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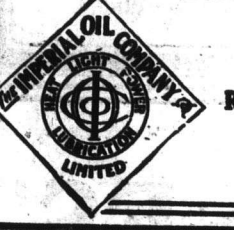
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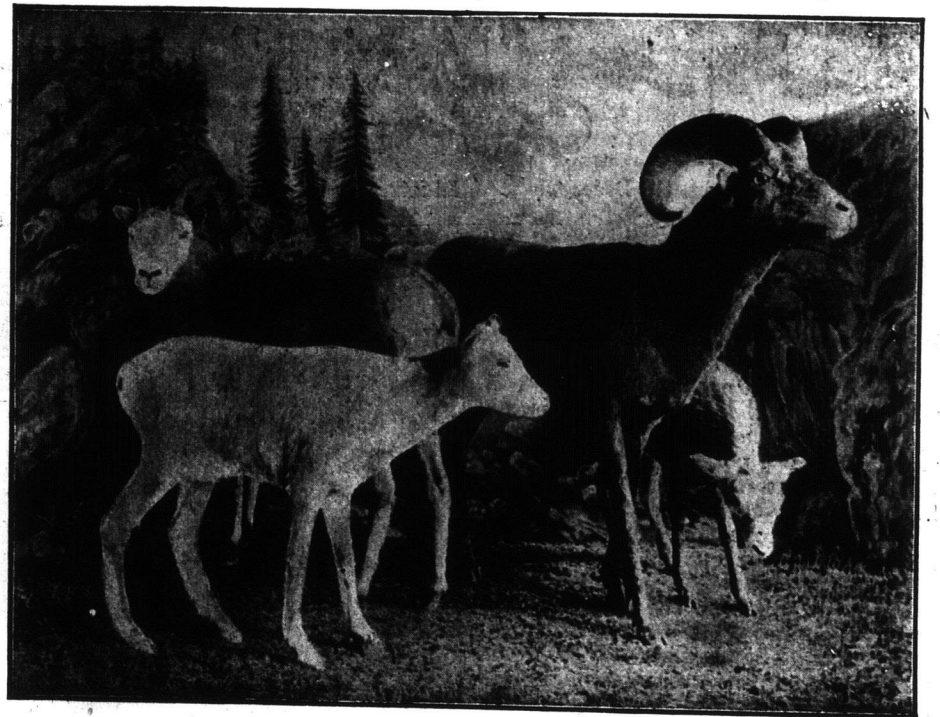
We slept that night below the grasses of the upper slopes and early next morning crossed these high meadowlike plateaus and stood at last upon the outgrown rock shoulders of the range. Above us the snow-covered, debris-littered rocks, glared in the bright sunshine. Armed with my big focal plane and field glasses I started. Even as early as this there were steady falls of snow on the upper heights as I was soon on fresh untrodden virgin fields. Glum—a really expressive cognomen—remained below. He stolidly refused to believe I could get the active bighorn "with my little black box." He resented, as absolute folly, our going into the woods without a perfect arsenal of weapons. He had his rifle for protection if needs be. (No animal has ever molested me in thirty years of continent wide field work).

About a projecting cliff I found the first signs of the bighorn. Here had passed a band of about six. From memory of tracks of the bighorn I would think they were all ewes and lambs. No trails but theirs impressed the snow, so evidently the wolves were on the lower brush clad heights. Once a slow dragging trail of a wolverine told of another enemy to the bighorn having passed—these two with the fox, lynx and golden eagle comprise the enemies of the mountain sheep—all of them together do not kill as many as the greatest enemy of all animals—Man.

From these great heights the view was inspiring, so I set the "black box"

my fears. The leaves of my lens were as wrinkled as the yellow leaves of the scrub beside, so I cached the wreck and climbed back. By two o'clock I stood on the well worn trail of the bighorn on the knifelike crests of the very peaks. Within a mile of the spot I stood, I saw two dark figures—of that very common animal—man. At four o'clock we met. He and his guide had seen the band my erratic camera had startled. We returned to the spot where I had first stood in the morning. Circled about were the tracks of at least two rams. The marks led right up to the spot where my camera box had rested; and I will always believe that ram was in league with Glum and sent my "black box" spinning into the valley.

Mr. Johnson and his guide had killed two fine old rams on the other side of the range, so he sent his man down to tell Glum to cross to their valley and with me dipped down into the lower levels to recover my cache. Twice that night, before we made Johnson's camp, we saw bighorn. He said they were quite plentiful all over the Kootenays, and that the railway authorities can tell all incoming hunters just where to get off. If you want to hunt the bighorn write to the department "Bureau of Provincial Information, Victoria B. C." for latest information—I have to deal with Johnston's guide and Glum. We made our supper, smoked our pipes, lay down for a while and then began to wonder why the guides did not put in an appearance. Ten o'clock came,



Sheep of the Northern Pacific Coast

down on the snow and taking out the glasses searched the scene. Across, on a lower height, where the debris from the precipitous cliffs was not snow covered, I made out several sheep. One big ram, an old one from its well ringed horns, fed on the scanty grasses and weeds. The ewes, together with some half dozen lambs, lay on the more exposed parts, they seemed to face everywhere and were constantly searching the scene. Some of the lambs looked quite white, others had the greyish coat of the ewes, while some were as dark as the big horned ram that cropped the scanty herbage. Suddenly they all stretched their necks, rose to their feet, flicked their short tails and started up that sliding rock slope as if their lives depended upon their speed. Now what had alarmed them?—not I, for I was fully a thousand yards off. What ever is that black thing leaping down the sides of the hill I am on? I tried to get the glass on it. I did. At first I thought it was a wolverine by its tail—but never before have I seen a wolverine that progressed by somersaults only. As this black thing was turning over and over, once I caught sight of its tail. Now it has stopped, right against a big gray rock. Surely I focus it and bring into the object glass. It was my favorite camera—alas! my only camera on this trip.

Discouraged, for a time, I decided to eat my lunch while considering what to do. My cake of chocolate did not take long to munch and I was soon sliding and slipping on my way to the valley. Alas! the first shake confirmed

the supper was still hot, another pipe was smoked—midnight—no sign of the guides. Tired and sleepy we both dozed off on the hemlock boughs and the sun woke us next morning—then our men appeared from two different directions. It turned out that my man had been telling the other guide that I never used a rifle, but that I got deer and sheep (as I had often told him) and carried them home in my "black box." This was too much for the Kootenayan and he refused to track with such a liar and the result was that my man had to trail him all the way to a new and unknown camp.

We saw the two fine rams Johnston had killed (Ovis Canadensis). These sheep are darker than any I have seen to the North-Fannins, or Stone or the Yukon, and Alaska sheep—which is pure white. Roughly speaking I think the colorization is based on the locality, the further north ones white, and those to the south gradually getting darker. What a marked contrast these white, clean limbed, alert, swiftly leaping sheep are to the solemn old Billy Goats some of the hunters follow. We watched a band of some ten rams and ewes and lambs. They had been chased from their last feeding place by the accidental intrusion of a black bear—it does not eat mutton—at least not as swift mutton as this, but its big black body scared the alert sheep and off they bounded. Two of them went back to within a short distance of the bear, then the rest of the band walked past him undisturbed. Once they reached the well trodden trails of the