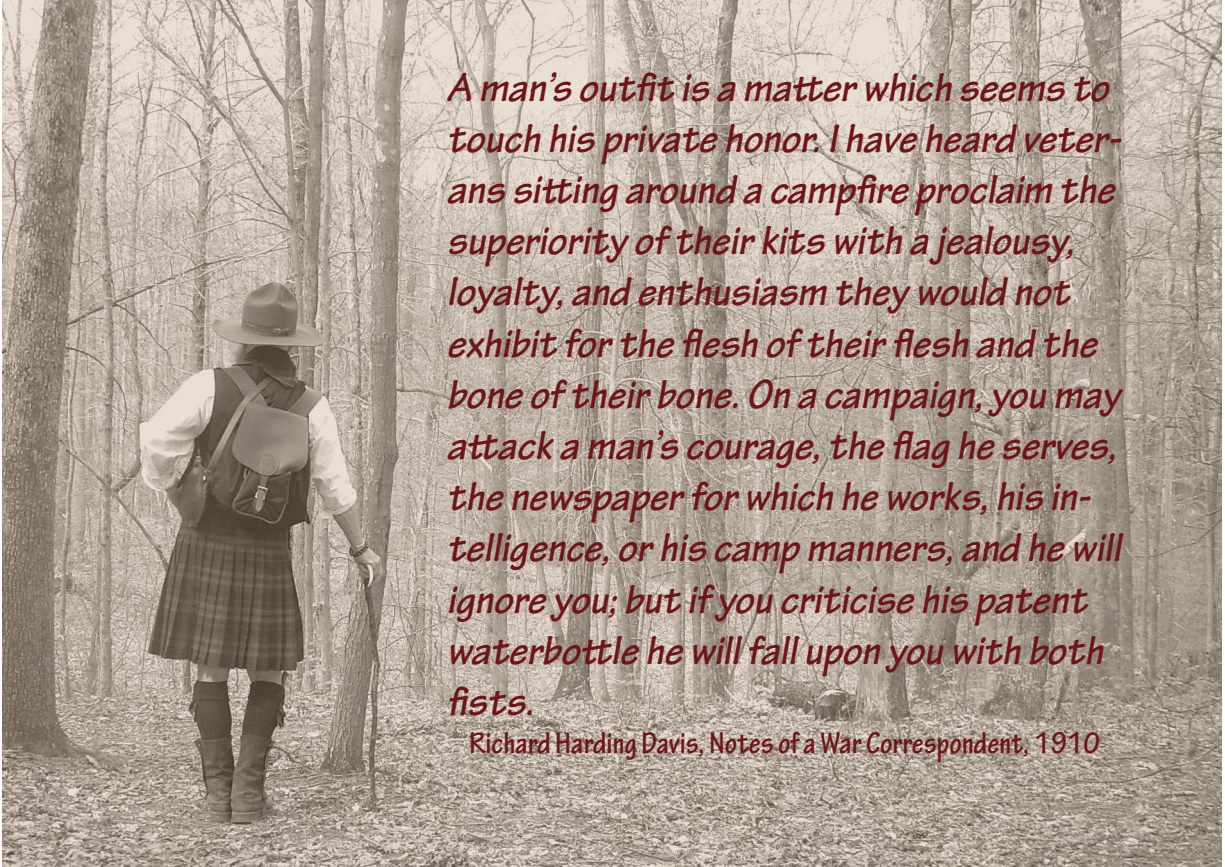


Camping On The Big Two-Hearted River

An Experiential Project in Classic Camping

By Steve Watts and David Wescott, 2018



A man's outfit is a matter which seems to touch his private honor. I have heard veterans sitting around a campfire proclaim the superiority of their kits with a jealousy, loyalty, and enthusiasm they would not exhibit for the flesh of their flesh and the bone of their bone. On a campaign, you may attack a man's courage, the flag he serves, the newspaper for which he works, his intelligence, or his camp manners, and he will ignore you; but if you criticise his patent waterbottle he will fall upon you with both fists.

Richard Harding Davis, Notes of a War Correspondent, 1910

The Big Two-Hearted River - Part 1

ex•pa•tri•ate - 1: to withdraw (oneself) from residence in or allegiance to one's native country
2: to leave one's native country to live and travel elsewhere.

There has always been a fascination for the expatriate – whether they be among Paris' "Lost Generation" (1925-1933) or East Africa's high society of the 20s, or simply soldiers and correspondents conscripted to far flung places– their art, letters, fashion and flare has become the stuff from which legend are made.

Drawing on his own experiences – being both an ambulance driver in WWI as well as an avid

sport fisherman all his life, Hemingway's story of a young man returning from a foreign land to a place he knew and loved is a perfect model for a classic camping experiential project.

Steve sent me a copy of his *Big Two-Hearted River* facsimile about 2011 (page 19). Not being a Hemmingway officianado, I thought it was a nice little camping story.

Then I started to peel the layers away.....

He liked to open cans...and shoot hyenas for no reason. Yep, Hemingway was a hand full if there ever was one.

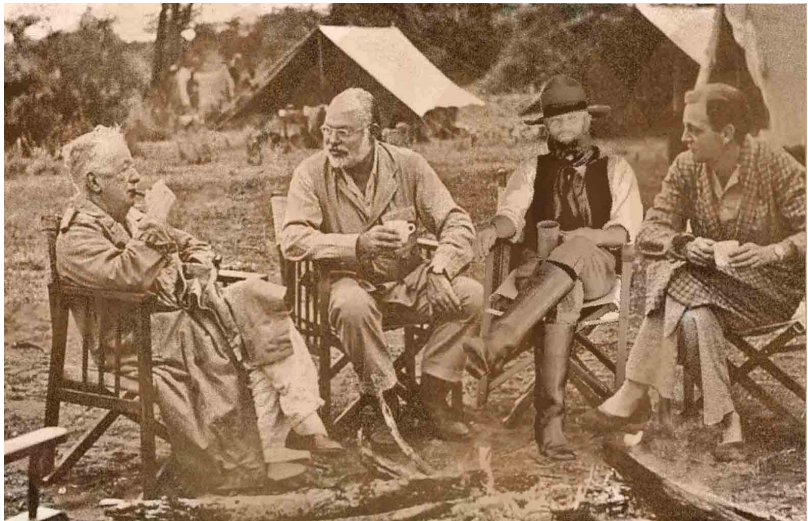
I met him in Philip Percival's camp just west of the Ngong Hills. We got along well enough I suppose, but four days turned out to be just about enough. I observed him to be a good shot and a tireless stalker—moving through the high grass with a boxer's grace.

I can't say much for his hygiene or his cooking skills, but when it came to campfire conversation, he was the grand master—Paris, tarpon, Fitzgerald, guns, Cuba, cats, Roosevelt, books, fascists, fear, courage, cock fighting, and fly rods (and that was just the first night)!

Bror Blixen showed up on the morning of my last day. Pretty soon we were all deep in the cups, and I realized I was in over my head with these two. I left right before sundown and went looking for a quieter camp and the tamer company of lions.

I walked away with a standing invitation to a Gulf Stream fishing trip. I'm still thinking it over.

*Gypsy Jack
Nairobi, 1933*



TR's Camp In Africa

The Expatriates of the 1920's

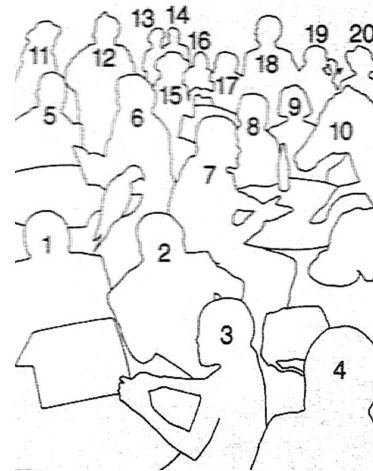
Nothing before, or since has equaled the mass expatriation of the 1920's. It was as if a great draft of wind picked up these very peculiar people and dropped them off in a European life style. Europe and the rest of the world were beginning to see a large population of these American expatriates. "... the younger and footloose intellectuals went streaming up the longest gangplank in the world." Along with the intellectuals went the wealthy élite, the recent college graduates, the art students, and the recent war veterans aptly called "The Lost Generation". Although many went all over the world, the largest density of these expatriates was in France. "Indeed, to young writers like ourselves, a long sojourn in France was almost a pilgrimage to the Holy Land." (Cowley 79)



GLENWAY WESCOTT

Glenway Wescott was an American poet, novelist and essayist. A figure of the American expatriate literary community in Paris during the 1920s, he mixed with Gertrude Stein and other members of the American expatriate community. Wescott was the model for the character Robert Prentiss in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*. Wescott was openly gay. His relationship with longtime companion Monroe Wheeler lasted from 1919 until Wescott's death in 1987.

Watch: *Midnight In Paris*



Expatriate Hall of Fame - Banana Republic, Summer 1987

1. Pablo Picasso 2. D.H. Lawrence 3. Josephine Baker
4. George Gershwin 5. W.H. Auden 6. Mark Twain
7. Ernest Hemingway 8. Gertrude Stein 9. Alice B. Toklas
10. Livingstone (our mascot) 11. Janet Flanner 12. Grace Kelly
13. Duchess of Windsor 14. Duke of Windsor 15. Isadora Duncan
16. Henry James 17. F. Scott Fitzgerald 18. Legarcon un vrai Parisien
19. Vaslav Nijinsky 20. Isak Dinesen.

Hemingway's Story

You might simply read the story as a return to nature that ends with a fine trout supper. (see *The Big Two-Hearted River Project* report). You might also read it as a story about what Nick is made of – suffering under his burden (see *The Classic Tramp Kit* sidebar), redemption through an experience in the natural world (see *A Working Knowledge Of The Land* sidebar), or the solace found in dependence on rules and order (see *The Law of Order* sidebar). Hemingway's Iceberg Theory of writing is used to address the tragedy of war without ever mentioning war. However, most of us simply get caught up in a wonderful story about hiking, camping and fishing for trout.

Who is Nick?

Nick Adams is a character who grows up through many of Hemingway short stories. In this story he has just returned from WWI where he was an ambulance driver for the American Field Service and Red Cross (AFS.org archives), but suffers a postwar case of what was then known as “shell-shock”. Through this story Hemingway subtly uses images of burned-over lands, suffering under the burden of a heavy load, and a tenuous hold on one's emotions, to contrast the relief Nick finds in returning to a place and skills that he has at least some control over; he goes on a fishing trip. But, whatever you do, don't go into the swamp.

An example of Hemingway's reference to war without really addressing it is the presence of Hopkins. Was he there just to teach Nick how to make coffee. The story relates how Hopkins was rich, but when he got a telegram he disappeared never to be seen again by Nick. The reality is that Hopkins was drafted (the telegram) and lost in the war. However, the undercurrent of dealing with the past is neatly obscured by the details of baiting hooks, studying the bottom of the river and cooking pancakes.

The beauty of Nick's return to the river is that he is able to recall his past and use it to heal his wounds. He watches trout, catches grasshoppers, uses ferns for padding, follows a map to his campsite, builds his camp on a rise above the river and builds a small cooking fire....he knew the land and had the skills needed to live comfortably with it....He also liked to open cans. In Nick's case, nature is a place for recollection and rebirth; how can anyone argue with that?

Seney and The Big

Along with Hemingway's character, the town of Seney is fictionalized from a rail and logging boomtown that played out years before Nick arrived. Lumberjacks on buying a rail pass to Seney simply asked for a “Ticket to Hell”. The current town of Seney is built on the banks of the Fox River, not the Big Two-Hearted. The BT-HR is miles to the east of Seney and runs north and east along the shores of Lake Superior.



BIG TWO-HEARTED RIVER PROJECT

Story Inventory

By Steve Watts and David Wescott, 2013

Part I

On The Trail - How heavy was his pack – approximately 45 pounds - This does not count any additional food that was not mentioned in the story. This could add about 8-10# per day - “I’ve got a right to eat this kind of stuff, if I’m willing to carry it, Nick said.

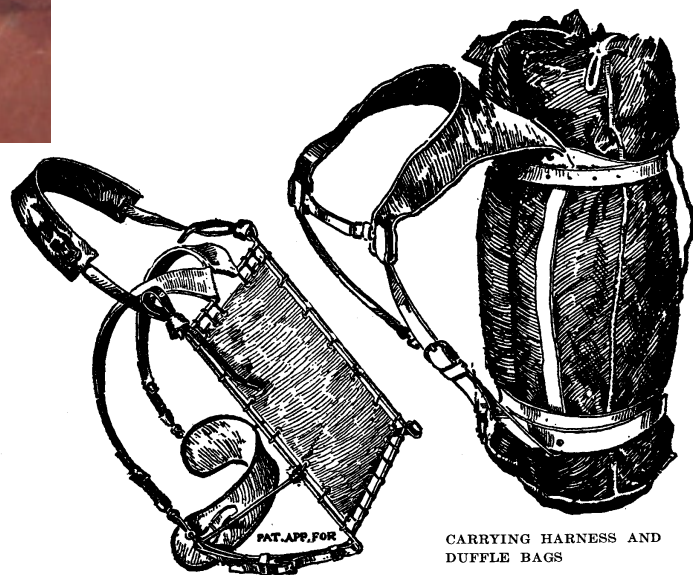
Pack, Harness and Tumpline –

Nick sat down on the bundle of canvas and bedding the baggage man had pitched out of the door of the baggage car.... He was happy. He adjusted the pack harness around the bundle, pulling straps tight, slung the pack on his back got his arms through the shoulder straps and took some of the pull off his shoulders by leaning his forehead against the wide band of the tump-line. Still, it was too heavy. It was much too heavy. He had his leather rod-case in his hand and leaning forward to keep



the weight of the pack high on his shoulders he walked along the road that paralleled the railway track.... He walked along the road feeling, the ache from the pull of the heavy pack.... From the time he had gotten down off the train and the baggage man had thrown his pack out of the open car door things had been different.

The initial description makes the pack sound like a pack harness with a separate tumpline that would be fastened to a canvas manti containing shelter, bedding and cook gear. However, a later entry describes the pack being hung by a nail from a tree to store gear, making it obviously a pack sack with shoulder straps attached. Did the pack also have a pack board like a Trapper Nelson rig?



THE “PERFECT” PACK

CARRYING HARNESS AND DUFFLE BAGS

[Steve’s TN pack]

If Nick also carries 3 medium-weight blankets, the bulk would fill most regular pack bags, leaving little room for the rest of his equipment.

A Working Knowledge Of The Land

By David Wescott, 2018



He broke off some sprigs of the heathery sweet fern, and put them under his pack straps. The chafing crushed it and he smelled it as he walked.

Observer – trout rising, grasshopper color, jack pine and fern

The sun for direction

Marly river bottom Nick and the river

Nick kept his direction by the sun...

Tent lighter inside than outside.....

Fisherman – amateur entomologist

how to kill a fish

Map reader

Camp on high ground

Make camp before cooking

Use side of axe not pole

Fat lighter



Cigarettes

Nick sat down against the charred stump and smoked a cigarette. His pack balanced on the top of the stump harness holding ready, a hollow molded in it from his back... He lit a cigarette and went inside the tent. He took off his shoes and trousers, sitting on the blankets, rolled the shoes up inside the trousers for a pillow and got in between the blankets..., and got out a cigarette from his breast pocket. He lit it and tossed the match into the fast water below the logs. A tiny trout rose at the match, as it swung around in the fast current. Nick laughed. He would finish the cigarette... He sat on the logs, smoking, drying in the sun, the sun warm on his back.

The only thing I could think of while doing this assessment was “How many matches does a smoker actually need?” Steve almost always used a Zippo during his smoking years, so I never paid attention.

Map and Navigation –

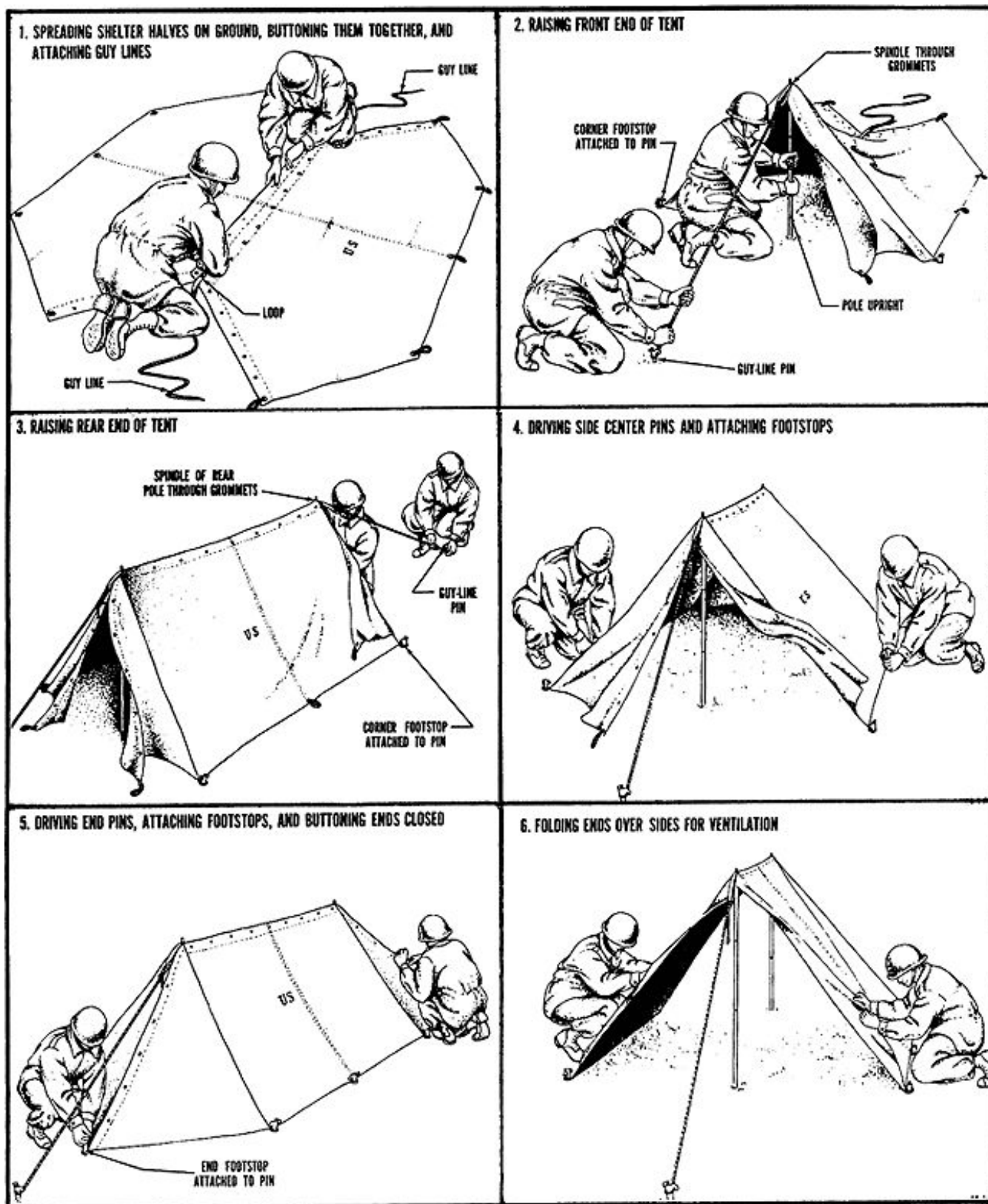
Nick sat smoking, looking out over the country. He did not need to get his map out. He knew where he was from the position of the river... Nick kept his direction by the sun.

It’s been said that woodcraft is “a working knowledge of the land.” Nick’s skills appear to rank among the fraternity of woodsmen. He has a map but can recon his route from the location of the sun and river. He uses an axe to fashion camp gadgets and feeds himself with his knowledge of trout. He knows the uses of the sweet fern and enjoys its aroma and can locate camp from stands of jack pines and topography.

In Camp

Nick dropped his pack and rod case and looked for a level piece of ground. He was very hungry and he wanted to make his camp before he cooked. Between two jack pines, the ground was quite level. He took the ax out of the pack and chopped out two projecting roots. That leveled a piece of ground large enough to sleep on. He smoothed out the sandy soil with his hand and pulled all the sweet fern bushes by their roots. His hands smelled good from the sweet fern. He smoothed the uprooted earth. He did not want anything making lumps under the blankets. When he had the ground smooth, he spread three his blankets. One he folded double, next to the ground. The other two he spread on top. With the ax he slit off a bright slab of pine from one of the stumps and split it into pegs for the tent. He wanted them long and solid to hold in the ground. With the tent unpacked and spread on the ground, the pack, leaning against a jackpine, looked much smaller Nick tied the rope that served the tent for a ridge-pole to the trunk of one of the pine trees and pulled the tent up off the ground with the other end of the rope and tied it to the other pine. The tent hung on the rope like a canvas blanket on a clothesline. Nick poked a pole he had cut up under the back peak of the canvas and then made it a tent by pegging out the sides. He pegged the sides out taut and drove the pegs deep, hitting them down into the ground with the flat of the ax until the rope loops were buried and the canvas was drum tight.

WWII Shelter Half Pup Tent Instructions



1896 Patent

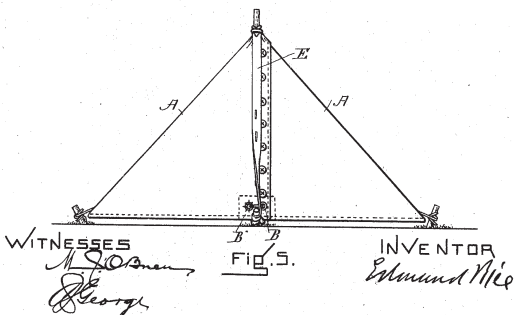
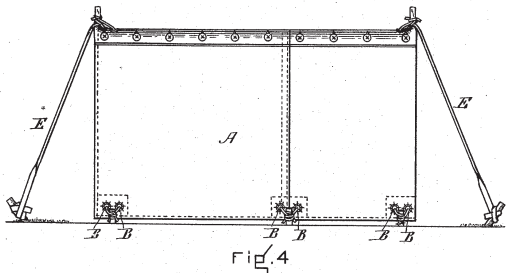
(No Model.)

E. RICE.
SHELTER TENT.

3 Sheets—Sheet 2.

No. 573,918.

Patented Dec. 29, 1896.



THE KODAK PATENT CO., PHOTOGRAPHIC, WASHINGTON, D. C.

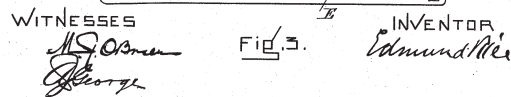
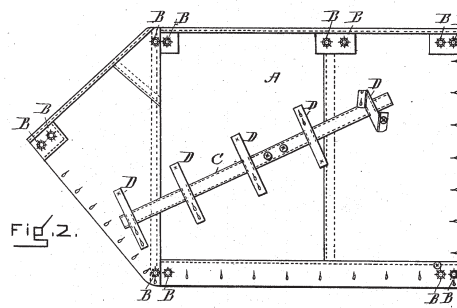
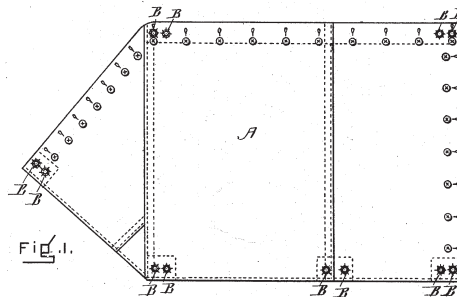
(No Model.)

E. RICE.
SHELTER TENT.

3 Sheets—Sheet 1.

No. 573,918.

Patented Dec. 29, 1896.



THE KODAK PATENT CO., PHOTOGRAPHIC, WASHINGTON, D. C.

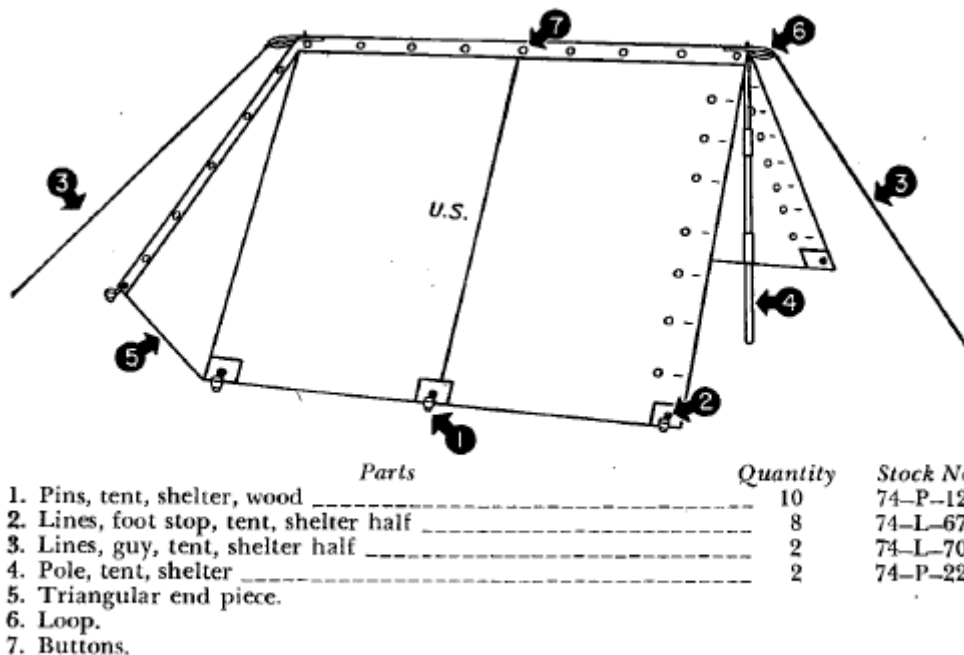


Figure 2. Tent, shelter (old type) (composed of two tents, shelter half (old type), stock No. 74-T-100.)

Axe

Authors with time in the woods almost always recommend a “Boy’s or $\frac{3}{4}$ ” axe with a 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ pound head for camp chores. Nick used his axe to chop roots, make and drive tent pegs, split off pine chunks for the fire, and drive nails. His camp required a simple axe for daily chores but not the full axe required for life in the woods. A hand hatchet or camp axe was all he needed. Sheathed and lashed to his pack, it was easily available and pressed into service as soon as he reached his campsite.

Pine chunks – fire starter

He started a fire with some chunks of pine he got with the ax from a stump...Nick tucked two big chips of pine under the grill. The fire flared up.

It might be assumed that some of the stumps that were prevalent near camp were chock full of pitch – fat lighter. The ease with which he appears to start his fire, and the instant flare under the grill with the addition of a few chips, speaks to that probability. Nick’s axe was the perfect tool for preparing his fire making materials and fuel.

Blankets

*When he had the ground smooth, he spread his **three blankets**. One he folded double, next to the ground. The other two he spread on top... Nick stretched under the blanket comfortably... Nick lay down again under the blanket. He turned on his side and shut his eyes. He was sleepy. He felt sleep coming. He curled up under the blanket and went to sleep.*

Blankets common to most literature of the day were the remnants of those common to the early trade days along the frontier. Some books still referred to “pairs” of blankets. This reference did not mean two blankets, but a single blanket that was two blankets long. When they were shipped and charged an import tax, duty was collected on one not two blankets. They were usually cut in two, however some whole examples are still found.

Nick’s know-how extended to using a blanket as an insulating layer to reduce conduction. He makes no mention of a bed tick or a bedroll cover. The tent most likely eliminated the need for a bedroll cover by reducing heat loss from convection.

Catalog prices and weights provide blankets that range from 3-5 pounds each, A good three-season blanket would be about 4 pounds. Since reference is made to morning and evening dew, it appears that a good mid-weight blanket is what Nick would have selected.

Brown Canvas Tent –

The tent hung on the rope like a canvas blanket on a clothesline. Nick poked a pole he had cut up under the back peak of the canvas and then made it a tent by pegging out the sides... He crawled inside under the mosquito bar with various things from the pack to put at the head of the bed under the slant of the canvas.

The tent sounds like an Army pup tent made from shelter halves similar to the one used by W.J. Cribbs. Why the pole was placed in the back of the tent is unclear, but by doing this it is unlikely that the tent was lower in the back like the Compac Tent design. The Mosquito bar may have been the prop for the front peak.



To me the most annoying species is the mosquito. The black fly is sometimes most industrious. I have seen trout fishermen come into camp with the blood literally streaming from their faces but his great recommendation is that he holds still to be killed. No frantic slaps, no waving of arms, no muffled curses. You just place your finger calmly and firmly on the spot. You get him every time. In this is great, heart-lifting joy. It may be unholy joy, perhaps even vengeful, but it leaves the spirit ecstatic. The satisfaction of murdering the beast that has had the nerve to light on you just as you are reeling in almost counterbalances the pain of a sting.

Edward Stewart White, *The Forest*

Food – He liked to open cans.

Nick was hungry. He did not believe he had ever been hungrier. He opened and emptied a can of pork and beans and a can of spaghetti into the frying pan.

“I’ve got a right to eat this kind of stuff, if I’m willing to carry it, Nick said.

It is well known that a variety of lightweight desiccated options were available. However, having been in the war and exposed to months of field rations, perhaps the thought of food that was not a reminder of those days would be a welcome refreshment.

Nick’s knife had a good can opener. His pocketknife, if it was of the scout or camp knife variety, would have had many option for blade and tool configurations; a can opener would be only one of those functional options.

Convenience foods like condensed milk (invented in 1863) and “catchup” topped it all off. He still had to slice his own bread since this modern trend didn’t come about until 1928.

• Dinner

Cans of Pork and Beans, Spaghetti and Apricots
Bottle of Tomato *Catchup* katsup, ketchup
Loaf of Bread
Coffee and sugar

• Breakfast

Buckwheat Flour
Can of Grease
Jar of Apple Butter

• Lunch

Oiled Paper
Onion – onion sandwiches
Condensed Milk

• Utensils –

Frying Pan / Skillet
4-Legged Wire Grill
Tin Cup and Plate
Spoon He took a full spoonful from the plate.
Folding Canvas Bucket
Coffee Pot
Matches

Part II

The Fisherman

Empty Bottle, Pine Cork, Neck Thong
Fly Rod
Leather Rod Case
Reel – Double Tapered Fly Line
Aluminum Leader Box – gut leaders
Hook Book – Fly Book
Landing Net
Flour Sack Creel
His Knife
Trout - species?

Quick Apple Butter Recipe

4 pounds assorted apples, peeled and chopped
2 cups apple cider
1 cup packed light brown sugar
Kosher salt
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Pinch of ground cloves

Directions

Preheat Dutch oven to 250 degrees F. Combine the apples, apple cider, brown sugar and 1/2 teaspoon salt in Dutch oven over medium heat. Bring to a simmer, partially cover and cook until the apples are soft, about 20 minutes.

Remove from the heat and stir in the lemon juice, cinnamon, vanilla and cloves. Puree the mixture in a collander in batches until smooth.

Return the mixture to the pot and bake, uncovered, stirring every 30 minutes, until thickened and deep amber, 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 hours (the timing will depend on the kind of apples you use).

Remove from heat and let cool completely, then transfer to an airtight container and refrigerate up to 5 days.

***Nick's Gear and Food List - Mentoned In The Story
Big Two-Hearted River by Ernest Hemingway, 1925***

Pack & Camp

Bundle of Canvas
Pack Harness - shoulder straps He adjusted the pack harness around the bundle
Tumpline
Cigarettes
Map
Woolen Socks Hat, Boots/Shoes, Trousers, Khaki Shirt
Axe - Tent Pegs and Pine chunks – fire starter
3 Blankets
Brown Canvas Tent, The ridge rope
Cheese Cloth – Mosquito Bar
Paper Sack of Nails - All his supplies were in the pack.
Pocket Knife

Dinner

Can of Pork and Beans
Can of Spaghetti
Frying Pan / Skillet
Wire Grill
Bottle of Tomato Catchup
Loaf of Bread
Tin Plate
Folding Canvas Bucket
Coffee Pot – and coffee
Can of Apricots
Tin Cup
Sugar
Matches

Breakfast

Buckwheat Flour
Can of Grease
Jar of Apple Butter
Oiled Paper
Onion – onion sandwiches
Condensed Milk

Fishing Gear

Empty Bottle (grasshoppers), Pine Stick Cork, Neck Thong
Fly Rod
Leather Rod Case
Reel – Double Tapered Fly Line
Aluminum Leader Box – gut leaders
Hook Book
Landing Net
Flour Sack Creel
Fly Book

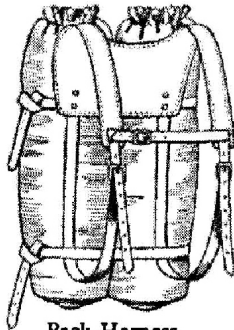


Richard Harding Davis' shoulder kit.

What Does Nick's Pack Weigh?

The Pack – Total 4#

A pack harness similar to the one shown below would weigh about $1\frac{3}{4}$ #. A tumpline would add another $1\frac{1}{4}$ #, making the rig 3# total. A Trapper Nelson with a attached tump and straps weighs 4#.



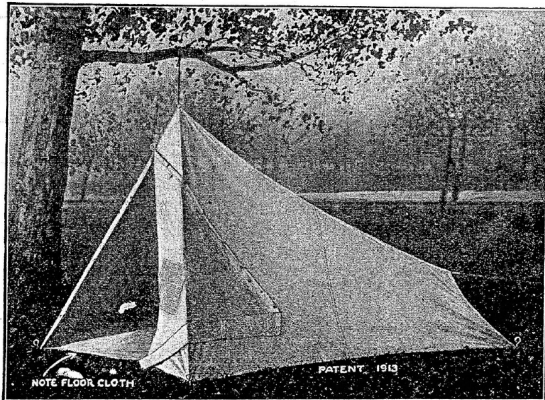
Pack-Harness
with Food-Bags

Blankets – Total 12#

Typical blankets available in catalogs regularly weigh from 3-5#. Since this is a summer outing, and he was in the army, he knows what he will need to stay warm. He might have selected 3 average blankets of 4# each. Total – 12#

The Tent – Total 4#

My WWII shelter halves weigh 4#. They create a tent similar to the one shown with W.J. Cribbs in Michigan. If he had selected a Compac Tent, the weight would be $3\frac{3}{4}$ #.



Patented Compac tent

Camp Gadgets – Total $1\frac{1}{2}$

Other items in the pack included a bag of nails – $\frac{1}{4}$ #, Cheese Cloth – 2oz., cigarettes – $\frac{1}{4}$ #, rope – $\frac{1}{2}$ #, map – $\frac{1}{4}$ # (and maybe a compass). Total – $1\frac{1}{2}$ #

Tools - $2\frac{1}{4}$

A good field axe ($\frac{3}{4}$ axe with $2\frac{1}{2}$ # head) weighs 3#. A small camp hatchet weighs about 2#. A famous axe of the day – the Marble Safety Axe – weighs $1\frac{1}{4}$ #. A good choice for a short tip would be his hatchet and his pocket knife – $\frac{1}{4}$ #. Total - $2\frac{1}{4}$ #

Clothing – Total – 2#

Nicks clothing is pretty non-specific except for his woolen socks and khaki shirt. He uses his hat to take a drink and his boots and pants were in and out of water frequently.

Approximate weight - 2#.

Cooking Utensils – Total – 6 ½ #

Frying Pan – a good 9” (#42) pressed steel frying pan weighs 1#. A small 6” weighs half that but wouldn’t be good for cooking trout. An 8” weighs the same as the 9 so why not take the large pan.

4-Legged Grill – Grills of the day were made from heavy wire. A modern Purcell grate weighs 23oz, but an old grill weighs from 2 ½ to 3#.

Tin Plate and Cup – Assuming it’s not aluminum cookware, a tin plate and cup weight 12oz.

Folding Canvas Bucket – A typical bucket for a group weighs 1#, but a smaller version in a New York Sporting Goods is listed at ½#.

Coffee Pot – An aluminum percolator would have been available, but a heavy tin or enamel would have been more likely. 13 1/2oz aluminum, 1# tin.

Matches - a full Marble’s Match case weighs 1oz, but Nick is a smoker so he would have had a larger container of matches. 3oz.

Food – Total – 8-10#

Cans of Pork and Beans, Spaghetti and Apricots – 3-4#

Bottle of Tomato Catchup – 12oz

Loaf of Bread – 10oz

Coffee, Sugar – 8oz

Buckwheat Flour – 8oz

Can of Grease – 6oz

Jar of Apple Butter 12oz

Oiled Paper

Onion – onion sandwiches – 12oz

Condensed Milk – 10oz

Fishing Gear – Total – 2 ½ #

Empty Bottle (grasshoppers), Pine Stick Cork, Neck Thong – 4oz

Fly Rod & Reel with double tapered fly line – 10oz

Leather Rod Case – 10oz

Aluminum Leader Box, Hook and Fly Books - 8oz

Landing Net – 10oz

Flour Sack Creel – 4oz

Total Pack Weight – 45 pounds – These are the items we know.

Food for the rest of camp must be considered – 2 more days could add 20 more pounds. *"I've got a right to eat this kind of stuff, if I'm willing to carry it, Nick said.*



Part 2 - The Classic Tramp Kit

By Steven M. Watts, 200....

Back Packing In The Old Style Equipment List - Fall/Spring

From Steve Watts Notebook - Sent to Wescott by Suzanne

Pack - 1920s Trapper Nelson

Bedroom - Whitney blanket, down comforter, bed tick

Kitchen - Tea pot, plate, grill, canteen, fry pan, cup, spoon, matches

Food Bag -

Clothes - Wool knit cap, socks, long johns bottoms, gloves, wool shirt

Shelter - Whelen tent w/ ropes and aluminum pegs

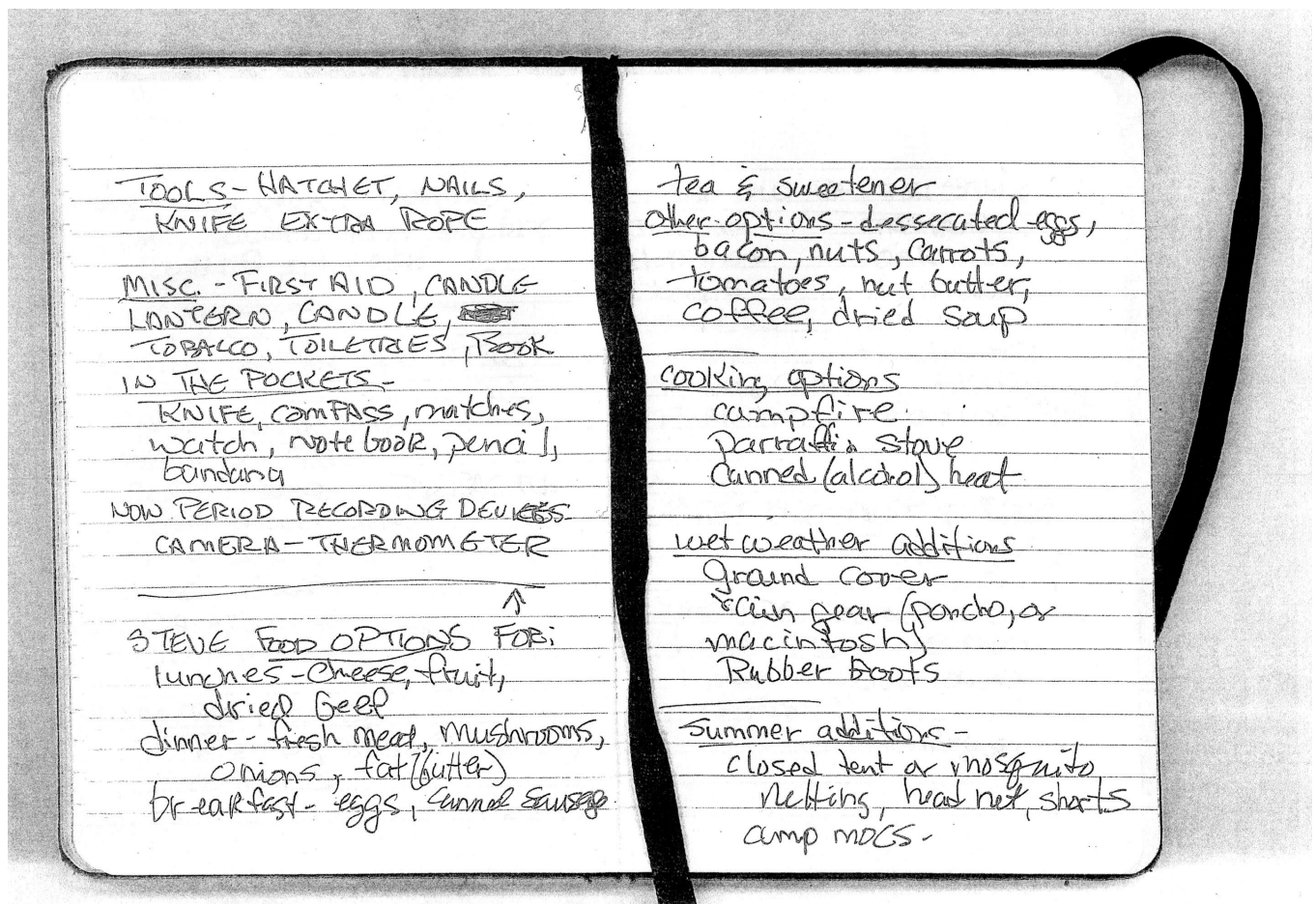
Tools - Hatchet, nails, knife, extra rope

Misc. - First Aid, candle lantern, candle, tobacco, toiletries, book

In The Pockets - Knife, compass, matches, watch, notebook, pencil, bandana

Non-Period - Recording devices, camera, thermometer

Steve's choices for what it would take to go - Back Packing In The Old Style



Steve's Food Options For:

Lunches – cheese, fruit, dried beef

Dinner – Fresh meat, mushrooms, onions, butter (fat)

Breakfast – Eggs, ground sausage, tea, sweetener

Other Options – Dessicated eggs, bacon, nuts, carrots, tomatoes, nut butter, coffee, dried soup

Cooking Options – Campfire, paraffin stove, canned (alcohol) heat

Wet Weather Additions – Ground cover, rain gear (poncho or Macintosh), rubber boots

Summer Additions – Closed tent or mosquito netting, head net, shorts, camp mocs

Fishing Gear – Rod, reel, line, leaders, flies, fly box, clippers, rod case

Hiking In The Old Style

Canvas Knapsack – Walking stick, matches, lunch, canteen, camera, bag for - cup, spoon, tea, sweetener

In Pockets – Knife, matches, watch, compass

The Old British Style

Tweed

Dogs

Kilt

Bird Hunting

Oak

Khaki

Fox Hunting

Horses

Linen

Riding Clothes

Tartan

Leather

Pith Helmet

Fowling Guns

*Below - Steve's marginalia from
his copy of The Big
Two-Hearted River*

"First one must endure." E Hemingway

"We are doomed to lose, but we must lose on our own terms." E Hemingway

Across the open mouth of the tent Nick fixed cheese cloth to keep out mosquitoes. He crawled inside under the mosquito bar with various things from the pack to put at the head of the bed under the slant of the canvas. Inside the tent the light came through the brown canvas. It smelled pleasantly of canvas. Already there was something mysterious and home-like. Nick was happy as he crawled inside the tent. He had not been unhappy all day. This was different though. Now things were done. There had been this to do. Now it was done. It had been a hard trip. He was very tired. That was done. He had made his camp. He was settled. Nothing could touch him. It was a good place to camp. He was there, in the good place. He was in his home where he had made it. Now he was hungry. He came out, crawling under the cheese cloth. It was quite dark outside. It was lighter in the tent.

Nick went over to the pack and found with his fingers a long nail in a paper sack of nails in the bottom of the pack. He drove it into the pine top, holding it close and hitting it gently with the flat of the ax. He hung the pack up on the nail. All his supplies were in the pack. They were off the ground and sheltered now.

Nick was hungry. He did not believe he had ever been hungrier. He opened and emptied a can of pork and beans and a can of spaghetti into the frying pan. "We got a right to eat this kind of stuff if we're willing to carry it," Nick said. His voice sounded strange in the darkening woods. He did not speak again.

He started a fire with some chunks of pine he got with the ax from a stump. Over the fire he stuck a wire grill, pushing the four legs down into the ground with his boot. Nick put the frying pan on the grill over the flames. He was hungrier. The beans and spaghetti warmed. Nick stirred them and mixed them together. They began to bubble, making little bubbles that rose with difficulty to the surface. There was a good smell. Nick got out a bottle of tomato catchup and cut four slices of bread. The little bubbles were coming faster now. Nick sat down beside the fire and lifted the frying pan off. He poured about half the contents out into the tin plate. It spread slowly on the plate. Nick knew it was too hot. He poured on some tomato catchup. He knew the beans and spaghetti were still too hot. He looked at the fire, then at the tent, he was not going to spoil it all by burning his tongue. For years he had never enjoyed fried bananas because he had never been able to wait for them to cool. His tongue was very sensitive. He was very hungry. Across the river in the swamp in the almost dark he saw a mist rising. He looked at the tent once more. All right. He took a full spoonful from the plate.

"Christ," Nick said. "Jesus Christ," he said happily.

He ate the whole plateful before he remembered the bread. Nick finished the second plateful with the bread, mopping the plate shiny. He had not eaten since a cup of coffee and a ham sandwich in the station restaurant at St. Ignace. It had been a very fine experience. He had been that hungry before but had not been able to satisfy it. He could have made camp hours before if he had wanted to. There were plenty of good places to camp on the river. But this was good.

Nick tucked two big chips of pine under the grill. The fire flared up. He had forgotten to get water for the coffee. Out of the pack he got a folding canvas bucket and walked down the hill across the edge of the meadow to the stream. The other bank was in the white mist. The grass was wet and cold as he knelt on the bank and dipped the canvas

slowly to porousness. Nick pushed under the browned under surface with a fresh pine chip. He shook the skillet sideways, and the cake was loose on the surface. I won't try and flop it, he thought. He slid the chip of clean wood all the way under the cake and flopped it over onto its face. It sputtered in the pan.

When it was cooked Nick regreased the skillet. He used all the batter. It made another big flapjack and one smaller one.

Nick ate a big flapjack and a smaller one covered with apple butter. He put apple butter on the third cake, folded it over twice, wrapped it in oiled paper and put it in his shirt pocket. He put the apple butter jar back in the pack and cut bread for two sandwiches.

In the pack he found a big onion. He sliced it in two and peeled the silky outer skin. Then he cut one half into slices and made onion sandwiches. He wrapped them in oiled paper and buttoned them in the other pocket of his khaki shirt. He turned the skillet upside down on the grill, drank the coffee, sweetened and yellow brown with the condensed milk in it, and tidied up the camp. It was a nice little camp.

Nick took his fly rod out of the leather rod case, pointed it, and shoved the rod case back into the tent. He put on the reel and threaded the line through the guides. He had to hold it from hand to hand as he threaded it or it would slip back through its own weight. It was a heavy, double tapered fly line. Nick had paid eight dollars for it a long time ago. It was made heavy to lift back in the air and come forward flat and heavy and straight to make it possible to cast a fly which has no weight. Nick opened the aluminum leader box. The leaders were coiled between the damp flannel pads. Nick had wet the pads at the water cooler on the train up to St. Ignace. In the damp pads the gut leaders had softened and Nick uncoiled one and tied it by a loop at the end to the heavy fly line. He fastened a hook on the end of the leader. It was a small hook, very thin and springy.

Nick took it from his hook book, hitting with the rod across his lap. He tested the knot and the spring of the rod by pulling the line taut. It was a good feeling. He was careful not to let the hook bite into his finger.

He started down to the stream, holding his rod, the bottle of grasshoppers hung from his neck by a thong tied in half hitches around the neck of the bottle. His landing net hung by a hook from his belt. Over his shoulder was a long flour sack tied at each corner into an ear. The cord went over his shoulder. The sack flapped against his legs.

Nick felt awkward and professionally happy with all his equipment hanging from him. The grasshopper bottle swung against his chest. In his shirt the breast pockets bulged against him with the lunch and his fly book.

He stepped into the stream. It was a shock. His trousers clung tight to his legs. His shoes felt the gravel. The water was a rising cold shock.

Rushing, the current sucked against his legs. Where he stepped in the water was over his knees. He waded with the current. The gravel slid under his shoes. He looked down at the swirl of water below each leg and tipped up the bottle to get a grasshopper.

The first grasshopper gave a jump in the neck of the bottle and went out into the water. He was sucked under in the whirl by Nick's right leg and came to the surface a little way down stream. He floated rapidly, kicking. In a quick circle, breaking the smooth surface of the water, he disappeared. A trout had taken him.

cheese cloth
mosquito netting

nails

wire grill

canvas bucket

oiled paper

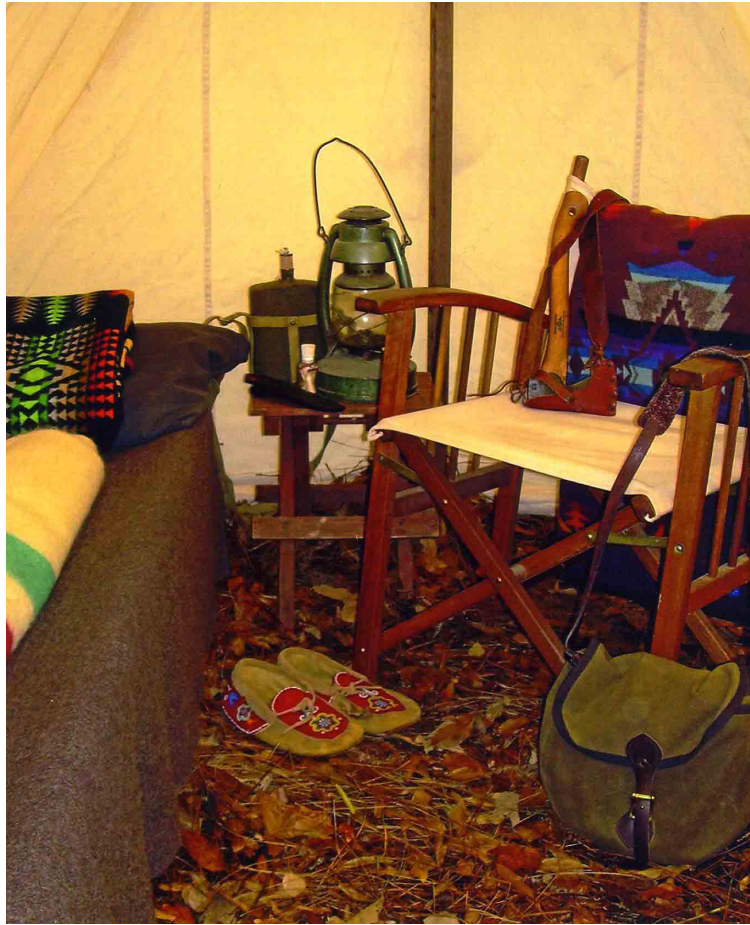
onion sand > waffles

bait bottle around fly neck

The Law of Order

Steven M. Watts, 19...

“...only a slob and a chump goes dirty and has a sloppy-looking camp. The real old time veteran and sourdough is a model of neatness and order.” Daniel Carter Beard



Your camp is a very small world—whether it be a simple lean-to with the most Spartan of amenities, or a fully furnished Home in the Woods. That small world can quickly spin off into chaos if an effort is not made to keep things in order.

Neatness in the traditional camp goes way beyond a fussy affectation. An orderly camp is an efficient camp—and it is safer. It allows you to know where things are—the old “a place for everything and everything in its place” idea. The unorganized camper may have the experience of searching through a jumble of gear for their matches in the middle of the night only to jab their finger into the edge of an unsheathed knife. They must then continue to fumble and dig through a pile of stuff in search of their first aid supplies to deal with the cut—and they’re still in the dark. Get smart, get organized—Uncle Dan is watching!



Last Assignment, 1914
 Vera Cruz Mexico with (L-R) Jimmie Hare, Frederick Palmer, Richard Harding
 Jack London, second from left. Davis





A young Ernest Hemingway fishing.

