

# Field Sports at Home and Abroad

## "GRIZZLY PETE" AND OLD "STUB-FOOT"

By Ernest McGaffey

In my brief stay in the little mining camp of Tail-holt, Friskiyou county, California, it was my fortune to make the acquaintance of Peter Walker, guide, prospector, hunter and raconteur. "Grizzly Pete," as he was called, told me several stories of his experiences, after I had won his confidence by a disposition to distribute, as regarded tobacco, and a willingness to imbibe, as regarded certain intoxicants. Mr. Walker's stories, some of them, seemed to me to be a trifle open to criticism, as far as veracity is concerned, so in selecting the tale of his adventure with "old Stub-Foot," I am simply taking what appears to be a very credible narrative, and leaving it to the judgment of possible readers as to their opinion of its literal truthfulness.

Mr. Peter Walker, Mr. Pete Walker, Mr. Walker, Pete Walker, or "Grizzly Pete," as he was better known, stood six feet two and nine-eighths inches in his boots; he seldom wore socks, and never stockings—and possessed a growth of whiskers rarely equaled and never surpassed. He was about 49 years of age, and the iron-grey cast to his hair and beard, the numerous conduits, gullies, furrows, slits, creases, indentations, etc., that had been bestowed upon him by the playful waggeries of Father Time, fully justified his favorite appellation of "Grizzly."

"And so," said "Grizzly Pete" to me one windy day, "and so you'd like to hear about old 'Stub-Foot'?" I acquiesced.

"Got any chewin'?" inquired "Pete."

I silently shunted him a plug of navy. Biting off in the neighborhood of three and one-half inches of this, he said: "Well, I reckon there never was such a bear hunt before nor afterwards. This here feller that went out with me after 'Stub-foot' had heard of this bear there back East, and he'd made up his mind fer to kill him er git killed hisself. His name, the feller's, not the bear's, was De Pyster (rhymes with eyster, don't it?) Reginald De Pyster, and I allow he was dead game, even if he did carry his name in sections like these canoes the fishermen pack over the trails with one feller carryin' the front and t'other the back of it. I forgot to say that his real name was Reginald De Pyster-De Pyster, but I got him to leave half of it when I told him the cook might object to it all when it came to callin' up to meals. He was a reasonable feller, this Reginald De double Pyster, and I liked him."

"Well, sir, he showed up here one afternoon in the Mariposa stage, and he gets off and asks fer me. Some of the boys hunts me up, and we git to talkin' bear right away. And he tells me ef I can git him where he can kill old 'Stub-foot,' and prove beyond any doubt that he was the feller that done it, he will pay me \$2,500 in gold. Yes, sir, he has a bet on with some fellers on East that stands him to win \$5,000 if he gits 'Stub-foot,' and he's willin' to put up half of his prospective winnin's to git the bear."

"So I agrees to be ready to start at noon the next day and he turns in to the little shack they call a hotel, and I come back to my shanty to lay my plans. Now I knowed where to find this here old 'Stub-foot,' and if my man has got a gun that can kill him, and can shoot straight enough, there won't be any trouble about gettin' him. But about provin' that he did it, that was what got me. So I comes down town, and goes to a little dried-up feller that was in camp named Gregg, a lawyer, a most powerful cuted critter he was, and he agreed to furnish ever' thing so's to prove that my man kills old 'Stub-foot,' ef he does kill him, beyond all reasonable doubt, as my lawyer puts it. He says I'll need him, and a shorthand reporter, and one he has in his office, and a picture gallery feller (a photograph man), and me, to do the job. He agreed to take the case on what he called an astringent fee."

"So the next day I takes my outfit over to De Pyster, and I says, 'Here's my lawyer, and here's my shorthand reporter, and here's my photograph feller, and here's three burros to pack the camp outfit and grub. When'll you be ready?' And this here feller he sorts of takes a reel long breath, and he says, 'All these fer a bear hunt?' And I says, 'On the advice of my lawyer.' An' he says, 'You're the doctor, Mr. Walker. I'm here to obey orders.'"

"So we gets out in the mountains and begins to climb. Old 'Stub-foot' he lived up so high in the ranges that the miners there used to put the ore out on the mountains and let the avalanches take it down to the smelters in the valley; no railroad er pack train bein' able to git in to where they wuz; an' they got their provisions and stuff in by way of trained eagles, same as these here carrier pigeons is learned to carry mail."

"So one day we got to where old 'Stub-foot' ranged, and I sort of got his bearings. So De Pyster he practiced a little with his gun one mornin'. It was the most powerful shootin' iron I ever seen, an' he was knockin' off the peaks from along the mountain ranges inside the first few miles till I stopped him from spillin' so much scenery. So he quits that an' begins to plow up a few new canyons with his steel-pinted bullets for a change. It was a master powerful shootin' gun, that there rifle of his wuz. Well, that evening he blots out the front part of a bull elk, as easy as a new blotter would lap up a blot of ink, as my lawyer said, and we planted the carcass out where

old 'Stub-foot' would be sure to see it at day-break."

"There was a few scrubby pines around, and when we got out at daybreak the next day De Pyster had his rifle, this here shorthand man had his note book, the picture man had his machine all fixed, and my lawyer had all sorts of affidavits ready, and a dyin' declaration fer the bear to sign, purvidin' De Pyster didn't blow his head off the first shot. I want to say right here that this here lawyer of mine was certainly the most thoughtful cuss I ever did see."

"Well, sir, we wasn't more'n 15 minutes hid in the pine scrub before here comes old 'Stub-foot' growlin' like a thunderstorm, and he looked like he was perty nigh as big as an elephant. There wuzn't no doubt he was the one, and three of his claws on his left fore-foot was gone, 'count of his gittin' ketchin' in a trap once. So the minute we sees him, the lawyer, the shorthand man and me we climbs trees, the lawyer gittin' the best tree and climbin' higher up than any of us. The picture man of course he had to stay on the ground to git the pictures of the scrimmage, and De Pyster had to be there to do the shootin'. So the picture man, as he was a dead-game proposition as ever I see, he's all ready and peekin' out from his curtain, and he gits one picture as old 'Stub-foot' takes a bite out of the bull elk's carcass. Then this here De Pyster ups an' blazes away, and fer some reason he only wounds old 'Stub-foot,' who immediately drops the elk and comes lopin' over to'rds De Pyster aimin' to finish his breakfast on him. The picture man gits another good picture of 'Stub-foot,' an' then goes up the lawyer's tree, and just then De Pyster shoots again, and drops old 'Stub-foot' with a bullet through the fore-quarters that busts both shoulders and lays the old feller out as helpless as a sick kitten. Then he soaks him with another bullet through the body, and just then my lawyer holler, 'hold on, you've done fer him,' and then we all slides down our trees and the picture feller takes a few more pictures while we looks at the bear."

"Fer a little while we thinks he's stoned-dead, but bime-by he rouses a little, and my lawyer he jerks a paper out of his pocket and a fountain pen, and he says, 'he'll jist be able to sign the dyin' declaration,' he says, and so he sticks the fountain pen in the bear's right paw, my lawyer reads the declaration to him, and with me helpin', old 'Stub-foot' signs this here paper with his mark, and then finally tumbles over, havin' passed in his checks right proper."

"Immejitly De Pyster an' me we skins the bear, the picture man goes back to camp an' develops—that's what he called it—them pictures; my lawyer he writes out the affidavits and fixes up the dyin' declaration all right, and the shorthand man writes out and hammers out on a typewritin' machine a full account of the fight. This dyin' declaration told how this here 'Old Stub-foot,' a monster grizzly bear of Friskiyou county, California, feelin' no hope of recovery, identified De Pyster as the feller that killed him, and so forth. Reglar legal, my lawyer said, an' provin' certain that De Pyster was the cause of old 'Stub-foot's' death. And we all signed it as witnesses to old 'Stub-foot's' mark."

"Well, sir, I got my money and paid my lawyer. And when De Pyster took the stage he had old 'Stub-foot's' pelt, the pictures of the affair, the shorthand man's account of the fight, all our affidavits, and old 'Stub-foot's' dyin' declaration that De Pyster shot him. It was the most convincin' array of evidence ever furnished, so my lawyer said. De Pyster shook hands with me and he sez: 'Mr. Walker, you're simply a genius.' And he sent me from New York this here watch as a remembrance. Cost a dollar an' keeps as good time as a hundred-dollar one. And I'm wearin' one of old 'Stub-foot's' missin' claws on it fer a watch-charm."

"And he passed the time-piece proudly over to me fer closer inspection."

## TROUT FISHING HERESIES

Mr. Stead went this year to his first foot-ball match at the Crystal Palace and has still to see his first horse race, and his naive impressions of such innovations in the autumn of life are interesting because he has brought the maturer vision of sixty years to spectacles commonly enjoyed in youth. His standpoint appealed to myself as, at Easter, I waded amid the babble of the Usk, cast my incompetent fly under the bank and caught withies and uttered strange profanities always in other tongues, though there was none to hear me. It was, in fact, since I do not seriously reckon the easily beguiled trout of Canadian lakes and rivers, practically my first introduction to trout fishing, and it proved a good deal more disastrous to me than to the trout. I did it, it is true, kill seventeen of indifferent size one morning, and seven or eight on another, but no two of them could honestly be described as a brace, in the sense of the word as used in angling reports. I doubt, indeed, whether the whole two dozen of them would have made two brace of sizeable fish, and the absence of goodly trout from my reel, and the conviction that each and all must be returned alive to the water, must be read as the measure of my skill.

I hope to improve. I fancy that, unlike riding and one or two other accomplishments, a modest degree of proficiency with the fly rod may, with the infinite patience that I am prepared, on terms, to devote to it, be acquired even after the fortieth milestone lies behind. But I find my views on the canons of the sport,

as laid down in particular by Stewart, not wholly without interest, since I do not, as I might have thirty years ago, take every maxim for granted, but challenge it audaciously in the light of my own trifling experience. As thus, Stewart says, about half a dozen times, that the moment at which the trout takes the fly is that at which it alights on the water. If this were the case, I should never even have hooked my twenty-five, for, properly speaking, my fly never alights on the water at all: it bumps into it. Moreover, I hooked at least half a dozen after the flies had come well round and had been under water probably twenty seconds, and one of them, a fish of over a quarter of a pound, actually seized the fly and made the reel squeal as I was in the act of walking to the bank with (I blush to confess it!) my rod over my shoulder.

Again, Mr. Stewart says that all fishing should be upstream only, mainly, so far as I am able to appreciate his meaning, because the fish lie with their heads upstream, and are thereby less likely to be alarmed by the apparition of the angler wading in that direction, and also no doubt because, from the position of their mouths, it must be somewhat easier to hook them from behind. But are trout, at any rate in a swift and noisy river like the Usk (which was unusually low at Easter), quite so susceptible of disturbance as the masters would have us believe? I vow that, more than once, as I waded down the beautiful Ty Maur water from the big stone at the top end to the boundary of the wood on the left bank, trout rose right in front of my brogues, and since I cannot, in the teeth of such a wind as blew all those days, get my flies more than a few feet beyond that ample footgear, I must have hooked several just before treading on them.

Two months later I was on the Usk again, this time for the evening fishing, and I actually caught six or seven brace of passable trout in the hotel water at Abergavenny. The great feature of those July evenings seemed to be the "evening rise," and my own impression of it was a bad quart d'heure, during which the trout fed in the most abandoned fashion, on some insect that it was too dark to identify, but would have nothing out of the fly-book. To the deuce with the evening rise! Those crowded moments in which the fish were gulping all around in the half light were the only interlude during which I never had a touch.

With yet less hope of success I fished this summer also on such dry-fly waters as the Otter and the Axe, both of them as low as consols. Yet, on the Otter at any rate, I had the supreme satisfaction of seeing my friend G.P. creel a score of beautiful fish by disregarding every single rule laid down by masters of the floating fly. Did he grease his line? Not an inch of it. Did he continually oil his fly? About once every two hours. Did he crouch in the water—nervous, like a tiger stalking a heifer? No; but stood upright on the bank in the full glare of the sun, smoking, talking, laughing, and pulling out fish after fish only a yard or two above him. To see a clever fisherman thus setting at naught all the injunctions I had bound as frontlets between mine eyes brought rare solace for my own failure.

Of attaining to proficiency with the floating fly I am anything but hopeful, if, indeed, I have the desire. It is pretty work, no doubt, creeping behind a particular fish and dropping the fly just over its nose. Yet there is more beauty in the music of the wild water in which the downstream angler gathers his harvest than in the placid, silent glides—"lakes," they call them in Devon—where alone the floating fly can do its deadly work.

All this is very foolish, no doubt. I stand, quite frankly, as an idiot so far as fly fishing is concerned, though I shall soon yield to none in admiration of its curious charm. Yet these confessions of inability to see eye to eye with the experts have seemed to me worth while, even if the editor consign them unreluctingly to that bourne from which no manuscripts return.—F. G. A.

## TIGER SHOOTING IN THE BERARS

I was camped on the north bank of the Pengmunga, in the Berars, in a beautiful large mango "tope," or grove. It was the hot weather, and the time was drawing on for a return to headquarters and to civilization. I had been away in the jungles for nearly six months, and was getting rather tired of my own company, so it may well be understood how pleased I was, on riding back to my tents one morning after finishing my work, to see another small camp pitched a little distance away from my own. I inquired whose it was, and was informed that Capt. L. from Hingoli had come out to try and get some sport. I at once made my way over to his tent and introduced myself. We speedily made friends and L. came over to breakfast with me. Pimri, the name of the village where we were camped, was in black soil country, a paradise for black buck, the Indian antelope. The plain country, however, was only a strip some four to five miles wide along the course of the Pengmunga River; beyond this was hilly country, clothed with heavy forest, principally teak. L. told me he had come out on ten days' leave to see what he could pick up. He had not come without a certain amount of foreknowledge, for his shikari, Karim, was acquainted with the district and had promised him good sport. I was in a position to corroborate Karim's testimony; there were many black buck in the open, while in the hills there were bears, sambhur, chinkara, etc., and tigers had been making their presence felt among the surrounding villages;

I had a fair amount of sport myself, but so far had not come across any tigers during my stay. We very soon called Karim and my own shikara into our conference, and finally decided to tie up half a dozen helas (i.e. buffalo calves) in various likely spots.

A couple of days passed uneventfully. L. shot several black buck, while I was engaged in my ordinary duties; but early on the morning of the third day news was brought in of a kill about four miles distant from our camp. I at once postponed my morning's work, and L. and I were very soon off to the scene of operations. The kill had been perpetrated in a wide sandy nullah running up from the Pengmunga, some hundred yards or so across at the actual spot. There were numerous tamarisk bushes in the bed of the nullah, and the sides were crowned and flanked by low brush jungle, "palas" (Butea frondosa) trees, and the like; but there were no trees of sufficient size to afford a seat for either of us, so we decided to take up our positions on the ground on the bank of the nullah, while the beaters were to make a round of about half a mile and come down towards us and the main river. L. got choice of position, and took the one furthest from the river. Just above where the kill had taken place the nullah forked in two directions, and the trackers had located the branch up which the tiger had retreated after his meal and drink. L. was posted on the side of this branch some 150 yards up, while I took up my position just below the fork. The beat began, and in a short time I heard L. fire two shots, evidently right and left, and then presently I was aware of him sprinting down the course of the nullah, hatless and gunless, in my direction, with the tiger in full chase after him.

It was a most extraordinary sight. The tiger was dragging itself along on its hindquarters, not more than six or eight yards behind the flying man, and every now and then making yearning but futile attempts to strike him with one of its front paws. At first I could do nothing, for L. was directly between me and the angry beast, and I was unable to fire for fear of hitting my friend. As they passed the fork, however, the chase opened out, as it were, and I got a chance of a broadside shot, of which I took advantage, and was fortunate enough to make a good one, hitting the tiger behind the shoulder and rolling it over, much to L.'s relief. He told me the beast came out to him, but saw him immediately it had cleared the tamarisk bushes in which it had been lying up, and he had to take his shot at once. Being up on the bank he was above the tiger, and fired at its head, which he missed. The shot, however, took effect in the hindquarters, and broke the brute's spine, thus, fortunately for L., paralyzing it to a partial extent. L.'s second shot missed, and when he turned for his spare gun he found his man had fled, taking the weapon with him. Seeing L., the tiger made for him, and he had to take to his heels, which he did, running in my direction, with the result described. L. was fairly blown, very hot, and very angry, but not in any way hurt, though I would not have given much for his chance of life if the tiger had been able to reach him. The animal was a very fine one, and measured, between the pegs, 9ft. 2in. When I went back to Hingoli at the expiration of his leave, Karim remained with me, and stayed for several seasons. He was the best shikari I ever had, or ever heard of. He was absolutely fearless; at least so far as tigers were concerned, and he was a marvelous tracker. His modus operandi in country like that I have been describing was to follow the pugs from a kill, track the tiger down to its resting place and make sure by ringing that it had not gone further afield, and then, placing scouts on trees in the neighborhood to watch, he would bring in the "khubber" (news), and one was pretty sure to get a shot at any rate.—D. F. O.

## IN YE OLDEN DAYS

It is not known with any certainty at what period in the history of shooting the custom of killing game in the air instead of upon the ground came to be recognized as the only sporting method. Gilbert White, in his "History of Selbourne," speaks of "shooting flying" as having been common for some time prior to the publication of his work, the latter having appeared first of all in the year 1878, but other authorities declare that until quite the latter part of the eighteenth century it was still quite a common practice to "shoot sitting," and that without the risk of being considered a poacher.

There can be no doubt, however, that from the earliest times some attempt must have been made by the more adventurous followers of the sport to try and kill their birds on the wing; and it is equally certain that this was a feat of very great difficulty until the precision of sporting firearms came to be greatly improved about the middle of the eighteenth century. Even at that time good shots were so rare that they could be numbered in any country almost on the fingers of one hand. Thus we are assured by the historian that at the period mentioned, the whole of Norfolk—always one of the leading counties in all matters relating to game shooting—could produce but two men who could really claim to be respectable shots, and in view of the cumbersome character of the weapons they were compelled to use, it is probable that even these two noteworthy gentlemen did not manage to kill more than one bird in every half-dozen that they fired at. But even that would be very good work all things considered, in those early days of the art of shooting flying.



## Sportsman's Calendar

### SEPTEMBER

Trout-fishing at its best this month. Bass in certain lakes. Spring Salmon and Cohoes all over the Coast. September 1st, shooting season opens on the Mainland for grouse, duck, snipe and deer. September 15th, shooting season opens on Vancouver Island for grouse, duck, snipe and deer, except for grouse in North and South Saanich Municipalities. Wild Pigeons plentiful and in season in many localities.

As showing how little faith was placed by the general shooting public in the newer style of shooting—it may be remarked that in an old book on sport, which first appeared about the year 1770, the following passage occurs in relation to partridges: "There are several methods of taking them, as is well known—that by which they are taken in a net, with a setting dog, being the most pleasant, as well as the most secure. The dog, as everybody knows, is trained to this exercise by a long course of education. By blows and caresses he is taught to lie down at the word of command. A partridge is shown him, and he is then ordered to lie down. He is brought into the field, and when the sportsman perceives where the covey lies, he orders his dog to crouch. At length the dog, from habit, crouches whenever he approaches a covey, and this is the signal which the sportsman receives for unfolding and covering the birds with his net."

It will be observed from these remarks that less than 150 years ago the main object of the "sportsman's" endeavors was to secure a bag, and that with the aid of a dog he was often able to obtain greater success than by depending upon his own prowess with the gun in place of the net. But it was the success that attended what we should now call the most flagrant poaching that first led to the excellent diversion of shooting game over dogs. Hitherto the main use for the gun so far as partridges were concerned, has been the "mopping up" of the coveys as they sunned themselves, or dusted under the hedgerows, and this practice like netting with a setter, was long regarded as quite a legitimate proceeding.

And even when shooting flying came into vogue, we may be pretty sure that the hitherto prevailing wholesale methods of slaughter were not readily abandoned. The gunner approached the covey as nearly as he could, either with the assistance of his dog—or without it, supposing he could mark down the birds with reasonable accuracy—and when they rose he let off his gun into their midst in the hope of securing the greatest possible number of them. He must, however, have often found—as some of us of the present generation have found, too, in our younger and more foolish days—that the apparently simple process of "browning" a covey is not always the most certain way of bagging even a brace.—Bailey's

## A LION STORY

About three o'clock in the afternoon we heard a fearful commotion from the direction in which the old cattle had gone, bellowing and roaring, and a few minutes later the herd-boy came tearing in to say that they were killing a lion, and had gone mad. A lion had come slinking down on them, and, for some extraordinary reason, instead of bolting, they had attacked him. He must have been taken completely by surprise, for he had put up no fight at all. In a few seconds they had gored him to death and after that had trampled and tossed the carcass until it was little more than a vast, shapeless clot of mingled rust and blood. There was no question of inspanning them that night, no question of going near them even. They were absolutely mad with the smell of the blood, and it was not until the following morning that they could be rounded up—"Off the Main Track," by Stanley Portal Hyatt.

"Why did you abandon your motor car trip so abruptly?" "Oh, my wife is so superstitious! After we had run over the thirteenth man, she said we ought to turn back, otherwise she felt sure we should meet with some accident!"

Dolly—"Were you pleased when Charley proposed?" Polly—"Pleased? I came pretty near giving him our college yell."

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