

Fifteen minutes or so passed and the guide again rose to his feet and sent the impassioned bellow ringing through the woods. Then silence again. Close beside us was a beaver dam and we occasionally heard the muffled movements of the animals and their curious breathing. A muskrat dropped into the water with a plomp that resounded in the intense stillness and sent the heart into the mouth. A few roystering songsters still stirred twittering about the branches of the pines.

In periods of about fifteen minutes, for more than an hour, the guide called. The last vestige of light had disappeared and the night was becoming inkier every minute. We were growing cramped and chilled and a trifle discouraged. Though we heard many imaginary moose plunging headlong through the brush or footing their way cautiously as indicated by breaking twigs, they never materialized. We were disappointed, cold, and it was too dark to see anything anyway.

Appeared and Disappeared

Just then the guide whispered "Listen", and pointed with his paddle. From the direction came the noise of breaking twigs, similar to a hundred sounds we had heard. Then directly ahead of us the darkness seemed to open up and a blacker shadow emerge. The huge bulk moved and there was the sound of harsh, deep breathing. We waited for what seemed an hour but could hardly have been more than a minute. There was further movement, a crashing of branches, and the dark blotch melted again in the murk of the night.

"Too dark to see" said the guide well pleased with himself and no



A Buck White-Tailed Deer snap-shot in his native haunts

doubt feeling justified, though we could not have been more deeply thrilled than at this magic of the night. "We see him in the morning. Going to be dam fine morning."

It was about three o'clock on a pitch black morning when the guide again roused us with a steaming can of coffee in his hand. Logs piled one on another were blazing away furiously and throwing their heat into the interior of the tent. The light they diffused disclosed a ground, white with frost. We shivered as valorously we stumbled down to the water's edge and soused faces and hands.

"Dam fine morning" said the guide as he poured the steaming coffee into our mugs. "De vin, she stay quiet."

We stood on the border of the lake

and watched the day break over the further rim of the earth, a wondrous sight which man sees too seldom for his own spiritual good. Gradually the blackness became less opaque, and slowly a narrow arch of dull light appeared in the eastern sky. The mirrored reflection of the stars in the water became dimmer.

Before the first rays of the sun had had time to show themselves we were seated in the canoe with a supply of blankets and headed once more for the cove. Arrived there we put the blankets about us and huddled up in the craft. The forest was yet deeply shrouded in the cloak of night but every minute revealed new details. There was scarce a sound; never a ripple on the waters or soughing in the trees; even the birds seemed to have not yet awakened to herald the new day.

The cadence of the mating moose issued from the guide's trumpet, splitting the morning air, travelling far into the woods on the motionless air. Shiveringly we waited for a response. For nearly an hour we sat there, cramped and cold, whilst the guide periodically called.

"Hear that" whispered the guide at length, and from afar off came deep staccato notes, not unlike the short, sharp brayings of a hound. "Bull there."

We waited a long while but there was no further development. As the guide explained to us later the bull which had fitfully responded was already mated and not to be lured away by another siren call.

Just with what faculty he made the discovery I am unable to determine, but a few seconds later there was an insistent whisper from the



Mr. Chicanot, his guide and his companion on their early morning camera-hunt for Moose