

H. Y. Belk

AND HIS NEWS OF NEBO VALLEY

Mr. William Ware and Mrs. Margaret Ware were dinner guests across the street with H. Y., Jr., and wife Friday night.

Mrs. Betty Self, Loyd, and Mrs. Mary Lingerfeldt, of High Shoals, visited your reporter Sunday.

I was despondent when I wrote a line last week and said: I have but three friends I can find. Now I find I have a host of friends, by the cards I find in the mail. I thank you my kind friends.



Now then, if I go on your note and you don't pay it, who will?

Mother: Daughter, did you let him come to your apartment last night?

No, mother, I went to his apartment.

I knew that gal who flirted by when she didn't know where her next husband was coming from.

When I got home the other evening, to my surprise, I found a strange man kissing my wife. And what did you do? I picked up his

umbrella and smacked it over his head, now I hope it rains.

An Adventure In The Wilds

By H. Y. BELK

Having lived in the country the greater part of my life, operating a farm, I had the desire—like most men who are lovers of the great outdoors—to see some of the wild places of the country where I could fish, hunt and enjoy freedom. Even as a boy I felt the call of the wild, the spirit of the nomad. The lust to wander to out-of-the-way places of the world of which I had read, I experienced in my imagination, but had never really lived. At the age of 26 I decided to look around the country for some territory to which I could journey, occasionally for recreation, enjoy the freedom of the wild and indulge in some of my favorite sports. I traveled over Arizona, part of New Mexico. At last I stopped in western Arkansas, on a government reservation just laid off and full of wild life. No restrictions at that time. I took with me a negro boy, he had no living relatives. Tom and I soon became very good friends and when I told him he was to accompany me on my proposed trip to the reservation, I had bought his gratitude and he was eager to set out at once.

The next morning being October 30, Tom and I loaded our old Ford with provisions, carpenter's tools, a tent and other necessities and set out on our adventure. We traveled in the daytime and camped by the road side when we were overtaken by darkness.

One night we pitched our camp near a large river. Tom gathered some dead timber off fallen trees and we had a glowing fire. Our supper consisted of bacon, eggs, coffee and bread and when it was disposed of we sat around the campfire. Tom nodded, but I was too overwhelmed by the magnitude of the forest to think of sleep. What a transformation from the drudgery of the past month in the cotton fields. I drew a deep breath, a vast sigh of contentment. This was what I best loved. I felt that my dreams, my entire human existence was all around me. The solitude of the forest, the strange night noises, the wild beasts calling to their mates, and intermingling with it all was the inexorable works of nature revealed to man.

I was so deeply plunged into my thoughts that I had not noticed the swift passing of time, and now as I looked at my watch I was surprised to observe that it was after ten o'clock. Tom was stretched out on the ground nearby snoring vigorously. I aroused him and picked up the lantern and told him to come in the tent. Tom lay down and rolled up in a blanket. He was asleep again almost at once. I kept my rifle within easy reach as I did not in-

tend to take any chances with prowling wild beasts.

We had not been asleep more than half an hour when I was suddenly awakened by something, or someone scratching on the outside of the tent. I spring to my feet and grabbed my Winchester and called to Tom to light the lantern. Tom rolled out from under the blankets and struck a match and as he held the lantern up over his head I saw a small black bear half way under the side of the tent. He had cut the not very good tenting with his razor-like claws as if it had been paper. I leveled my rifle and fired three times in rapid succession. A terrible roar issued from the throat of the bear. He staggered, then made an effort to advance and fell to the ground dead just outside the tent. I looked around for Tom but he was no where to be seen, then glancing upward I saw him perched on one of the upright poles just as high as he could get, holding on to the ropes at the top of the tent.

Tom, you fool nigger, I said, come down here and see your brother.

No, Marse H. Y., Ah don't want to see no brother. Ah's rather be up here.

Tom: I commanded impatiently, come down here at once. The bear is dead now. Here a little coaxing I convinced Tom that the bear was dead.

but as soon as he reached the ground, he cried:

Lawd's sake, Marse H. Y., let's leave here. Nonsense, Tom, there is no need to be afraid. Come on, lets have some bear meat for breakfast.

I cut the bear's throat so he would bleed freely, while Tom rolled his eyes, held the rifle, and prayed.

After much persuading I succeeded in getting him to hold one of the bear's legs while I proceeded to skin the bear. After dressing the bear, I took a fresh chew of tobacco, with my rifle across my knees and waited for further developments. I anticipated the coming of other wild animals and I was determined to be on the alert. Tom rolled up in his blanket and covered up his head. The October night was chilled by

frost. I saw the poor little darkey quivering with fright. I for the moment, wished I had left him at home, but presently he was snoring and was unaware that a wild animal existed.

I had been setting on the cot for perhaps 3 minutes when suddenly the howling of wolves brought me to my feet with alacrity. They had scented the fresh killed bear and had gathered to devour it. I waited inside the poorly constructed tent for several minutes. Outside everything seemed to become unusually quiet. I wondered what had silenced the vicious howling wolves, I in my loneliness stepped outside the tent and leaned against a tree.

The moon had risen and now shown brilliantly down on the frost-kissed forest, and by its light I perceived several brown creatures mo-

ving about where we had discarded the parts of the bear. I took aim at one as he came smelling close to the ground. My bullet, however, went wild of its mark.—(To Be Continued)

My dear friends you never thought I'd be a poet: Yes I'd like to be Somewhere in North Carolina, Where a woman is seldom seen. That's where I want to be, Where a Christmas card in April, Is considered up to date in June, Where the summer sun shines all day, Then at night a thousand mosquitoes, Replace the ones you've just slayed And not a pretty gal in sight, That's where I want to be. Yes, that would be Best for B. Y. B.

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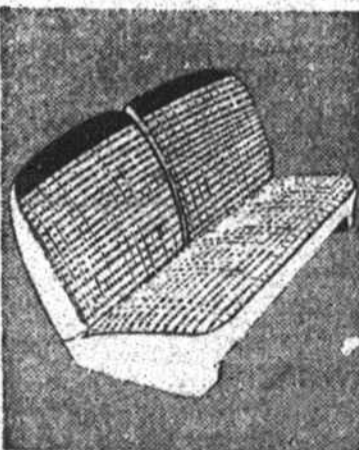


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