seized the opportunity for a little hunting, and taking a rifle, left the camp at about one o'clock, thinking there might be an off chance of bagging a deer. The going was rather bad for a while, as there had been a fire through the country which had caused a tangle of small fallen timber and a thick second growth of scrub which was rather trying to the patience. Getting to the altitude which took me out of this into a steep rocky country occupied quite a large slice of the afternoon, but, once events began to happen, they happened rather rapidly. The first game I saw was a fine fat blue grouse sitting on a rock regarding me with a mixture of indifference and curiosity.

Being somewhat out of breath after the climb, I took my time before pulling the trigger of the rifle and scored a bull's-eye on his neck at a range of about ten yards. After bestowing him in my pocket, I proceeded on my way, to see a small army of his relatives also regarding me with the same expression of mingled indifference and mild curiosity, but I contented myself with returning the compliment and refrained from further rifle practice on this kind of target, as I wanted to get some vision and had not yet got rid of my old fallacy of thinking that the noise of the rifle would spoil my chances. I wandered round the hill a bit without seeing anything except some

more blue grouse, and had just made up my mind to shoot the head off the next grouse that gave me an easy chance and go back to the camp content, when I heard a slight noise below me, and looking down, saw a big buck leisurely climbing a game trail and coming straight for me. Almost as I spotted him, he must have spotted me, as he stopped and looked up to where I was standing, and as he did so, received a bullet from the Winchester full in the chest, which reached his heart, and with one last leap into the air he was my meat.

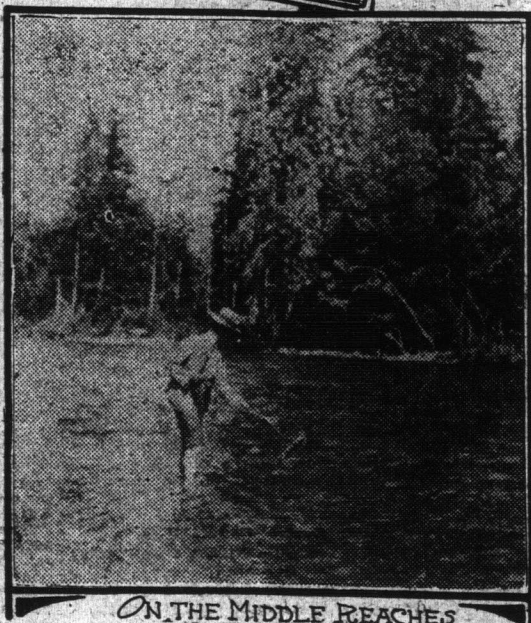
This sounds like a good climax, but the Powell lake country had to go one better than that. As I reached the deer and was about to gralloch him, my attention was once more attracted by a rattle of stones, and as I looked up, I perceived a mountain goat doing his best to put distance between himself and myself in a short space of time. He was just about to disappear over the top of a ridge when I got a snap shot at him with the Winchester; with but little hope in my mind of having hit him, I hurried to the ridge on the chance of getting a second shot, when, much to my astonishment and no less to my satisfaction, I found him stone dead in a little hollow within a few yards of where he had disappeared from view.

Not such a bad bag for one afternoon—a grouse, a deer, and a mountain goat—left camp at one o'clock and was back at five with the skins and heads; and no fluke either, as I have proved by subsequent visits to the same country.

I think the trip round Powell lake was one of the most fascinating that I have ever undertaken on this coast and I have made a good many. The country is unique in the variety it affords. At the low end of the lake the slopes are gentle and the hills not very high. Paddling along the shore I have seen deer so tame that they have even lain down while I was watching them from the canoe, and calmly chewed the cud as they watched me paddle by within a distance of fifty yards. The blue grouse there were plentiful and the country an easy one to shoot them in; as you proceed up the lake the hills that skirt its shores become higher and larger, until you reach the large island in the middle, itself a curious freak of Nature, being formed of a mountain which I have seen snow-capped in June and surrounded on all sides by deep water. Even on this island the goats are to be found and are common on all the mountains of the mainland which surround the lake. Half way up the lake are some good specimens of the curious paintings of an older generation of Indians, high up on the flat surface of a rocky bluff.

The upper half of the lake is entirely different in the character of the country from the lower, as you turn a corner you seem to take a plunge into the heart of the mighty mountains of the coast range, their sides coming sheer down in solid walls of rock to the water's edge, with scarce a landing place for even a canoe, and towering for hundreds of feet before they split into peaks enclosing fields of ice and snow, truly an awesome country for many miles before you reach the head and gaze in admiration and astonishment at a wonderful cascade tumbling for more than one thousand feet down a sheer precipice into a green and flat stretch of land, until after one more sudden fall of sixty feet or so its waters are lost in the mighty lake.

The almost level valley at the lake's head comes as a welcome relief after the sheer walls of rock, a relief to mind and eye as well. Here are beaver still, black bear are numerous, and marten fairly so. In the lake are luscious trout; but the solitude is vast and oppressive and it was with a sense of relief that we left behind the dizzy walls of rock which seemed to hold us as in a vast prison and returned to the lower half of the lake with its green hillsides and less awesome scenery.



ON THE MIDDLE REACHES

LOCAL NOTES

Mongolian Pheasants

It will be of interest to sportsmen to learn that a syndicate of British Columbia sportsmen have made arrangements to import a shipment of Mongolian pheasants, with the intention of ultimately turning them out on the Island and the mainland.

These pheasants are a larger and more handsome variety than the common Chinese ring-necked pheasant which we now have. They have been introduced into some English coverts during recent years, and have given great satisfaction, being said to give even better sport than the varieties already in the country, and to be less addicted to running, which is of course a very important point in their favor.

There are only a limited number in the market; it was found impossible to get any from China, as the dealers had all the birds they could deliver booked in advance, and the price of the European breeder who has almost a monopoly of them in the Old World was prohibitive. Lord Ernest Hamilton, who is interested in this Province, has consented to supply forty birds at a low price from his own stock, and has taken upon himself to see that they are properly started on their journey to their new homes. Half will go to mainland farms and half to island farms, where they will be kept in pens, the plan being to keep them in confinement until they have multiplied considerably, which it is confidently anticipated they will do. They are a very hardy bird and used to harder winter weather than they are ever likely to get here; they are also a very fertile variety.

The enterprise that is responsible for the importation of these birds deserves a successful issue, and the experiment will be watched with great interest by all true sports lovers.

Motor-Boat Poaching

In the issue of the Colonist of July 10th, I published a letter from Mr. H. McDonald, of Nanaimo, calling attention to a shameful account of shooting British Columbia game out of season by a party of Americans in a motor-boat, and I remarked that there is good reason for believing that the same sort of thing is still going on. As I remarked, in commenting on the letter, that a good many sportsmen were asking how long the authorities were going to keep their eyes shut to this sort of thing, I ought, perhaps, to say that I was unaware at the time of writing that the matter had been reported on by the game warden of the province, and that he had done all in his power to catch the offenders and bring them to justice. No reflection was intended on the zealousness or vigilance of the existing staff of wardens, the only trouble is that at present their numbers are totally inadequate to cover the whole ground, and it is obviously ridiculous to expect a man to patrol the coast and chase poachers in a row-boat.

The point that it was intended to emphasize was just this fact, and the suggestion in Mr. McDonald's letter seems the only reasonable one to cope with the question, viz., "that the Government should equip and operate a fast boat from a central point to run down a few of these marauders and bring them to account."

I have heard on undoubted authority that the same thing is going on right now, and I hope to hear soon that the Government have deemed the matter of sufficient importance to make them accede to the request for a good motor boat for the use of the game warden. The recent convictions obtained for the offences against the game laws are evidence that the authorities are on the alert, but as I pointed out in last week's page Government cannot give adequate protection to the game of such a big country without relying largely on the co-operation of all good sportsmen.

Campbell River Salmon.

The salmon fishing at Campbell river is reported to be better this year than it has been for some years past, and the presumption is that it is due to the successful representations made to induce the authorities to prohibit the use of seines at the mouth a couple of years ago. This is a matter for congratulation, as the fame of this river for big salmon has spread far and wide, and sportsmen travel long distances to attempt to beat the record made by Sir Richard Musgrave. At least one salmon of seventy pounds has been killed there this season, with rod and line, and several of over fifty pounds.

Cowichan Bay.

Salmon trolling is good at Cowichan Bay now. It is getting late for trout there, and there are very few except little ones about. The big ones are up the river spawning, the few large trout landed at the bay lately being full of roe.

The Hungry Farmer.

It is a poor advertisement for the farming industry of the Island when a farmer living a short walk of the E. & N. line finds it necessary to shoot a brace of pheasants before breakfast in August for the sake of getting fresh meat. Said farmer must be making a poor living out of his land if this excuse is a genuine one.

Convictions Under the Game Act

Shooting grouse out of season seems to have become an expensive form of recreation in the New Westminster district, at any rate. The reports in the daily press of the recent convictions should help to deter offenders. One man has been fined \$100 and costs, and another \$50 and costs after being in jail for four days. The game warden of that district seems determined to make the way of the transgressor as hard as possible, and, doubtless, his activity in the discharge of his duties will have a salutary effect in other districts also, where the wardens are apt to get busy at any time to try and emulate his example.

THE FESTIVAL OF "ST. GROUSE"

"The Twelfth" is one of the great time marks in the lives of the leisured classes of England and their guests. Ever since the Christmas holidays came to a close in the old country houses, folks have been flocking to London for "the season," and the past season has been the gayest that London has ever seen. The houses of Parliament have been in constant session ever since February, and this necessitated the presence in town of the members of the House of Commons. The court, too, has been in residence while at Buckingham Palace, and King Edward and his consort have revived much of the attractive ceremonial and state pageantry that was in vogue before the widowhood of the late Queen Victoria.

To those in London society the months from February to the end of July are arduous and trying; and it is a case of going, almost day and night, if one is to keep pace with one's engagements. Besides one's private entertainments, there are many public functions, such as "The Derby," Ascot, Henley, the Eton and Harrow cricket match at Lords, and a hundred and one other fashionable events, at which one must be seen if one wishes to be considered anybody.

Towards the end of July the whirl begins to slacken; hostesses have lunched and dined and given their garden parties almost en surfeit; and the fervid rays of the July sun begins to warn the legislators of the nation that it is time to cease from their labors for a season, and seek relaxation.

Hence the popular "Feast of St. Grouse," to the coming of which all eyes are now turned.

Nature has provided on the upland moorlands of the north of England and Wales, but more especially on the highland moors of Scotland, the heather—a plant that seems to have been designed solely for the purpose of providing food and cover for the little brown bird, the grouse. And the laws of England, long years ago, elevated the grouse into the list of "game" birds, and decreed, under heavy penalties, that, under no circumstances, should gun be leveled at him until the sun rose on the morning of August 12 in each year.

Now, after the trials and hustle of the London season, it is essential that those who took part therein should seek, if not rest, at least a change from the smoke of the town to the pure and bracing air of the countryside. In the pre-railway days of the regency, when old King George III had sunk into a dotage and the prerogative of the crown was vested in the person of his son the prince regent, afterwards George IV, Brighton-by-the-Sea, Bath, an old inland "cure" station of the Romans, and Leamington Spa in Shakespeare's country, were the chief centres of this relaxation (not to forget Tunbridge Wells) by the pure accident of the fact that the Romans had made military roads to these places, and they were fairly accessible. Then when roads and

railways began to spread all over the land, bringing the grouse moors within easy reach of London, grouse shooting became a fashionable sport, and, hey presto, the "Feast of St. Grouse" a firmly established festival in the realm of society and wealth.

It is a remarkable sight to be present at when the height of the exodus to the north is reached at one of the great London termini, say Euston, the terminus of the London and Northwestern Railway. The movement north begins to be heavy about the third week in July. The day trains, likewise the night trains, are crowded with prospective grouse shooters, their families, their servants, their gamekeepers, and often their dogs—pointers and setters. Tons upon tons of personal luggage are rushed to the station and have to be handled in right smart time by the porters and dust-begrimed porters; whilst from the vast number of gun cases on evidence—often three or four, or even more, the property of one individual—the uninitiated might be pardoned for fancying that the brave defenders of the country were on their way to repel an invader somewhere on the north or west coast.

But this is really only the beginning. Take the last few days. There be those, and always will be those, who leave all to the last moment; there are also others whom affairs of state or vast business interests have detained in town much against their wills. The crowd is beyond comprehension; the railway men, however, are equal to the occasion. The 10 a. m. train for Perth, for instance, right in the heart of the grouse country, is filled and sent on its way; then a second, a third, a fourth, and a fifth if required, is backed up to the platform, filled and sent off at intervals of a quarter of an hour, until the vast assemblage has melted, as it were, into the summer atmosphere.

Next morning the daily papers will gravely state that "London is empty"; but to the mere man in the street, there does not appear to be any appreciable diminution in the ordinary traffic. Go, however, to Mayfair, or visit Belgrave, where are the town seats of the high and mighty, and one will soon find that this is literally true of the West End of the town. Doors that erstwhile yawned a hearty welcome and promised hospitable treatment inside are now fast shut and barred; windows are closed in with heavy blinds, and an odd peep into interiors here and there reveals the fact that the furniture fittings are all swathed up in winding sheets of canvas to sleep the sleep of oblivion until society shall return to its own again next February, when the king and queen go forth in state to reopen the business of the country at the houses of Parliament.—The Argonaut.

TAKING CARE OF GAME

There is one feature of the outing of sportsmen that is seldom touched upon in the literature of the field and stream, but which is becoming very important, and should have attention. This is getting the game home, where it can be made useful, and a source of delight to the hunter and his friends. This branch of the outing business is becoming more and more important, as the sportsman is yearly being compelled to go further and further from home to find the game.

With a little care and labor, at the right time, game can be taken long distances and be in perfect condition when the hunter has arrived home and sits down at his own table to a game dinner, with a few good old friends, who have been denied the pleasure of the outing, but who enjoy a double pleasure in eating the game, and hearing the doctory sportsman tell of his delightful experiences in the faraway fields, where he alone had the pleasure of finding and bringing the game to bag.

The grouse and prairie chicken of the Western plains and sandhills are generally killed in the fall months, and when the weather is warm, and to keep them and get them home in fine condition is quite a task, and the result quite uncertain, unless the proper care and labor are bestowed at the right time.

The first step is to pull your grouse as soon as you can get to it. If pulled as soon as shot and given a good shake, all of the blood will have left it; then as soon as you get to the house, hang it up by the head. If you throw your grouse into the wagon and depend upon drawing it at night when you get to the house or camp, the game has become thoroughly cool and will not bleed when drawn, and if the weather is hot, you need not try to take it home, it will not be good. Allowing the bird to cool with the entrails in it detracts very much from its quality when you come to eat it, no matter how soon afterward. This is especially true of the sandhill grouse, which gets no grain to eat, but lives upon the weed seed, and bugs, grasshoppers, etc., that they pick up.

When ready to pack for the home trip, do your packing in the early morning. Wrap each grouse in newspaper, and pack not less than twenty-five grouse in a telescope or grip which can be roped tightly.—Forest and Stream.

SLIPPERY, BUT HARD TO SWALLOW

According to Mr. Vandersnickt, eels always go tail first when endeavoring to pass through any small opening or to escape through the meshes of a net. Not long ago the water in a pond was found to have risen about 20 inches above its usual level. An inspection of the grating at the overfall—which was about 30 inches square and consisted of a series of iron cross-bars and about one-third of an inch apart—revealed the fact that it was almost completely blocked by the heads of a number of small eels which, in endeavoring to pass through tail first, had stuck fast and had been drowned. In order to clear the grating, it was necessary to cut off the heads of the eels and draw their bodies out one by one.—Sports Afraid.