

JOHN DECKER'S ELK.

(A BLACK FOREST SOUVENIR)

By HENRY W. SHOEMAKER

[Taken from "Black Forest Souvenirs," Mr. Shoemaker's latest work. The slayer of Pennsylvania's last elk is undoubtedly a well known figure to some Reporter readers.—Ed.]

COBURN.

Walter Barcott is spending a few days at Nanticoke. J. B. Kern has returned from a two weeks' visit with his daughter at Paton.

John Confer had the misfortune of falling and breaking one of his ribs. He has been suffering serious pains; hope he will soon recover again.

J. E. Harter attended the horse sale at Centre Hall Friday.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Stover of Wetham spent a few days at the home of Thomas Kaler and also attended the Jacob Stover sale at Madisonburg.

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Heim spent last Sunday at the home of Thomas Kaler.

Lewis Stover attended the horse sale at Centre Hall last Friday.

John Meyer had a serious attack of appendicitis one day last week. Hope for his speedy recovery.

A carload of horses were shipped from this place one day last week. Calvin Fryer wears a broad smile since the arrival of a little son.

Andrew Fryer wears a broad smile since the arrival of a little daughter.

W. C. Krader, the agent for Maxwell autos, received a carload of autos last week.

The measles are still the go in our burg. Quite a few of the children are housed up with them.

Aaron Zerby of Bellefonte was a caller among friends one day last week.

Mrs. Jacob Breon from Jersey Shore was a visitor among friends for a few days last week.

Jacob Stover has purchased the home from A. J. Campbell for \$850. He will move into it April 1st.

Pleasant Gap.

From last week.

Miss Helen Love of Bellefonte spent a few days with her grandparents at Weaver's toll-gate.

Miss Freda Weaver is housed up with sore throat.

Miss Lizzie Gill is convalescing from a serious operation at the Bellefonte hospital.

The Lutheran people of our village, aided by friends of our church, contemplate building a new church in the near future.

News from Miss Esther Noll, who had an operation, in the Baltimore hospital, says she is doing very well. Hopes are entertained for a complete recovery.

Quite a few of our townpeople enjoyed the evangelistic services in Bellefonte on Sunday. Among the number were Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Noll and Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Jodon.

Samuel Noll is in the Baltimore hospital for an operation for throat trouble, which has been causing him quite a bit of worry for some time.

Frederick Noll of Bellefonte, assisting Noll Bros., in taking inventory.

There is quite a bit of controversy in our town, over the moving of our postoffice to the lower end of town. To be or not to be is the question.

Frank Weaver is busy excavating the cellar for his new house.

Rumor of a thirty-room boarding house in our town! It may only be rumor, but would be quite a convenience for employees of the Pen and strangers in the town.

Jesse Houtz entertained his father for a short time last week.

Don't forget the weekly dance in Noll's hall.

GOOD WAY TO DO BUSINESS.

M. A. Dodson Sells Reliable Remedy at Half-Price and Guarantee a Cure.

When one can buy gold dollars for fifty cents it is a good time to purchase.

In ordering a 50c bottle of Dr. Howard's celebrated specific for the cure of constipation and dyspepsia at 25 cents, H. A. Dodson is giving one of the greatest trade chances ever offered to the people of Centre Hall.

Even though offered at half price for introductory purposes the specific is old under a guarantee to cure or the money will be refunded.

If food does not digest well if there is gas or pain in the stomach, if the tongue is coated and the breath bad, if there is constipation and straining Dr. Howard's specific will cure you. If it does not, you have druggist H. A. Dodson's personal guarantee to return your money.

Dr. Howard's specific gives quick relief and makes permanent cures of constipation, dyspepsia and all liver troubles.

These are strong statements, but H. A. Dodson is giving his customers a chance to prove their truth at just half the regular price—sixty doses for 25 cents. If they are not found true, all you need to do is to ask for your money. adv.

The national guard of Pennsylvania will be increased from 10,000 to 22,000 men, if a bill introduced in the house Wednesday by Representative Adams, of Luzerne, is passed and sufficient money is appropriated to carry it into effect. The measure, drafted by Adjutant General Stewart, would put Pennsylvania militia on a "war basis" and establish a full militia division.

It was Springtime on Portage Branch. The elkwood was in bloom. In the recesses of a deep swamp, along the edges of which Great Blue Herons nested in the stag-topped crests of the fall white pines, three Wapitis or Pennsylvania Stags were resting themselves. Their leader was an enormous bull, long-bodied, drab-colored, strong of antlers to which the velvet still hung in clusters like the maple-bud rosettes, whose deep, full brown eyes betokened unusual intelligence and patience. By his side stood a well-formed cow, drab-colored, with eyes like those of her lord and master, but infinitely deeper and kinder. Hidden behind her was a very robust looking bull-calf, unusually large and vigorous for his age. At frequent intervals he shook his little head and bristled his tiny mane, for he was restless and anxious to see more of the beautiful forest-world into which he had been so recently born.

The Springtime soon ushered in the Summer, and even the young calf relished the cool retirement of the swamp, so silent save for the occasional croak of the nesting herons, and the frogs. Then the nights became colder, and on the summits of the nearby but unseen mountains wolves barked. The cricket and katydid songs suddenly diminished from full choruses to occasional wandering minstrels.

The first snow came, and the elk sought the valleys, browsed and huddled together, while the fierce winds rattled the dead tops of the pines. Sometimes through the openings in the branches above their coats were dappled by cold starlight. Then came heavy rains, warm days, the disappearance of the snow. The skunk cabbage quickly appeared along the edges of the swamp, there were bird songs that recalled the previous year. The elk family wandered back to higher lands, finding themselves again in the inaccessible swamp on Portage Branch.

One morning the stalwart bull-calf awoke to find a newcomer in the family circle. The slimmer neck, narrower head, and wilder, more appealing eyes, betokened that it was a sister who had come to swell their numbers.

With the blooming of the elkwood the bull-calf felt a tickling sensation on the crown of his head. He began to rub his skull against the brown bark of the original pines but could find no success. Soon little growths, like swellings appeared. They dripped bloody at the slightest contact with other substances. As the season advanced, and the little sister waxed slimmer, and more lithe, and more beautiful, the bumps on the bull-calf's head became more to resemble miniature horns. The bull-calf was very proud of his embry antlers, and tossed his head, and sometimes tried to roar like his sire but his voice cracked in an adolescent squeak. All through the Summer the elk family were quietest. The bull-calf wondered why no effort was made to venture far from the deep, and insect teeming swamp. The nights became colder. The herons flew away. The katydid and cricket choruses lessened, bird songs were no more, even the wild pigeons had ceased their cooing. Only a solitary hylode piped. Wolves barked on the unseen heights. Once a panther's scream, its love song, long, weird and terrible, reverberated the entire nocturnal atmosphere. On grey afternoons the "dum, dum, dum," the drumming of the ruffed grouse was heard.

One morning, when the sun was climbing over the mountain tops, and the maple leaves were particularly golden, a strange series of sounds came to the ears of the elk family. It was bang, bang, bang, and to the minds of all of them some instinct said that it was the report of the weapons of their most inexcusable, and incomprehensible foe, mankind. All that day and that night the elk family huddled more closely together in the depths of the dismal swamp. The bull-calf needed no one to tell him now why his elders were so cautious. While he had never seen a man, he had been born with a fear of an arch and horrible enemy, beside which panther, wolf, or rattlesnake paled into insignificance. But the instinct of the race grew stronger every night. The voice first a tremolo, then cracked and unmusical, grew into something loud and sonorous. One night he poured forth his soul to the wilderness, and in tones of which he was not ashamed. But the only answer was the echo from the unseen mountains. Other nights produced no other results. Again the instinct which always made for self-preservation, told him that there never would be an answer, that if he must continue his race his mate must be his little sister. This dulled a little the keenness of his joy of masculinity. But he showed it in no other way than that he stopped his night-song. His eyes assumed a softer expression, he became more solicitous for the comfort of his mate-to-be, edging her to where the browse was choicest.

The winter came on again. With bumps on his skull, now fashioned into erect broad prongs, and with throat full and mane shaggy, he was almost a match for his majestic sire. Snow fell, the elk family migrated southward, to another hidden swamp in the lowlands. There they were in comfort for a while. One morning they were roused from their ruminations by a savage yelping, a sound which lacked all the noble melody of wolfish or catlike cries. Man's henchmen, dogs, were somewhere in the forest. It was too late to fly, the elk family must wait, perhaps the enemies would pass them by. But it was not to be. There came an awful cracking of brush and twig, and soon two spotted, hideous looking hounds, with flapping ears bounded into the centre of the swamp.

Quick as a flash the old bull went at them with lowered antlers, and tossed them torn and bleeding among the hazels. Barely had they been dispatched, when a man, thickset, bearded, red-capped clad in furs, bearing something long and glistening, appeared at the verge of the swale. He was Jim Jacobs, full-blooded Seneca hunter, the terror of the Wapitis of Northern Pennsylvania.

The thought flashed through the bull-calf's mind "How can this little thing hurt us, wipe out our race, level the forest covers, change the very aspect of the world now share he?" Quick as lightning could think the diminutive Indian had the long, glistening thing—his rifle, to his shoulder, and aiming, fired, and down fell the mother elk, choicest of the quartette from a pot hunter's point of view. Blood, bright red, gushed from a hole in her neck, as she toppled over on her side into the snow. The old bull-calf gave a snort of alarm and command, and trotted away followed by his two offspring who trusted him implicitly. There was no second shot.

Evidently Jacobs was satisfied with the cow elk, for when far to the north, the elk trio paused for breath, there came no further apprehensions of danger. The episode produced a profound impression on the survivors. They wintered in a northern swamp, enduring great hardships. On some nights they were almost buried in avalanches of snow. There was browse enough, if they could but reach it. The elk family became very lean and listless as the long winter waned. The bull elk hung his head, he acted like some old, discouraged man. The younger elk longed for the chance to move, to wander, but the will of their sire was strong enough to hold them close to the confines of the swamp. Before the snow was all gone, even before the May-flower budded, ominous barking of the wolves on the unseen mountains, disturbed the peaceful slumber of the elk. The night winds rattled the dead tops of the ancient white pines, banshee like in their warnings.

One grey morning, while the elk family stood motionless, a strange patter of feet was heard. It could not be man's ally, the dogs, there was no yelping or barking. The enemies, whatever they were, were approaching, silently save for the footfalls on the rattling leaves and show patches. Like a sudden storm, they were upon the elk, and running about them in circles, great, gaunt, grey creatures, all jaws—wolves. At a snarling order from the leader the ugly mob singled out the old bull elk for their fury. Reaching with the wide jaws for his gambrel joints they bit him fiercely, and he was quickly rendered crippled and helpless. As he fell to his knees, the leader of the wolves with one snap, tore his throat open. Meanwhile, the two younger Wapitis had a chance to escape, and they made good use of it. They traveled steadily until nightfall. Self-preservation dulled their grief for their sire, and he was quickly rendered to them like wolfish footfalls.

They traveled all night, aimlessly, but their direction was southerly. They rested a while in a secluded swamp at dawn, but soon their instinct moved them on. At noon they came to a broad stream of water, the Sinnemahoning; they were making ready to plunge into it, and to cross, when they noticed a log cabin, with creatures, human beings, moving about it, on the opposite shore. The elk slunk back into the tanglewood, and remained motionless until all was dark. Then for the first time in their lives they swam, and were soon on the other side, landing about a quarter of a mile below the log-cabin. A high mountain reared its precipitous cliffs close to the water's edge. The refugees made no attempt to scale it or to reconnoitre until next morning, when their mutual decision was to find sanctuary among its pinnacles. They wandered in an easterly direction along its base through a tangle of wild grapes, water-birches and elms, until they came to a little draft, where now a mountain torrent gushed out from under a hemlock canopy. Lowering their heads they wended their way up the mountain, their feet displacing and rolling downward the smooth stones in the bed of the stream. They stopped many times to catch their breath, or to pick a twig off some deciduous tree, but they were on the bare, bleak, open summit in time to greet the afternoon sun before it reached the level of the knobs, the highest of the western peaks. In the clear afternoon light they had an admirable opportunity to look about them. There were mountain peaks, mostly bare, cold and grey on every side, but in the sides of all of them were furrows or hollows heavily timbered, mostly with hemlocks running almost to the summits. These looked like avenues of escape. Doubtless one of these would lead into some sequestered valley or plateau where they might follow out their destiny for a while.

The young elk made a handsome pair. The young bull was unusually large for his age, he had a proud head and eye there was an almost Roman curve to brow and nostrils. His winter coat was almost an olive or drab. The young cow had a fine expression, the eyes were larger than ever through that perception which only suffering gives. Her lines were symmetrical, she was short coupled, almost like a western elk. Her color was somewhat lighter than her mate. The two hunted beasts gazed at the limitless expanse for a while, and then at a common impulse, started down one of the worn water-courses with moss-covered banks that seemed like a path, and which led into the big timber below.

At nightfall, they found themselves in a soggy upland bog, caused by many windfalls damming up the brook, which flowed down through the draft. It was probably a thousand feet above the valley, which was little wider than the Moshannon and the West Branch of the Susquehanna, which had their confidence in it. It was a good place to tarry because it was so hard to get to; few outside foes would ever invade its solitude. Stretching from it were flats or "benches," where a little grass was apt to grow, and where beeches, birches, and maples were abundant. But the prevailing forest was hemlock. Here the young elk spent many happy days. Gradually a sense of security returned. The weather became warm, and though it was but Springtime, the flow of the mountain torrent diminished. There

(Continued on inside page.)

An Open, Square, Aboveboard, Direct Appeal to the Intelligence and Judgment of the People

The railroads of Pennsylvania and New Jersey believe that the public should be fully advised concerning the Full Crew laws in these states. Costly experience has demonstrated that these laws have worked to the detriment of public interest and that their repeal would redound greatly to the advantage of the people.

Not a Fight On Trainmen

The railroad companies making this announcement wish the public to clearly understand that this appeal is in no way to be construed as being aimed at the trainmen in their employ, nor is it an effort to curtail operating expenses at the cost of public safety or service.

The companies point to the fact, with justifiable pride, that whenever public safety and convenience demanded an increased number of employes the necessary men were put on trains. Behind this statement is a record of advancements and improvement achievements which is a most vital factor of calm and dispassionate consideration of the laws in question.

But when arbitrary laws are passed which compel these railroad companies to burden their payrolls with some \$2,000,000 annually for wasted, unwarranted extra labor, and which actually means a decrease, rather than an increase, in operating efficiency, together with heavier casualty lists, it is undeniable that the public should be put in full touch with existing conditions that the people may judge wisely for themselves should an effort be made to impugn the sincere motives which prompt this educational campaign.

How Full Crew Law Works

A twenty-nine-car freight train can be operated with five men. Add a car and an extra man must go on. The law requires no larger crew on a hundred-car train.

A four-car passenger train can run with five men. On a five-car or longer train there must be an extra man. Even if all the cars are Pullmans, with porters and a Pullman conductor, a six-man railroad crew is required.

A milk or express train of twenty or more cars, running through, sealed, and virtually without stops, must carry a crew of six. The only place four of them would ride would be in the end car.

When the Full Crew law became effective in Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Railroad Lines East of Pittsburgh and Erie were operating in Pennsylvania 2,971 weekday trains. Of these, 1,198 passenger and 1,061 freight trains were manned up to or beyond the law's requirements.

The 1,198 passenger trains which were provided with crews equal to or in excess of the law's requirements consisted principally of local or semi-local trains, making frequent stops and handling a large number of passengers. The second brakeman was employed to expedite the departure of trains from stations and to assist conductors in collecting tickets.

The 1,061 freight trains on which the law required no additional men consisted of local freight trains carrying package freight, on which brakemen were required to load and unload cars; road chuffers, doing a large amount of work, necessitating the throwing of switches and much hand braking on cars; mine trains, placing empty cars and picking up loaded cars, and through slow freight trains of heavy tonnage on the Philadelphia and Middle Divisions on which the brakemen riding on the front part of the trains were required to assist the firemen.

Official Casualty Statistics

The effect of the Full Crew laws in forcing extra men into already adequate train crews, thus dividing responsibility, has been to increase the hazard of operation. This fact is conclusively proved by the official figures of the Interstate Commerce Commission. The great number of persons killed who were neither employes nor passengers have not been included, for it is obvious that extra men on trains are powerless to prevent such casualties.

The Pennsylvania Full Crew law took effect on July 19, 1911. The Commission's figures show that for the three-year period preceding this date 10,186 employes and passengers were killed. Since the law became operative, the total number killed shows an increase, or 10,372 persons.

The casualty list of the Pennsylvania Railroad for the six months preceding the enactment and the first six months of 1914, when the law was in full force and effect, discloses the following startling comparison:

	Before Law, First half 1911		Under Law, First half 1914	
	Killed	Injured	Killed	Injured
Trainmen	15	1046	16	1699
Passengers	1	99	*2	141
	16	1145	18	1840

*Fall from train.

What the Extra Man Costs

Twenty Railroads in Pennsylvania and New Jersey last year paid in employment of superfluous brakemen \$2,000,000. That would have bought.....200 steel coaches
It would have bought.....80 locomotives
It would have paid for.....67,000 tons of rails
It would have returned 5% on.....\$40,000,000
It would have block signaled.....300 miles of track
It would have eliminated.....65 grade crossings

Rejected by Other States

A Full Crew law was enacted in Missouri and signed by the Governor in April, 1913. In November, 1914, it was submitted to a referendum vote. The people repudiated the law by a vote of 324,055 against 159,593.

A proposed Full Crew law for Texas failed to pass owing to the popular protest against it, led by the farmers.

In 1907, Governor Charles E. Hughes, of New York, vetoed an attempt to enact a Full Crew law in that state.

In 1912, Governor John A. Dix, of New York, also vetoed a Full Crew measure. Governor Foss, of Massachusetts, vetoed a Full Crew bill passed by the legislature.

In 1913 the State Assembly wisely referred a Full Crew law to the Railroad Commission of Connecticut, who promptly condemned it.

Governor Cruise, of Oklahoma, vetoed a Full Crew bill in 1913.

Attempts to enact Full Crew laws in Colorado, Delaware, Virginia, and Ohio were defeated.

In Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and Maryland such laws are in force. In the interest of the public, the railroads, and the great body of railroad employes, these burdensome laws should be repealed. In Pennsylvania, approximately 65,000 men are employed in train service. Only 2,500 of these are extra brakemen.

Will Wage a Just Fight

Railroads operating in Pennsylvania and New Jersey are determined to place their case squarely and fairly before the people of those states. They are firmly convinced that the people—all of whom, without exception, are affected more or less directly by the imposition of this annual \$2,000,000 burden, and thousands of whom are direct sufferers—will, knowing what a continuation of these harmful laws means to them, voice their wishes in no uncertain way to their elected representatives at Harrisburg and Trenton.

This campaign of public enlightenment will be waged by the railroads in a manner that cannot possibly be legitimately assailed. There will be no lobbying, no star chamber conferences, or private deals to influence public opinion or legislative action. The campaign will be fought in the open, purely on its merits.

Railroad Pledge to Trainmen and Public

Definitely and finally to give public notice that the railroads ask only a square deal all around in this matter, the presidents of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Philadelphia & Reading Railway Company and Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company, in announcing on February 9 that the railroads intended to work for repeal of the Full Crew laws, pledged themselves as follows:

"Let us add that if there shall be evidence that without such laws the railroads would underman trains, to the hardship of employes or the detriment of or danger to the public, that, assuming the present Public Service acts do not give to the commissions ample powers to determine what crews are necessary on different trains and to compel the railroads to man trains as ordered, we will openly support such amendments to the present acts as may be necessary to give such assurance."

The railroads now appeal directly to the people, who demand the greatest safety at all times and who realize that a policy of wise economy, and not one of wasted revenue, will enable the railroads to adequately fulfill their obligations and meet those demands as they should be met.

R. L. O'DONNELL,

Chairman, Executive Committee, Associated Railroads of Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

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