



SHIBE, MULLIN, PLANK, MURPHY, COLLINS AND COOMBS  
—THE STAR HUNTERS

## From My Diary

By John Coombs

*Pitcher, Philadelphia Americans*

Illustration from Photograph

CONTEMPLATING a successful trip for hunting big game, John Shibe, Eddie Plank, Danny Murphy, Jimmy Collins and myself left Philadelphia soon after the close of the ball season last year for a hunting and canoeing trip down the famous Allegash River of Maine. The topography of the country was unknown to the non-residents. Many laughable stories can be told by the boys. I will, however, attempt to describe one of these laughable incidents recalled in reference to this very enjoyable excursion. Our three guides joined us at Greenville, Me.

At the end of a hard day's journey, we landed at the head of Umbazooksus Stream, a small creek coming from a

lake bearing the same name, but emptying into the Penobscot River. Among dry stumps and large trees we decided to pitch camp. We all got to work, with the exception of Shibe and Murphy, who took upon themselves a twelve-mile walk to secure a team to carry our provisions and canoes to Mud Pond—a seven-mile journey. As soon as the party returned, both bearing lanterns to keep away the wild animals, we sat down to a fine supper, consisting of a quarter of venison, potatoes, beans, hot biscuit and coffee. We were all now satisfied with the exception of a smoke, which we had, and then Plank, Murphy and Collins began to prepare themselves for the blankets.

Shibe, the three guides and myself were seated around the campfire telling stories and the wonderful inventions which had gone on in the large cities, of which the guides were ignorant. When the conversation was being carried on in an interesting manner, a loud roar broke into our midst with an echo which sounded against the many hills around us. We stopped talking—looked at each other and reached for our rifles. Again the cry sounded. Two were now distinct. Shibe, who was some distance from the fire, moved toward it as for protection. The guides went into low but earnest conversation and decided that lynx were about. For the third time, the echo rolled from mountain to mountain. Three were now in evidence.

“Whole family, boys,” said one of the guides.

Shibe stood on his feet with his rifle ready, expecting any moment to see many glittering eye-balls.

“What do you think that is, Jack?” said he.

“Hardly know,” said I. “But we must investigate, or the boys in that tent will be scared to death.”

With this determination in view, our head guide (Mr. Mullin), went slowly toward the tall timber, stopping to listen at every step. He had hardly reached the canvas shelter over the sleeping men, when he beckoned for us to come near him. Shibe, with his rifle ready, led the party up to the guide's standing place. When we reached there, we smiled, for the sounds came from the tent.

Opening up the fly of the tent, we all looked in. There was Plank with his mouth open sending out hideous sounds; Murphy was roaring like a wounded tiger; while Collins, with his cap over his ears, his sweater around his neck, his mackinaw over his shoulders, his feet covered with three pair of stockings and a number eleven moccasin, and with four blankets wound around him was uttering sounds which were the cause for the thunder-pealing echo.

Thus the source of our terror was discovered, and with a few loud shouts to the sleeping youths; we journeyed back to the fire and told stories in peace until nine o'clock, when we ourselves sought quiet slumber.

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