

HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF THE EAGLE CAP WILDERNESS
EAGLE CAP RANGER DISTRICT
WALLOWA-WHITMAN NATIONAL FOREST

Summer 1983

Volume 11

Jo Broadwell

HURRICANE CREEK

The Legend of the Sucking Monster

The adventures of Coyote in the Wallowa Mountains, and his encounter with Its-welx.

LOSTINE RIVER

Roy Schaeffer, Mountain Man of the Lostine

Hunting, fishing, and trapping tales surrounding a legendary cowboy.

IMNAHA RIVER

How Imnaha River Received Its Name

From the Nez Perce Indians, a stirring account of a young man's brave attempt to outwit the Snakes.

A Nez Perce Calendar

William C. Cusick, Pioneer Botanist

Several episodes of early plant collectors in the high mountain country around the turn of the century.

A WALLOWA MOUNTAIN REMINDER:

Rude Rural Rhymes

A bit of wisdom found within an aging scrapbook, circa 1924.

THE LEGEND OF THE SUCKING MONSTER

Written by Jo Broadwell

Many tribes on the North American continent held the common belief that the world was first inhabited by a race of animal people. According to Ella Clark in her delightfully written book, Indian Legends of the Pacific Northwest, these animals were giants, living exactly as the Indians themselves lived later. They lived in lodges, fished and hunted, dug roots and ground them, used sweat lodges and had headmen or "chiefs". The greatest of the ancient mythological characters was Coyote. He could change himself into any form he wished with his supernatural power, rescuing his animal friends from the deepest, darkest, dangers. But he had certain human frailties such as pride, vanity, lust, greed and gluttony causing him to do many selfish and foolish things also.

During the cold winter months of falling rain and snow drifts, tribal tales were told around the glow of campfires inside the lodges. These tales were acted out by the best entertainers in the group, serving to instruct the younger ones in history, nature study, geography and proper behavior. Sometimes stories were told to the girls while they were learning beadwork and hide tanning, and to the young boys while they were being instructed in hunting and fishing. Most often, though, it was winter when the families gathered together to hear the wisdom and wonder of a time when the world was young. After all, spring, summer and fall were busy months of root digging, seed gathering, fish trapping, hunting, tipi mending, hide scraping and the drying of berries and venison. "My grandfather," says a Warm Springs woman, "always said he would get bald and yellow jackets would sting us if too many stories were told in the summer."

Several of the early myths actually parallel, in their theatrical way, theories held by modern scientists and philosophers today. Howel Williams, chairman of the Department of Geological Sciences at the University of California has graphically described the tremendous explosions that once disturbed the Crater Lake area several thousand years ago. In myths, the Indians refer to these eruptions of volcanic ash and pumice as "glowing avalanches, frenzied streaks of lightning, and the Curse of Fire." They speak of a great mountain that collapsed in the center and filled with water. Scientists believe that this was Mt. Mazama, once 12,000 ft. high, forming its great bowl for the waters of Crater Lake.

In all cultures, the art of story telling predates any written literature. The Legend of the Sucking Monster was retold in various ways by many tribes of the Columbia River Basin as well as the Nez Perce. One version tells of a giant beaver monster named Wishpoosh who had red eyebrows, eyes of fire and "huge fierce, shining claws with which he seized everything that came near him." In this story Coyote is once again the hero, although he relies entirely on the advice he gains from his three sisters, living in his stomach in the form of huckleberries.

The following Nez Perce version is recounted by a former Supreme Judge of Idaho, R.D. Leeper, and published in the Chief Joseph Herald newspaper, 1953. "Koos-Koos-Ki" is in reference to the Clear Water River in Northern Idaho. Part of the story actually takes place on top of the highest peak in the Wallowa Mountains, which is the Matterhorn, at 9845 ft., overlooking Hurricane Creek.

Long, long ago, indeed, so long ago that this story has been forgotten by everyone, except a few old men, there lived at Kamiah, far up the Koos-Koos-Ki, a wicked monster. He was a huge creature and took up his abode in one of the most beautiful fields of Kamiah valley at a point where he could watch all the pathways over which folks traveled to and fro. How ugly he was, with his great scaly legs and feet, his immense mouth and staring sightless eye, snorting his hot evil-smelling breath out over the country side.

No one knew just where he came from. He appeared one night dropping down out of the sky with a great noise, and here he had remained for many a day terrorizing the peaceful inhabitants of the valley.

Most monsters of whom we read went hunting after their victims, but this monster was different, for he sucked passersby into his great mouth with his breath. Whenever he heard one going by, he drew in his breath with loud hoarse gasps and sucked the victim straight into his mouth and swallowed him. So great was his appetite that he swallowed every one of Coyote's subjects, except those who had fled into the high mountains, and his strong, evil smelling breath was felt all through the valley of Koos-Koos-Ki way down by Tsemnicum, even into Wallowa land.

Humming Bird escaped him, being so small, and fled away into the west where he came across Coyote visiting some friends on the Yakima.

"Say Coyote," said Humming Bird, "there is a terrible monster over in Kamiah who has eaten all of your subjects."

"Is that so," said Coyote, "tell me about him. Is he very strong and fierce?"

"Oh terribly so," answered Humming Bird, "he sucked in Grizzly Bear and Fierce Wolfe and Rattle Snake just like they were little children. I escaped only because I am so little and I doubt if even you can conquer him."

"So," said Coyote, "then I must be careful, but I will go to my people. Perhaps I can yet help them." He understood, you see, that it would never do for a great king such as he to run away from his subjects when they were in need of him nor was it befitting his dignity to appear fearful.

So he started out for Tsemnicum, going around about by the way of the Wallowa mountains. Mounting the highest peak of these mountains,

he looked over towards Kamiah, but there was a high ridge between and he could see nothing. Whereupon he called upon his medicine magic, and taking a large stick in his hands he hit the ridge a heavy blow, making a deep gap through which he could see clear to Kamiah. There he saw the monster, squatting like a huge ugly toad in the beautiful green valley, and even at that distance he could feel hot breath.

"Ho", thought Coyote, "he is a big fierce fellow, isn't he, but I'll find something to do him up."

He prepared a bundle of pitch from fir trees, which burns quickly and with a hot flame; he also made ten flint knives, a strong bow of yew wood and many arrows. After getting these together he painted himself over with blue clay and then tied himself firmly to the mountains with a wild grapevine which grows on all the mountains hereabouts and is very strong and tough. He was now ready to challenge the monster, so in a loud voice he cried out, "You blind monster, can't you see me. Here I am."

The monster looked and looked but of course, could not see him on account of being blind.

"That must be Coyote," he said, "he is the only one I haven't swallowed and I am a little bit afraid of him."

"Ho, you're a great one," jibed Coyote, "You can't even see me and here I am in plain sight."

"No I can't see you," answered the monster in a deep growling voice, "but I can eat you all right."

"Well then," said Coyote, "you draw me, if you think you are so strong."

"Not I," the monster replied, "you draw me-you're the great king of Tscemicum so they say."

"No, no", said Coyote, "you draw me."

But the monster was very careful and refused to draw first so finally Coyote said, "All right Monster. Get ready and I'll draw you," and with that Coyote drew in his breath and drew and drew until the monster shook and trembled but he could not budge him.

"See," shouted the monster, "you don't move me. Now I'll draw you." He sucked in his breath so strongly that Coyote was almost pulled off the mountain even though tied to it. So great was the strain that Coyote finally had to cut the grapevine rope and as soon as this was done he flew through the air towards the monster, down the valley across Tell-well-kalkoos and above the wide prairie which lies between the Salmon river and Kamiah. While sailing over this prairie he dropped some camas roots and kouse plants he was carrying and as he did he prophesied, "That will be the greatest place in the world for digging camas and kouse and to this place future generations will always come for their celebrations and good times."

This prophecy has come true for this place is called "Camas Prairie and to this day it is a place where people come for pleasure. The camas and kouse grow thickly here, and there are many streams of cool water and shady groves and deep valleys where there are ice caves.

Closer and closer Coyote drew to the mouth of the monster. He could feel his hot breath pulling, pulling, pulling with irresistible strength and it sounded like a storm in the trees. Swiftly onward he flew until he saw the great gaping mouth just ahead of him approaching closer and closer.

"At last," said the monster gleefully. "I've got you. I shall eat the great Coyote just as I have eaten all the rest of them miserable animals."

Shortly after he opened his great mouth, it snapped shut. Poor brave Coyote was swallowed down like a worm. He slipped down the huge throat and at last stopped where he saw all of his subjects lying about in the dim twilight. As he walked on down, he first met Rattle Snake lying alongside. Rattle Snake was cross and disagreeable and tried to bite him saying, "You're a great king, why didn't you kill the monster and save me from this terrible place?"

"Say," answered Coyote, jumping nimbly aside, "what do you want to bite me for? Why don't you help yourself a bit and bite the monster?" So speaking, he tramped on RattleSnake's head and this is why his head is flat. It is where Coyote stepped on him.

Going farther down, Coyote met a great Grizzly Bear, who growled out, "A pretty king you are, letting an important person like me be eaten up by this old monster."

"Is that so?" said Coyote, being very angry, and he commenced to beat the grizzly, finally striking him on the nose and leaving a big sink between his eyes. Grizzly bear rushed off howling mightily, but he has always carried this same mark upon him.

Pretty soon there came along Little Black Bear, who whimpered and cried like a baby.

"Oh brace up," said Coyote crossly, "what are you snivelling about?"

"I'm afraid," said Little Black Bear. "I'm afraid that I'm afraid that I'm afraid that I'm going to be in here."

"Don't be silly," answered Coyote, "why be afraid?" He reached out and pulled Little Black Bear's nose, giving it a good twist, which made the little bear howl all the louder. That is why the black bear's nose looks so funny.

Coyote went on and on, seeing more of his people, all of whom were in very low spirits and weak from hunger. At last he found himself inside of the monster and he said to himself, "My poor people are starving to death. Why are they starving? Here is a big heart with

lots of fat around it."

So he built a fire under the heart with the fir pitch which he carried and as the fire waxed hotter the old monster began to groan in agony for he knew that something was wrong inside him. Coyote then took a flint knife and began to cut away at the heart with all his might, but this knife broke, so tough was the flesh. He tried several other knives and they all broke but one. The monster was screaming in agony.

"Oh that terrible Coyote," he moaned. "I was afraid of him and now he is cutting my heart out. Why didn't I leave him alone."

By this time the fire had done its work and Coyote stripped off the fat and gave it to his hungry subjects saying, "Come on here and eat, there is plenty for everyone."

The hungry animals crowded around and ate the monster's flesh. Oh, how good it tasted to these poor ones who had thought they were doomed. They ate and when they were finished Coyote said, "Say, all of you fellows who have finished your dinner, come on and gather up all these old skeleton bones lying around here. When we get through eating this heart I want to get out of here." These skeletons he spoke of were those animals long since dead and gone who had been swallowed by the monster and had perished inside of him.

So, after they were finished, and the monster being then dead on account of his heart being cut out, all of the animals, Grizzly Bear and Rattle Snake, Cottontail and Fox, Gray Wolf and all the others hastened out of the monster's stomach, some crawling out of his ears and some out of his mouth.

Everyone escaped without hurt except Muskrat, who caught his tail in the monster's teeth and lost it, this being the reason why Muskrat has no tail.

They were exceedingly happy to be delivered from their fate, and Grizzly Bear and Rattlesnake apologized to Coyote for being so cowardly and rude. Little Cottontail jumped and skipped when he saw the bright sunshine again. Bald Eagle sailed high up into the sky and the others ran about rejoicing and singing the praises of Coyote, who received their acclaim very modestly.

But what was Coyote going to do with the body of the dead monster? Obviously, it could not be left where it was and yet the problem was a difficult one. After thinking and studying for a long time Coyote finally took his flint knife and commenced cutting the huge carcass into strips. He piled the strips of flesh into one heap and the bones in another but so large were the piles that Coyote said, "This will never do because there are generations coming who will be called men. I will have to distribute this."

So he went to work and threw the huge thigh bone way up over the Sawtooth mountains into the land where the Blackfeet people later came, saying, "By this token shall the Blackfeet be tall, long-legged

people." And so they are. The Blackfeet are taller than any others.

So he went to work and threw the fat over the Rocky Mountains and across the Dakota prairies to the land of the Sioux of whom he prophesied, "By this token shall the Sioux be fat people." And so they are, for Coyote's prophecies always came true.

He distributed the wide ribs to the land of the Flatheads, over in Montana, of whom he prophesied, "By this token shall the Flatheads be squatty and wide shouldered." And so they are.

In such wisdom did Coyote distribute the flesh and bones of the monster, giving some to every tribe which came later--the Flatheads, the Sioux, Cheyennes, Blackfeet, Snakes, Crows, Yakimas, Spokanes and all the others were remembered--each of them according to the prophecies of Coyote.

After he was all through with this talk, Fox spoke up saying, "Well, here, Coyote, why have you forgotten the tribe that is going to live here in Tscemicum? You have given them nothing."

"Thunderation!" said Coyote. "I did forget that tribe. But here, I still have some blood left on my hands," and he sprinkled this blood over the lands of Tscemicum, and up and down the Koos-koos-ki. While so doing, he prophesied, "There will be a people here. It will not be a very large tribe but they will be the bravest people on earth to fight."

The people who came to fulfill this prophecy and dwell in the land of the Tscemicum, are the greatest fighters in the world. They are called the Nimipu (The Indian's name for Nez Perce) and they defeated the Sioux, the Snakes, the Spokanes, the Bannocks, the Crows and all the others. This came about because their land was sprinkled with blood. Of course, the long peace has come but the prophecy of Coyote was fulfilled.

All that was left of the monster was the liver and the burned heart and if you will go to Kamiah today you will see them lying out there in the open field.

Special Note:

In "Noon Nee-me-poo (We the Nez Percés)", by Slickpoo and Walker, the great Sucking Monster's name was Its-welx. A photograph of his heart may be found in the frontpiece of their book.

Roy Schaeffer, Mountain Man of the Lostine
by William O. Douglas

William O. Douglas, the esteemed American Public official and judge who served an unprecedented 36 1/2 years as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, was also an avid outdoorsman of the Wallowa Mountains.

From his tamarack log cabin on the Lostine River, he recalls his early adventures with Roy Schaeffer, the one "I would want with me if I were catapulted into dense woods anywhere from Maine to Oregon." Hunting, fishing and trapping tales abound from North Minam Meadows, Stanley Ridge, Hawkins Pass, Imnaha River, Washboard Trail, Bear Creek Saddle, Cheval Lake, Copper Creek And Sturgill Basin.

As a child Bill was stricken with poliomyelitis, but determined to renew his strength by hiking in the Cascades. In his book Of Men and Mountains are several accounts of the healing powers of the mountain country. A devoted naturalist and conservationist, he inspired others to seek the beauty and peace within the wilderness.

He writes, "I learned early that the richness of life is found in adventure. It develops self-reliance and independence. Life then teems with excitement. There is stagnation only in security..." In the high country people are "inspired to search out the high alpine basins and fragile flowers that flourish there. They may come to know the exhilaration of wind blowing through them on rocky pinnacles. They may recognize the music of the conifers when it comes both in whispered melodies and in the fullness of wind instruments. They may discover the glory of a blade of grass and find their own relationship to the universe in the song of the willow thrush at dusk."

The following account is taken from his book Of Men and Mountains, published in 1950.

Roy Schaeffer is the same kind of warmhearted, generous person Franklin Roosevelt was. With a man in need he'd share his last slab of bacon, his last pound of coffee, and in the mountains he'd care for him and expect no reward. The suggestion of a reward would, I think, hurt. He is indeed one of the few I have known who like to give more than to receive. He will die as he was born, poor in worldly possessions.

Roy Schaeffer is the man I would want with me if I were catapulted into dense woods anywhere from Maine to Oregon. He knows Oregon best, but in any forest he would king. For he is as much a part of the

woods as the snowberry, the mountain ash, or the buck deer. The woods are part of him. Above all men I have known, he would be able to survive in them on his wits alone.

Roy is quiet and unassuming in any crowd. He is tall--six feet two. He is big--240 pounds. His eyes are blue. And his hair, now thinned, was once a wild and unruly shock. Roy's parents were the first white people married in Wallowa Valley. He was born there January 5, 1888. It was 6 degrees below zero that day. The rugged scene into which Roy was born is symbolic of the environment through which he has moved during his life--a life on the plains and in the high mountains of eastern Oregon. He has worked long hours deep in the Snake River canyon in the heat of summer when the lava rock of the canyon walls turned it into an oven night and day; he often has slept in a hollow in the snow at the top of the Wallowas with a blizzard howling overhead.

He married Lucy Downard in 1908 and for this honeymoon took her to Bear Creek Saddle in the high Wallowas. This saddle is a great rolling meadow about 8000 feet up, at the head of Bear Creek, surrounded by low-lying rims of hills gripped by jagged fingers of granite. They hold Bear Creek Saddle close to the clouds. At the time of his marriage Roy owned a band of sheep. He left them at Bear Creek Saddle while he hurried down to Wallowa to claim his bride. They returned at once on horseback to the sheep camp. From that time Lucy has shared the hardships of Roy's life and also has brought him five children-- Charles, Annamay, Ivy, Dorothy, and Arnold--all of whom love the mountains as do Roy and Lucy.

Roy owned this band of about 900 sheep for six years. During that time he came to both the summer and winter ranges of the Wallowas. He sat in snow, rain, and sunshine on their hillsides and saw the live of the mountains at work. The mountains became as familiar to him as a factory is to a man who works there.

After Roy sold his sheep he was a jack-of-all-trades. But most of the jobs took him to the back country. He was the champion of sheep-shearers. He sheared by hand 200 sheep a day and better. He is a strong man; but sheepshearing taxes the strength. Bending over, holding the animal, working the shears through the tough wool--this is killing. Of all jobs, it close to exhausted Roy's great energy.

Between sheepshearings came a variety of jobs on farms and in lumber camps, with a few winter months in Union Pacific roundhouses repairing locomotives. "That work," Roy once said to me, "was the part of my life that was wasted." He loved the outdoors and it is punishment to assign him to inside work. Most of his days have been spent in the mountains taking fishing parties to high lakes and hunting parties to high ridges or deep canyons. In the winters he has done much trapping for marten. In 1934 he bought Lapover, famous dude ranch of the Wallowas.

Roy's strength is prodigious. His hands are like hams. Each of them is so strong it could crush a man. Taking hold of it is similar to grasping a wild steer by the horn. There are many stories of his

feats and most of them have a Paul Bunyan touch. One fall he and three others were hunting deer in the Grande Ronde canyon, Roy became separated from the others. He rejoined them late in the afternoon to find that one had shot a buck. The three men had worked out a scheme for division of labor in getting the deer out of the canyon. One would carry the rifles while two would carry the buck. Roy met them as they were resting for a short climb. He tied the four legs of the buck together, slipped his rifle barrel underneath the knot, raised the rifle to his shoulder and started up the canyon wall. It was a good 2000 feet to the top. The buck weighed 185 pounds dressed. Roy stopped a few times on his way up but he finished ahead of the other members of the party.

Many years ago he figured he was spending \$120 a year for chewing tobacco, which was too much for his budget. He decided to shortcircuit the retailer and manufacturer and go directly to the producer. He wrote to Hawkesville, Kentucky, and found a man who for \$10 would send him a good sized box of unprocessed tobacco. It is the leaf and stem of the tobacco plant, dried, but otherwise just as it comes from the field. It comes in three strengths: mild, strong, and extra strong. Roy orders the extra strong. For \$10 he gets a supply that lasts a year. He takes the plant and crushes it into a coarse powder and carries this in a cotton bag that Lucy made for him.

This tobacco is powerful. Though many have tried, no one but Roy has been able to chew it. He has bet that no one else can chew it for a half-hour and so far no one has won the bet. One man who chewed Roy's tobacco only ten minutes spent all night behind the chicken coop. Roy's reputation has spread. No one bums a chew off him. He also smokes this tobacco in a pipe, and has yet to find a smoker who can inhale it.

The habit of chewing tobacco has affected his speech, so that he does not move his lips when he talks. He probably could have been another Edgar Bergen if he had tried, for he speaks from his stomach. It is a deep guttural sound, hard for the newcomer to pick up. But it has great carrying power. I have been 100 yards from him in the woods and heard what he said even though he did not raise his voice. He talks as I imagined, when a boy, like an Indian would talk.

* * * *

Roy has a great affection for horses. When this powerful man is near a horse, he is unfailingly gentle. His hand on a horse that is ill or injured has the tenderness of a father's hand at his child's sickbed. His voice is soft, and his gentleness with horses is reciprocated. I have seen a trembling three-year-old, wild and unbroken, become calm as he touched it and talked to it in a low voice.

Roy has never owned a pair of hobbles. His horses never leave him in the hills. This means, of course, that he picks his campgrounds with an eye to the comfort and pleasure of the horse as well as his own. He looks first for horse feed--not for grass that horses can eat in a

pinch, but for sweet and tender grass that is rich in protein, like the alpine bunchgrass that grows as high as 8000 or 9000 feet in the Wallawas. As a result, Roy's horses are never far away in the morning. A handful of oats and his soft whistle will bring them to him. From November to May they run wild in the winter range on the lower reaches of the Big Minam; but when Roy goes to get them in the spring they come right to him. Then he puts his arm around their necks and pats them, greeting them as one would a friend of long absence.

Once when Roy and I were camped at Cheval Lake in the Wallawas, we took a side trip to New Deal Lake. It is a small lake of ten acres or so, in a treeless basin. It has eastern brook trout up to five pounds. Cliffs shaped somewhat like a horseshoe hem it in. Our approach was from above, which brought us to the lake from the south side. When we first saw it, it was 500 feet below us. The slope was perhaps 45 degrees or more, but it was not dangerous except for one stretch. That was a flat piece of tilted granite, smooth as a table top, half as wide as a city street, and covered with loose gravel. There was no way around it; it had to be crossed. Roy was in the lead. I watched to see what he would do. His horse stopped and sniffed the rock. Roy spoke to him and touched him lightly with spurs. The horse stepped gingerly on the granite. Then putting his four feet slightly forward, the horse half walked and half slid down the granite with sparks flying from his shoes.

"Might have slipped in these boots if I had tried to walk," said Roy in a matter of fact way. And he probably would have, for under his lighter weight the loose gravel would have rolled. It was then that I thought of Jimmie Conzelman's definition of horsemanship. "Horsemanship," says Jimmie, "is the ability to remain unconcerned, comfortable, and on a horse all at once."

One November day Roy had his hunting camp set up near the mouth of the North Fork of the Minam. It was a big party, with seven or eight tents. It was so sprawled out that from a distance it looked like an Indian camp. Smoke came from every tent. There was a big center tent where the cooking was done. A few horses stood tied to trees in an outer circle, waiting to be saddled. Three or four elk hung high above the ground from poles laid between two trees.

Roy was preparing breakfast, and as he cooked, Mac, a wise, old mule, age 35, came up and nuzzled him. When I have been at Roy's barn saddling horses, Mac has often come up behind me and given me a push with his head, urging me to the door of the barn where the oats were kept. He seldom stopped until I gave in.

Mac was a favorite of Roy's. He always trusted Mac with the delicate tasks of a pack train. Mac always carried the eggs and the liquids, or any pastry that Lucy might fix for the first night out. Mac was never tied onto a pack string. He followed behind, taking his time and picking his way. I have seen him stop and look closely at the space between two trees, trying to figure whether he could get through without bumping or scraping either side of the pack. Often he would go around rather than take a chance. He never rolled a pack. He

often was late in arriving in camp behind a pack string; but he always brought his burden in safe and sound. At breakfast time he was always in camp begging for hot cakes.

This morning Roy turned to Mac and said, "Want a hot cake? Well, go away and come back pretty soon and I'll give you one."

This happened over and over again. Finally he fed Mac a few.

"Now don't bother us anymore," said Roy. "Go on." And with that he gave Mac a push. Mac stood for a minute and then went over to the trail that ran close by camp and started downstream.

When Roy saw Mac go downstream, he was puzzled. The horses were upstream. Lapover was upstream, up the North Minam and across a high range ruled by the jagged finger of Flagstaff Point. Downstream was the winter range and the town of Minam on the paved highway coming up from La Grande. Roy sometimes went that way, but only in an emergency; for when he got out, he would be 30 miles by road from Lapover. That was the long way around.

"Let's see where Mac goes," said Roy.

So we followed him down the trail a mile or so. Roy finally stopped and said, "We're breaking camp and following Mac. We're moving down the Big Minam and will go out by the town of Minam. Looks to me like a big snow is coming. Mac usually knows it before I do."

We broke camp and moved downstream. Before long a heavy snow fell, almost 18 inches, which meant there were at least 4 feet on the ridges. And 4 feet are far too much for any pack train.

The next night beside the campfire Roy chuckled as he said, "Mac knew more than all the rest of us put together, didn't he?"

* * * *

The high lakes of the Wallows number 100 or more and lie at 6000 to 8400 feet. Each has a personality. Cheval is hardly more than a pond nestling under granite peaks in a high secluded pocket. It's small and intimate--a one party camp. Long and Steamboat show wide expanses of water like those in the Maine woods. They show broad acres of deep blue water on calm days, and produce whitecaps in rough weather. Douglas lies in the high lake basin under Eagle Cap. Here there are granite walls mounted with spires like unfinished cathedrals. It is austere or intimate, depending on how one comes upon it. Patsie, Bumble, and Tombstone lie like friendly, open ponds in a pasture. Diamond, Frances, and Lee have the dark cast of wells without bottoms, and water that chills to the marrow a few feet under the surface. Blue, Chimney, and Hobo appear as sterile as slate, showing clayish bottoms with no moss or grass. Green, Minam, and Crescent are lush with algae and moss, rich feeding grounds for trout.

Fish have been planted in 50 or more of these lakes. Roy has packed many thousands of fingerlings in to them, carried in milk cans and kept alive by the sloshing of the water caused by the movement of the horse or mule that transported them. Sometimes Roy while en route to one lake has paused long enough at a smaller one to pour in a dipper of fingerlings. Or having a part of a can left over, he has climbed a ridge or dropped into another canyon and planted a few hundred fingerlings in a remote pond. In that manner dozens of lakes have received their fish. Many are nameless lakes, unmarked on maps, with no trail to designate their locations, tucked away high on ridges or in small basins below granite peaks. They are deep blue sapphires in mountings of gray and green.

One summer Stanley Jewett and I were on a pack trip with Roy. We were studying the problems of the fish, convinced that in many instances the solution was to supply the lakes not with fish but with food, such as fresh-water shrimp or periwinkles. We were camped at Long Lake. One morning Stan suggested we take a look for mountain sheep. The bighorns were native to the Wallawas, where they once existed in large numbers. Captain Bonneville, who wintered on the Idaho side of the Snake in 1832, reported that the bighorns were the principal diet of his expedition. But none have been seen in the Wallawas for a decade or so, and it seemed incredible. Stan thought the ridge east of Long--the rocky backbone that stands as a 1000-foot granite barrier between it and Steamboat--was where they might be.

We started up the ridge early one morning. We soon had to dismount and leave the horses, for there was a granite wall ahead of us. We were almost to the top when we spotted fresh tracks of sheep--the unmistakable imprint of the bighorn in fine sand on a ledge. We hurried to the top, thinking he might be going ahead of us. When we peered over the rim, we saw no sign of a bighorn. But there in a meadow of heather was a shallow lake of 10 or 20 acres. A breeze swept from the south and touched its surface, ripples dancing like lights in a dazzling chandelier. In the midst of the ripples there was a swirl. An eastern brook that Roy four years before had brought here in a milk can tied to a pack saddle of a mule. Now there was life in the once sterile pond. Now there was a new reward at the end of an adventurous climb for those who dared those treacherous cliffs.

The North Minam Meadows lie over the range to the west of Lapover. It is a rich bottom land, a mile or so long and a half-mile wide, coveted by every man who loves the mountains and has seen it. Fortunately it is in a national forest. It has knee-high grass for horses from spring until winter. The North Minam meanders through, spilling over marshy banks lined with tall grass and rushes. Like the Klickitat Meadows of the Cascades, it is ideal for a boy's fishing. Here he can hide himself in the tall grass a few feet from the river's edge and float his fly on the water. It will not go more than a few feet before he has a rainbow or eastern brook. They are little fellows, from six to eight inches, but they are every inch champions and right for the pan.

Roy took me there in 1939 on our first pack trip together. When we left Lapover, Roy looked to the sky in the south and said, "It's a bit

too blue. We're apt to have a storm." The last day or two it had been too hot for August. There had been little breeze and the heat of the valley was in it. The woods were tinder dry and the dust, pounded and churned by many pack trains, lay deep on the Bowman Trail. We rested our horses frequently as we climbed out of the Lostine canyon. The powdery dust rose around us. And when the horses stopped, sweat ran off their bellies and noses, and disappeared in the dust.

We were at Brownie Basin, not far from the top of the range, when we heard thunder. The storm came quickly. Clouds moved in from the south. The heat had hung on the mountain as it does in a city long after the sun has set on a humid day. But now it was gone in a flash as a strong cold wind swept in, licking the ridges with a smattering of rain. The rain turned to snow and sleet. Before we had crossed Wilson Basin, which lies over the top on the western side of the range, the ground was white with snow.

I stopped my horse, Dan, halfway down to the North Minam Meadows on the zigzag trail that drops out of Wilson Basin. He turned sideways on one of the crooked elbows of the path, as I looked down on the meadows a thousand feet or more below me. They were dimly visible as through a fog, for the snow at this altitude had turned to rain and was falling soft and misty. Suddenly Dan reared and snorted and tried to run. I looked up the trail, and there coming around a bend was what appeared to be a long, dark serpent. It weaved and wiggled as it came down, and once in a while raised its head as if better to mark its course. My first impulse was the same as Dan's. But in a second I understood.

Pulverized dust can be as efficient in shedding water as the feathers on a duck's back. When it is as fine as flour, it contains an air cushion with pores too small to admit water. Thus it can become a roller that carries water off a mountainside. That is what happens when a flash flood rolls off a dry desert hillside of the west, tossing houses and barns as if they were chips. That was what was happening this August day. Dan did not stop snorting and rearing until he felt the familiar touch of water on his hooves.

By the time we reached the Meadows the rain had settled to a steady drizzle. It had a stubbornness and persistency that indicated it might be with us for days. The trees were dripping; the dampness penetrated everywhere.

Roy found pieces of pitchwood and had a fire going in a jiffy. He piled slabs of dry bark off a red fir on the fire. This is the fuel that produces the hottest fire in the mountains of the West. At once the atmosphere of a home took the place of the wet woods.

The best of all fuels in the Wallawas is mountain-mahogany. Its coals from the night's fire are hot in the morning. But there is no mountain-mahogany in the Meadows, for it grows only on the ridges. So Roy said, "Let's get some cottonwood, willow, or alder. It's a little better if it's on the rotten side. I learned that from the Indian squaws when I was a boy."

We had no tent on that trip, so before dusk Roy said, "Let's see if we can find a dry tree for our sleeping bags." He thought he could find one that would shed water for three or four days, and it was not long before he did. It was a red fir, leaning slightly to one side. It was dry underneath. There we put our bags for two days of rain, and they stayed as dry as they would have in a tent.

The third morning when we wakened the sun was rising in a clear sky. We lolled about camp, hanging out blankets and clothes to rid them of dampness. When we had finished, Roy said, "You know, a man could live in these Meadows just about forever. It's a powerful healthy place."

Then he told me about Joe Culbertson and Reuben Horwitz, and how in the old days he used to come here just to sleep off the fatigue of sheepherding. "When God made this spot he made the air a little lighter and cleaner. He made the water a little purer and colder. He made the sunshine a little brighter. He made the grass a little more tender for the horses."

As Roy talked, three does and a fawn crossed a clearing above camp. The yapping of a coyote floated down from the ledges high above them. In a little while a bull elk, with at least a six-foot spread of horns, sauntered by, as unconcerned as a window shopper on Fifth Avenue.

"That elk would act differently if the hunting season was on," said Roy. "Funny, but they know when it starts. Frighten a herd of elk during hunting season and they may leave the country. I've known them to travel 40 or 50 miles without stopping. But deer are different. Each bunch has his little domain. Maybe it's a draw or a stretch of woods a mile or so long. Wherever it is, it's home, and he won't leave it. If you're hunting him, he'll circle back to it. He'll stay in the country he knows."

Roy added: "Another nice thing about these Meadows is that they are protected by Uncle Sam. That's the way it should be. It's against the law to graze sheep here. That's right, too. Pretty soon they got to take the sheep out of these mountains. If people are to come here and fish and hunt or take pictures and climb these peaks, they'll need lots of horse feed. Pretty soon people will discover that all the feed in the high Wallows is needed for horses and deer and elk."

It was snowing when our pack train pulled out of Bear Creek Saddle, headed toward Sturgill Basin and Stanley Ridge. It was a light snow and there was no wind, so the near-zero temperature did not bite. The snow did not melt as it fell; it powdered our hats and shoulders so that we soon were a ghostly looking procession winding among the trees of the silent forest.

An inch of snow had fallen when the pack train reached Sturgill Basin. At this point we were high above the North Minam. On the ridge opposite us was Green Lake, frozen into a great crystal turned milky by the light touch of new snow. And on the far horizon to the south the town of North Powder was only faintly visible as the storm dropped a curtain of dusk over the mountain. When the pack train

pulled through the Basin and climbed to the Washboard Trail that leads to Stanley, a cruel wind with a severe bite in its teeth had come up from the southwest. It drove the finely powdered snow into the skin as if it were sand from a blasting machine.

The ridge along the Washboard Trail is cold in any wind. This trail, decorated with prostrate juniper and whitebark pine, winds along the hogback west of Bear Creek. At points the hogback is only a few feet wide, with the ground dropping 1000 feet or more on each side at a dizzy pitch of 60 degrees. In these places the wind howled on this winter day as it picked up speed from the downdraft that sucked it into the Bear Creek canyon, 3000 to 4000 feet below the trail on the right. This trail often passes along the base of jagged cliffs that rise as great hackles along the hogback. Here it is often skimpy, carved from the base of the basalt cliffs. At these places this winter wind hurled its weight against the cliffs and whirled clouds of snow into the air. Then it swerved off the cliffs and raced to the north with a whine in its throat.

Below us on the left the land tumbled in disarray into a series of sharp ravines that collect small streams of pure cold water in the spring and summer and carry them to the Big Minam. The slopes leading into them are dangerous. A single horse might pick his way up or across these steep inclines, but neither a pack train nor a horse with a man on him should venture it. One of these draws ends in Chaparral Basin some 3000 feet below the trail. At that point a shepherd's train once rolled into the canyon. Five horses were tailed together. The rear one slipped and fell, pulling the other four with him. They rolled for half a mile. When they came to rest, down on the sharp rocks that line the brush on the lower reaches, the five horses were dead and their cargo was scattered over the mountainside. The shepherd stood briefly with bowed head, as if in reverence at the burial of friends; then sadly he turned his horse around and headed back to get a new outfit.

Roy shouted something when we passed this place, pointing down to Chaparral Basin. Perhaps he was reminding us of the episode I have just told. But the wind was so strong his words were carried away, like mere petals of snow in the blizzard.

I have often stopped here on a summer afternoon, enthralled by the view. Off the west in the valley of the Minam is the great meadow of the Horse Ranch, where Red Higgins welcomes visitors at an airport in the wilderness. The light green of that meadow is the only break in the darkness of the conifers and basalt that line the valley-- the only break, that is, except for an occasional glimpse of the blue water of the Minam itself.

This is favorite country of elk and ruffed grouse. Here I have found a vast display of exquisite pink penstemon. Here the wild current and black-headed coneflowers flourish.

The ridge the trail follows runs north and turns in a great arc to the west. From a distance it seems impassible. The sharp cliffs, the precipitous mountainside, and the ravines that slash its surface in

deep and ragged cuts seem indeed to be forbidding obstacles. There are in fact not many places where a trail could traverse this treacherous ridge. But some sheepman years ago picked his way around great rocks, across ledges, and under the cliffs, and found footholds adequate for one way travel in the six miles it takes to travel the arc of the bowl. I always feel at grips with adventure when I look at this route. Every step must be taken gingerly. It is as though one were walking along a cornice of a building high above the canyons of Wall Street.

Much of the beauty of the scene had been wiped out by the blizzard of this November day. The Horse Ranch and the whole valley of the Minam were lost to view. Even the far points of the ridge we were on had disappeared. Whirling snow made impenetrable clouds in the deep pockets of the canyon below us. The trail traverses a virtual knife-edge above Blow Out Basin. Here it seemed as if the whole pack train would be blown into the void.

The wind soon pierced our heavy mackinaws, slipped under our chaps, and chilled our legs. The six miles along the rim of the basin seemed twelve. Cold reached through to the very marrow. It would have been a relief to walk, but the trail was slippery and no place for half-frozen people who could only stumble. Roy wisely kept to his horse; and the others agreed. We moved in silence, bent forward so as to soften the force of the wind that blew us against the cliffs on our right.

By the time we had cleared the rim and come out on the broad ridge above Stanley, it was mid afternoon and deep dusk. Low, dark clouds had swept in from the southwest and cut the vision to a few hundred yards. On the open ridge the wind was a gale. Great swirls of snow blotted even the pack train from view. To stay in this place all night with the expectation of being alive in the morning would seem reckless to most people. Yet Roy pulled up by a clump of fir, dismounted, and said, "Guess we better camp here."

He cut two poles about 8 feet long, each having a fork at one end. He cut another pole about 12 feet long and, using it as a ridge, lashed it into the fork of each of the other two poles. He then raised these poles and used ropes to anchor each of them to stakes. Then he took longer poles, about 15 feet long, and laid them as rafters on the windward side of the lean-to, about 18 inches apart, so that one end rested on the ridge and the other on the ground. These roof poles he lashed to the ridge with twine and rope. Next he took quantities of fir boughs and wove them through these roof poles until he had a snug thatch that was several boughs thick. He closed each end of the lean-to in the same way, weaving fir boughs through cross poles that he had lashed into places in those openings. In front of the lean-to he built a three walled open fireplace, prying up rocks from the frozen ground and building a horsesho-shaped wall 18 inches high with its open side toward the lean-to. A fire was started, and in not much over an hour everyone in the party was snug and warm. The horses were fed oats and baled hay we had packed in. They stood throughout the night with their saddles and blankets on for protection. Before supper was cooked the blacks and bays and sorrels were so heavily

powdered with snow they were indistinguishable one from another. We humans bedded down in Roy's lean-to. The wind howled out the night and in the morning the snow was over a foot thick. But Roy's work had been well done; there were no draughts to disturb our sleep. Roy knows the Wallowas in winter. He had buried himself in them for a week or more, riding out a blizzard. Sometimes his shelter was a cabin; at other times it was a hole in the snow.

* * * *

Roy usually ran a trap line for marten from Minam Lake to the head of the Copper Creek Basin, an eight or ten mile arc in the high mountains. It had to be an elevation of 6000 to 8000 feet, because that is where the marten are found in winter. He places each trap on a tree trunk, three to four feet above the ground. He learned about marten bait the hard way. - One winter he baited his traps with the trimming from elk meat, and as a result he lost a winter's catch.. Marten do not like fat meat.

Rabbit, pine squirrel, and blue jays are the best marten bait available in the Wallowas. Marten will not touch camp robbers or flying squirrels. They love grouse, which in severe winter weather sometimes bury themselves in snow for warmth.

"We can't see the grouse," said Roy. "But the marten smells him and digs him out."

Roy would leave Lapover on snowshoes every week or so for a five day inspection of his marten traps.

"About a quarter of the traps caught camp robbers, blue jays, and squirrels," Roy told me.

Roy's pack weighed 40 pounds or more. He always took an ax for wood and a shovel to dig a hole in the snow for lodging. He carried a frying pan, kettle, coffee pot, and a cup, plate, and spoon. He took 20 pounds of rabbit meat for bait, and a half-dozen extra traps. For food he had coffee, sugar, bacon, whole wheat cereal, potatoes, and bread. Roy never took blankets or a bedroll on these winter trips because the weight of the pack did not permit it. At night he slept like a bear in a hole in the snow. He cut off the top of a snag and with that wood built a fire next to the snag.

Those who have built fires in deep snow know, as Gifford Pinchot observed (Breaking New Ground), that it promptly melts itself down out of sight, leaving only a hole with a little steam coming out. That's why Roy always carried a shovel on these snowshoe trips. He dug a pit in the snow as he followed the fire down. Since the fire was next to the snag, Roy was able to take his wood supply down with him to the bottom of the pit. In the morning he might be 15 feet or more beneath the surface. His bed was fir boughs. If it rained or snowed, he would dig an alcove in the side of the pit and crawl into it. There he could ride out a blizzard for several days.

One day, when Roy was reminiscing about these trap-line trips, he said to me, "People think snow is cold, but it isn't. It's a blanket that has a lot of warmth in it. At times birds bury themselves in it to keep warm. I've seen deer do the same thing. They keep their heads out, but they will lie in a snowdrift entirely covered for maybe 18 to 24 hours."

The mountains in winter are cruel to man and beast. The game leaves the high country and goes down to winter range. There are no berries, roots, or other produce of the woods for food. Travel itself is hazardous. A blizzard in the Wallowa may blow 12 days and drop a swirling cloud through which man cannot see even 50 feet. Or the snow may turn to slush and cling to snowshoes like leaden weights. Then a man may not be able to walk more than two miles in the whole day. In cross country travel he can readily exhaust himself, and in his fatigue at the end of the day sit down to rest and freeze to death. Roy's first principles of winter travel are: 1) always take along a shovel and an ax: 2) get under the snow when weather is bad: and 3) go slowly at the beginning of the day, saving energy for the last few hours of the evening, for a blizzard or rainstorm may come up and change the character of the travel. Then a man's life may depend on his reserve of energy.

* * * *

There are many things to eat in the mountains, and most of them are good. Gifford Pinchot, during the days when he road the trails, sampled them freely, eating everything from elk to grasshopper. He enjoyed bear roasts, fried cougar, rattlesnake steaks, and stewed grouse. Once he told me the best meat of all was the chicken hawk--sweeter than quail, more tender than pheasant, and more delicate than grouse. Clark of the Lewis and Clark expedition gives some support for this recommendation. He reported that his hunters killed three hawks at the mouth of the Columbia in the winter of 1805 which they "found fat and delicious." I asked Pinchot what was the least palatable of his outdoor dishes, and he answered without hesitation: "Grasshoppers." He had cooked them in deep fat like scallops; and they were, he said, as crunchy and tasteless as fried straw.

Roy Schaeffer rates cougar higher than Pinchot did. The cougar meat is like a cat's. And according to Roy it is not far below chicken.

Matter of fact, said Roy when we were cooking a scanty meal on a cold night at Bear Lake in the Wallawas, "cat meat's not too bad. I knew a Chinaman in eastern Oregon years ago. He ran a restaurant and served cat for chicken in all his dishes. No one knew the difference."

"How did he get his cats? Raise them?"

"No. Caught them with a saucer of milk in the alley." And after a pause he added, "You know, cougar is healthier and better than alley cats. Hard to get, though. It's a rugged, cross-country hunt with

dogs."

Roy puts young porcupine ahead of lamb. He roasts it on a spit over coals of mountain-mahogany, cottonwood, quaking aspen, or willow. In his judgement it is perhaps the real delicacy of the mountains.

The best meat I ever had in the hills was blue jay. Roy and I were camped six miles above the mouth of Lightning Creek in the Snake River country. It was early October and unseasonably warm. The series of lava cliffs that formed gargantuan steps up the canyon walls absorbed the heat of the sun and warmed the canyon as a brick can warm a bed. In spite of rattlesnakes, we put our sleeping bags down in the grass by the side of McLaren's old cabin. We slept with our sleeping bags open and unzipped.

The birds and unsects, like the rattlesnakes, behaved as if it were late summer. Robins, blue jays, and Hungarian partridges were there in abundance. One day I hunted Butcher Knife Creek. It tumbles 2000 feet or so down a sharp narrow ravine into Lightning Creek. It is heavily wooded in spots and is filled with thick brush to the top. I scouted its length, perspiring freely in the heat of the canyon as I fought brush and dust and rattlers for an entire morning. There were plenty of signs of deer, but not even the flash of a tail. When I got almost to the top I heard shots above me. When I reached the summit, I discovered another party camped there and learned that I, by working up Butcher Knife, had unwittingly become a beater for them. Deer had gone out ahead of me and over the saddle within range of the party camped there. One buck was being dressed.

When I came back empty-handed late in the afternoon, I discovered that Roy had spent a more productive day. He had gone up Lightning Creek with a shotgun, and flushed Hungarian partridges from a stand of sumac. As they rose, blue jays also rose. The jays, being in the line of fire, fell. We had them for supper, fried in butter. They were sweeter and more tender than any quail or other bird I ever tasted- although I have yet to determine whether Pinchot's chicken hawk is better.

Smoked trout is a delicacy of the hills, and fairly easy to prepare. Roy Schaeffer and I smoked some on a July weekend in a remote part of the Wallowa; and a week later President Roosevelt was enjoying them at the White House. We were camped at Cheval Lake, a hard 12 miles from Lapover. We were catching an abundance of eastern brook trout and were eager to preserve them. The weather was hot even for the high mountain shelf, so we decided to make a smoker for the trout.

We dug two pits about 3 feet apart and 2 feet deep- one 3 feet square and the other about 2 feet square. We connected the two pits by a trench a foot wide, and covered the trench with bark. The smaller of the two pits was our firebox. Strips from tin cans were laid across green sticks that we had placed over this pit, leaving an open end in the pit where we could insert wood for the fire. We covered the firebox and the trench with dirt, driving four 4-foot stakes on each side of the larger pit and stretching twine between them. Next, small hooks out of baling wire were tied along the twine at intervals of an

inch or so. The trout were ribbed with a generous supply of salt and pepper on the inside flesh. (Instead of rubbing the trout with salt and pepper before smoking, some soak them overnight in a solution of water, salt and sugar -- for 5 pounds of trout, 2 quarts of water, 3 tablespoons of salt, 1 tablespoon of sugar). We hung them by the gills on the hooks and covered the scaffold with tarpaulin. A fire of rotten pine and fir, built in the smaller pit, was kept going from Friday afternoon to Sunday morning -- 36 hours or better. The secret is to keep the trout away from flame and in a steady, cool smoke. A small flame should be kept burning so as to rid the smoke of gasses that make the fish taste strong. The best wood is green willow, or alder with the bark peeled off, but cottonwood or quaking aspen will do. Yet even with the rotted pulp of pine and fir, our smoked trout were finer canapes than one can buy.

* * * *

Throwing a diamond hitch, putting an improvised show on a horse, building a lean to in a storm, carrying a sick or wounded person out of a wilderness, cooking, finding the lair of a buck deer or the den of a bear--these and any of the hundred and one experiences of a pack trip are chores that Roy handles with understanding and high efficiency. It is the competence one respects when one sees the deft fingers of a sculptor at work, or watches the sure eye of an ax-man, or observes a skilled mechanic at a lathe, or hears the master advocate in court. It is the extraordinary skill that one finds at the top of any profession or trade. There is a finesse and quality about it that distinguishes the skill of any champion.

When I read of the early mountain men I think of Roy. He would have been a credit to Jim Bridger or any of the early scouts. He is the caliber of man I think Captain William Clark of the Lewis and Clark expedition must have been. Clark did not know the outdoors as a botanist or biologist or geologist knew it. He knew it as a country lawyer without benefit of formal legal education may know the law. He knew his way through the wilderness, he could appraise its risks and dangers, and he knew where to find shelter and sustenance. Clark could not spell very well, and his writing shows some vestiges of illiteracy. He was not erudite, but he had wisdom and judgment.

Clark was a simple, uncomplicated man who had the knack of giving every problem in the woods a practical twist. He was the kind of man who could survive though he entered the wilderness empty handed. He had the competence to deal with the day to day tasks, which, though trivial, added up to life or death. Such a man as Roy Schaeffer. He, too, could have done with credit what Clark did.

Roy was a warm admirer of President Roosevelt. Shortly before the 1945 Inauguration he got the idea he wanted to attend. He sat up in a day coach all across the country and arrived in Washington, D.C., late one afternoon. He was dressed in cowboy boots, Pendleton pants, a loud plaid shirt, a mackinaw, and ten gallon hat. He strode through Union Station with a battered suitcase, stepped into a taxicab, and

told the driver, "I want to see Bill Douglas."

Eventually he ended up at our home in Silver Spring, Maryland; and during his two week visit he captured the town. He went to dinners and luncheons and teas; he stayed in character and wore his cowboy clothes to all of them. He stood on the White House grounds with head bared and saw Roosevelt take the oath. A lady in the crowd said to him, "It's always good to see someone from Texas."

Roy, embarrassed, said, "I'm from Oregon, ma'am."

We walked down Pennsylvania Avenue together, and reserved Easterners looked up at Roy and said with friendliness, "Hello, cowboy."

Roy would touch his hat and, as if speaking to a traveler on a high mountain trail, reply, "Hi."

He pounded the pavements of Washington with his high'heeled boots and said to my wife at night, "Walking the Bowman Trail is easier."

He slept in a bed with white, clean sheets and commented, "Never slept inside but what I caught a cold. Wish I had brought my sleeping bag. Then I'd sleep on the back porch. It's much healthier outdoors."

How Imnaha River Received Its Name

The following story was written by Cecile Stubblefield Pearson on July 17, 1930 in the Enterprise Record Chieftan. It was first told by Captain A.C. Smith, an early friend of Chief Joseph, during the time of the Nez Perce War.

"The Powder River Mountains" are in reference to the Wallowa Mountain Range, sometimes called the Granite Mountains or the Eagle Mountains. Every summer the Nez Perce came to the foothills of these mountains to pasture their horses on the lush, green grasses, digging roots along the way and following the seasonal run of salmon in the cold, clear rivers. Small hunting bands ventured into the higher snow capped peaks for deer, elk, bear, and mountain sheep.

With the onset of winter, families moved to their more permanent dwellings along the lowland rivers of the Grande Ronde, the Snake, the Imnaha... the "Land of Many Waters".

Some Indians claim the name Imnaha refers to root digging country. In this story, it relates to a large piece of land owned by Imna, a Nez Perce chief. "Ha" attached to the end of a name means "the property of".

In the most northeasterly corner of Oregon is situated the Imnaha valley. Sheer box walls of granite rise like mighty castle steps, tier on tier, their sharp contour softened by the servis, choke cherry, hack berry, sumac, and chaparral bushes, and the soft shading of mauve and purple cast by the ever changing shadows of the brakes. Through the center of the canyon floor the river roars and rushes on its way to join the Snake.

It is a land of summer sun, fertile bars where fruit and winter vegetables are grown to supply the ice bound regions of the Wallowa. It is a haven for cattle and sheepmen of today for winter range.

So it was in the days of an early Nez Perce chief, perhaps Old Joseph, leader of the Nez Perce Indians, before the white man came to take his fruitful lands. From the beautiful summer home in the Wallowa valley and near limpid lake Wallowa, the chief was wont to move his band every winter to the lower lands, or "land of many waters," as the Nez Perce called it.

The early snows had begun to fall in the higher lands. The peaks of the Blue Mountains on the east, and the Powder River mountains on the south of Wallowa Valley were capped in snow. It was time for the Nez Perce to move their fine herds of horses to "the Land of Many Waters."

At the time of the coming of Lewis and Clark to Oregon they found the Nez Perce people interested in breeding fine horses. True, they were what we commonly call "cayuse." But they were bred for endurance, and

were suited to the Indians' mode of living. The chief prided himself in the kindness shown their animals and so it was that he selected from his braves the most capable of all, one Imna for this task. Straight, sinewy and tall--keen of eye and fleet was this fellow.

Imna knew the perils of his undertaking for at that time the Nez Perce were unfriendly with the Snakes, inhabitants of the Snake and Salmon river valleys of Idaho. The Snakes had harassed them to death, driving off their stock and stealing their lands. Imna believed he could outwit the Snakes if the odds were not against him.

So at the break of dawn Imna was to leave with some hundred head of choice stock. With him were two Indians of his own choosing. His chief had promised him the finest colt of the herd as reward when the feat was accomplished. A black with a star face and a white fetlock with a coat of satin was his choice.

The day was done without event and night had set in before the gradual slope led into the mouth of the canyon. The roar of the river and smell of its boiling waters was an invitation to the tired, thirsty animals as they were nearing home, they rushed headlong down the long, rocky trail to the water below. Two Snake Indians on lookout above, their ears keyed to the silence, knew the Nez Perce horses were nearing.

The Nez Perce had scarcely closed their eyes in sleep before the renegade Snakes were among their horses. The snorting of the animals and the yelling of the enemy had the surprised Nez Perces after them, but being on foot they were no match for the mounted enemy. Their horses were clattering away up the canyon with the Snakes riding hard on their trail. There was nothing to do but wait the coming of day and the chief's arrival. But before Imna slept he decided to leave on foot in pursuit. Visions of the sleek, black yearling were fading, but he must rectify his stupidity in some manner, before his chief.

At dawn Imna was away with a strip of jerked venison as his only pack. He knew the odds were against him. The enemy was mounted. They were many hours ahead of him. He wore only soft moccasins to protect his feet from the sharp rocks of the trail. Hackberry and thorn bush scratched at his limbs. The trail wound ever upward. His pulses beat in his body but he never slackened his pace except to drink at an occasional spring.

He came at last to their burned out campfire. He could see his horses hoof prints. He was encouraged, they would not suspect him of following on foot. They would stop to eat. He would keep up his steady gait and, if the gods were with him, overtake them before they reached Snake river. If they ever crossed into their own territory he was lost. He must go on faster and faster.

The afternoon sun sank below the tops of the dense pines that flanked the distant ridge, and evening changed swiftly to dusk. The mauve shades turned quickly to purple and from purple to black. Velvet night closed in around the Indian. Nothing but the chirping of crickets and the call of the night birds disturbed the hush of the

night.

As Imna neared the summit of the divide between the Snake river valley and the "Land of Many Waters" he detected the smell of smoke from a camp fire. This pass has since been named "Freeze Out Gap" due to the fact that two white men were nearly frozen while trying to spend the night there.

The Snakes had eaten a heavy meal and rolled in their blankets near the far side of the pass. The smell of cooked meat was plain to Imna. He had hoped for this. The Snakes would have eaten to the limit and their drugged senses would aid in his work. He remained awhile in hiding among the chaparral of the pass. He could hear the uneasy stamp of his animals picketed near by. The Indian at last came out from his hiding place, and cautiously approached the sleeping Snakes. The odor of cooked flesh gave him a feeling of uneasiness. It was not bear nor yet deer, neither was it grouse. The peculiar sweetness of it told him it was horse flesh. He was not surprised at this, however, as he knew it was their custom to eat horse flesh when food was scarce. As he speculated as to the next move, his keen eye observed what appeared to be the small hoof of a colt near the dying embers; black and sleek was the hair on the bone of the slender leg with a white fetlock. To the seething brain of the intrepid Imna came a vision of his coveted prize colt in its death struggle--so should the enemy pay with life blood.

The knife that the Snakes had used to dress his beloved colt lay still bloody near the embers. With a bound, the Indian, now, a savage, gripped its hilt and lunged to his first victim. With a convulsed shudder the sleeping Snake joined his fathers, and so from body to body until all four Snakes lay dead in their gore, lunged the undaunted Imna. Vengeance was sweet. With the stoic calmness of his race, Imna called to his mount among the band and was answered by a joyful whinny.

In a very few minutes he was riding behind his band headed for "The Land of Many Waters". Noon of the next day found him at the mouth of Sheep Creek, weary but exalted over his victory. His return was a thing of great joy among the waiting Nez Perce. The chief and his followers held a pow wow in his honor.

At the set of sun the chief called all his braves about him and made this proclamation: "As the sun sets on the "Land of Many Waters" so shall it be called "Imnaha". To you my son, shall be given the horse of your choice, and over the land of Imnaha you shall rule."

To this day the advent of the white man has not completely eclipsed the presence of the red man in this land. The Indian still hunts and fishes and the nature-loving white still feels the charm of his presence.

So today the "Land of Many Waters" is called IMNAHA.

A NEZ PERCE CALENDAR

reproduced from

NOON NEE ME POO

by

Allen P. Slickpoo and Deward E. Walker Jr.

We-lu-poop-- January, season of cold weather.

Au-la-tah-mahl--February, season of hard time to build fire (Ah-lah meaning fire).

Lah-te-tahl--March, beginning of blossoming of flowers season.

Keh-khee-tahl--April, first harvest of roots known as keh-kheet

Ah-pah-ahl--May, season of the making of Up-pa (baked loaf), made from ground Khouse.

Toose-te-ma-sah-tahl--June, season of migrating to higher elevation to dig the roots.

Heel-lul--season of melting snow in the mountains.

Khoy-tsahl--July, season of the run of the "Blue Back" salmon.

Tah-ya-ahl--August, season of midsummer (Ta-Yum) hot weather. It is also referred to as Wa-wa-mai-kahl--when the salmon reach the canyon streams or upper tributaries to spawn.

Pe-khoon-mai-kahl--September, season of the fall salmon run going up stream or when the fingerlings journey down river to the ocean.

Hope-lul--October, season when the Tammrack needles are shedding and
the trees turn color.

Sekh-le-wahl--November, season of shedding of leaves.

Ha-oo-khoy--December, season of the fetus in the womb of the deer.

WILLIAM CUSICK, PIONEER BOTANIST

Written by Jo Broadwell

In 1929, the United States Geographic Board in Washington D.C., awarded William C. Cusick a mountain with his name in the Eagle Cap Wilderness Area. It rests close to Eagle Cap, far up the south fork of the Imnaha, glistening in limestone and white granite, a myriad of wildflowers in rainbow colors. He left behind very little knowledge of his personal life, other than the flowers and grasses he discovered. The following account draws upon these sources:

- PIONEER BOTANISTS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST by Erwin Lange, Oregon Historical Quaterly 1956.
- THE BULLETIN OF THE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY October 1981 through May 1982
- RARE, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED VASCULAR PLANTS IN OREGON by Jean Siddall 1979.

Mostly working alone, and for little monetary reward, was a small group of dedicated pioneer botanists living in the Pacific Northwest around the turn of the century. With limited or no formal training in the field of botany, these unusual men spent their lifetime searching for new plant species in the remote corners of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, parts of Montana, Alaska and British Columbia. Records and diaries are few in number, but the volume of plant specimens they collected run into the thousands.

Colleges and universities of the Northwest were still to be founded when these men began their work. The two available but not altogether adequate plant classification texts were The Botany of California , by Watson Gray Brewer, and Synoptical Flora of North America , by Asa Gray. These books, along with wood slat plant presses, a hand lens, a notebook for notations, special graded paper and balsam or camphor for mounting made up the necessary botanical paraphernalia.

William C. Cusick, the most well known botanist of Eastern Oregon saw his first plant book at twenty-two years of age. After walking the Oregon Trail behind an oxteam in 1853, joining the army and later teaching school in the Willamette Valley, he decided to buy a ranch on the Powder River near Union, Oregon. Here he began collecting plants even though he had never seen an herbarium or spoken with any knowledgable professor. Much time was spent in correspondence with botanists in the East on how to find plants, mount them, number them and who to sell to. Each year he set out on his pony, or team and wagon, combing the hillsides, the high rugged mountains and sandy deserts for new greens. He often traveled alone for weeks at a time, taking no firearms or fishing tackle, feeling that unmolested animals would never trouble him. Besides he was too concerned in plant collecting to do any fishing anyway. Exploring first the Steens Mountain, then the Wallowas, he continued as far as the Santa Rosa Mountains of Nevada, the Seven Devils in Idaho, and Crater Lake.

"There is not enough pay in it" he wrote in 1902. "Expenses are so very heavy and after these are paid there isn't much left for me."

Of all the well known botanists of Oregon, William Cusick was clearly the most unassuming and modest. His collections brought other men fame. Rarely did he wish to publicize his own accomplishments. His neighbors didn't even know that in 1908 a new genus of umbelliferae, CUSIKIA, was named in his honor, or that a great many species held the identification of CUSICKII. From Hitchcock's condensed Flora of the Pacific Northwest we find his name in reference to a special variety of onion, rockcress, aster, vetch, reedgrass, sedge, indian paintbrush, wild buckwheat, gentian, forget-me-not, biscuitroot, monkeyflower, penstemon, bluegrass, knotweed, buttercup, speedwell and camas. (This list, by no means, being complete.)

He sold his first herbarium to the University of Oregon, and later another, comprising of 3600 species, to the State College of Washington at Pullman. These were the first large collections representing the flora of Eastern Oregon.

Cusick never met Thomas Howell, living over on Sauvie's Island, but he did exchange plants with him through the mail. This man had only three months of formal schooling yet he published the first catalogue of plants of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, sold seeds, bulbs and plants to parts of Europe and America, produced an herbarium of over 10,000 species, and with great difficulty

organized a volume of wild plants of the Pacific Northwest. A Portland firm promised to publish his work, but stalled due to Howell's poor handwriting. So, by setting the type himself at home and carrying case after case of set type to the printers, the task was finally completed under one volume seven years later.

Living on the westside of the Cascades afforded botanists many luxuries Cusick never experienced. For one, there was contact with other scientists and teachers which inspired more expeditions into the back country. Two, because botanists were awarded free passes on boats and trains they were able to cover a larger territory than if they were limited to their own horse and wagon.

Louis Henderson, a graduate of Cornell University, explored the Northwest as a botanist for sixty years, and left behind a delightful diary of his ramblings in mountain country. On the 4th of July in 1879, Henderson recounts, he and a small group of scientists climbed the snow slopes of Mt. Adams without "adequate nails or pegs in our shoes or steel pointed alpenstocks; neither did we grease or blacken our faces to avoid sunburn. In order to reach the top we proceeded to fill our pockets with small flat stones to mark our way across the snowfields. Unnecessary to say, those flat stones were so heated by the sun's rays they had all sunk out of sight before our return 15 hours later"

On another Mt. Adams trip he was determined to investigate more

alpine plants but to do so required crossing glaciers and snowfields alone on snowbridges in the early morning hours. On his return trip that afternoon he found all the snowbridges melted out. "As I looked down into the blue-black depths I shuddered at the death I had escaped as well as my supreme ignorance of alpine dangers." Adventures encountered during his plants forays often brought him into camp in the late evening hours.

Once, on Mt. Rainier in September 1891, he nearly lost his life to hypothermia while gathering the berries of plants. A guide dropped him off 20 miles from the nearest inhabitation, expecting to pick him up ten days later. Having no tent and only a few blankets to roll in, he enjoyed balmy weather the first two days, adding many specimens to his collection. Then a storm brewed, bringing rain then snow, "heavily falling and covering the limbs of the alpine firs with heavy burdens. These limbs rarely break under snow, but bend more and more, till the snow cannot remain any longer, and come thundering down to earth. The first big slide put out my fire under a two foot avalanche; pretty near obliterated me under its pounding mass, and wet me to the skin." He slept in a snow hole that night, wrapped his frozen outer garments and blankets around him the next morning, and hastily trudged off for lower elevation.

"Soon I came to a level spot where I nearly lost my head and idea of location from the snow beating in my face like bullets.

'Steady', I cried to myself in order to hear human voice..."

Following the small trickle of a creek by sliding down precipitous slopes, Henderson finally came to the Nisqually River. "There one of my legs utterly played out from the strain. However, I was fired by the thought of getting to a bed that night, so I would seize that leg when I came to a big tree in the way, and slam it over the log with both hands, following slowly with the other." He found a trail but was forced to cross waist deep water five times before a deserted cabin finally came to view.

In the summer of 1890 Henderson accompanied an expedition through the Olympics from East to West, supplies being packed in by mules. One evening Henderson and his party were forced to return to camp by a new route, because their mules simply would not budge one step on the old trail: "My kind friends, did any of you ever have the doubtful pleasure of forcing your way through Devil's Club by night? If you haven't you still have one experience you will never forget. By nine pm we were every now and then firing off our rifle to see whether we could be answered from camp. Finally, we were delighted to hear answering shots in the distance. By ten pm we had reached camp, but not to sleep! The next day we spent most of the day in pulling out or even cutting out the prickles of Devils Club from our faces, hands and arms, and rubbing the parts with bacon rind, as we had no other curatives. For the next week our faces and arms were swollen and sore, and I suppose it was due to our splendid health that no one of us was affected by blood poisoning, as is the fate of many who pass through this cursed brush!"

In yet another episode, Henderson tells of a 1000 mile botanical reconnaissance undertaken throughout the central portions of Idaho, exploring specifically the Salmon River and Lost River Mountains. Pay was \$150 per summer month, covering 30-50 miles per day. One man walked looking for specimens, while the other rode, leading a mule. They carried a pedometer to measure out equal 10 mile stints. Besides encountering the usual annoyances of horseflies, fallen timber on roads, sudden storms and bridges broken out due to high water flood stages and days where no decent water was found at all, they also had to deal with an Indian uprising. They spent several days helping a family move chickens, hogs, and wagonloads of food ten miles into the hills for refuge against a small band of Lemhi Indians supposedly on the warpath. This, later was found to be a false alarm, but Henderson writes "I botanized, Indians or no Indians!"

On the larger jaunts, or "tramps", as he calls them, each man was "limited to a tin cup attached to his belt or to the backstrap of his pants. To begin the evening meal, flour, salt and baking powder were mixed in a sack, while stirring went on constantly with the index finger, I am glad to say carefully washed. When the right consistency had been reached and dough enough prepared for all the men, it was taken out of the sack, moulded a few minutes," and a hunk thrown to each expectant member. Each sculpted his chunk into two cylindrical pieces and a green stick was then sharpened at the larger end with the common axe. After twisting one of the rolls one way around the stick and the other

the reverse way, the mass was held out over the fire and rotated until it hardened into a French loaf. The thinner end of the stick was sharpened with a pocket knife and "impaled theron a fish with a small slab of bacon attached to then bake. In the meantime coffee boiled in one big pot, but if you were finicky and prefered tea, you brewed it yourself in your own tin cup. A few dried apples or prunes, as dessert, finished your meal."

Louis Henderson was professor of botany at the University of Idaho for 18 years; twelve species bearing his name. The shooting star or bird's bill is his most well known plant. Summers were always spent on botanical trips and on his seventieth birthday he swam across the Columbia River.

Botanists are still searching the mountains for plant species today, carrying with them the same simple implements and tools. But now great concern has developed for the rate at which native habitats are disappearing, and for the species of native plants which, as a result, are becoming more rare. The same determined and undying spirit the early plant collectors shared for exploration of wild uncharted country, the new pioneer botanists of the 1970's and 80's are refocusing toward land preservation .

Much of the wild, flowering grassland country that Howell, Cusick and Henderson traveled through is now in wheat fields or well-grazed ranchland. Mining, recreational use and suprisingly, commercial and private collectors of rare plant species for

"scientific" purposes all pose a significant threat to our native plants.

Oregon is one of the few states to compile a list of rare, threatened and endangered plants by volunteer effort. During the past six years, 22,000 hours have been donated by devoted volunteers. It's unusual, too, that we have an interagency taskforce of state, federal and private land managing agencies and organizations cooperating in the data gathering process. Our state runs third to Texas and California for holding the greatest number of diversification of plant species. Within the Wallowa mountains alone is the second greatest concentration of rare plants in the state. Certain plants grow only here and in no other known place in the rest of the world. Among these are:

Dwarf Golden Daisy (*erigeron chrysopsidis brevifolius*)

Wallowa Draba (*drabs lemmonii cyclomorpha*)

Fraternal paintbrush(*castilleja fraterna*)

Greenman's Desert Parsley (*lomatium greenmanii*)

Of the 4000 known Oregon species of vascular plants, close to 400 are included on the rare and endangered list compiled in 1979.

An endangered species is "one which is in danger of becoming extinct throughout all or a significant portion of its range."

This list undergoes continuous readjustments due to newly reported botanical finds every year. For example, certain plants Cusick reported in the late 1890's have not been relocated since, so it is presumed such a plant may be extinct or near extinction.

Or, occasionally, a new plant never presumed to be growing in a particular area may be discovered by a present day botanist.

Sometimes new finds in a particular region may be significant enough to remove a plant from an "endangered" status.

Of the 400 rare, threatened and endangered plants in the state 55 have been found within or adjacent to the Eagle Cap Wilderness. Among these are:

Wallowa milkvetch (*astragalus robbinsii* apliniformis)

Cusick's Camas (*camassia cusickii*)

Wallowa Penstemon (*penstemon spatulatus*)

Alpine Forget Me Not (*eritrichium nanum*)

Lady's slipper (*cypridium montanum*)

Small Northern Bog Orchid (*habenaria obtusata*)

This summer, Roy and Rachel Sines, Wilderness Wildlife volunteers, discovered a plant from the rose family that had not been recorded since William Cusick first made reference to it on July 31, 1899. As they were climbing down from the windswept rock ledges to their small camp below, they realized the date of their find was also July 31, eighty-four years later.

RUDE RURAL RHYMES

written by Bob Adams

In a 1924 scrapbook donated by Mrs. Benton Mays to the Wallowa County Museum, is a poem entitled, "Advice to Campers." Part of it is recorded here. It's hard to believe that sixty years ago there might have been a problem with careless folks venturing into the wilder sections of the country. Perhaps the present plea of NO TRACE CAMPING in 1983 might well have been echoed in earlier times.

"I much admire in summer weather to see the Jones' out together,
They constitute a camping party and every kid is brown and
hearty.

They boil their pot and warm their beans amid seductive
sylvan scenes,

Then pitch their tent beneath the stars and leave the road to
other cars,

Til Phoebus bids them cease to snore and rises to hit the pike
once more.

Brothers, leave your camping site as slick and clean as when you
light.

Amid your horseplay and your laughter, remember those who follow
after,

And do not curse the haunts of Pan with cracker box and salmon
can.

Yea, quench your campfire that no spark escaping from it in the
dark

May scorch the scene you found so fair and leave a desolation
there.

I bless the honest careful tourist, alike the junkman and the
jurist,

But darn the man who scatters matches and spoils our nice green
forest hatches."



