



Fifty Years a Hunter and Trapper: Experiences and Observations of E. N. Woodcock the noted Hunter and Trapper, as written by Himself and Published in H-T-T from 1903 to 1913

Eldred Nathaniel Woodcock

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I was born on the 30th day of August, A. D. 1844, in a little village by the name of Lymansville, Potter County, Pennsylvania. Lymansville was named after my grandparent, Isaac Lyman, or better known as Major Lyman, having held office of that rank in the Revolutionary War. It is from this limb of the family that I inherited that uncontrollable desire for the trap, gun and the wild.

At a very early age it was my greatest delight to have all the mice, squirrels and groundhogs and in later years young raccoons, young fox and every other varmint or wild animal that I could catch or could get from other sources, and at times I had quite a menagerie.

I began trapping at a very early age, the same as many boys do who live out in the country where they have an opportunity. My father owned a grist mill and a sawmill. These mills were about one-half mile apart and it was about these mills and along the mill races and ponds of these mills that I set my first traps for muskrats, mink and coon. Before I was stout enough to set a trap which was strong enough to hold the varmint, it was necessary for me to get some older person to set the trap. I would take the trap to the intended place and set for the particular animals I was in quest of, whether mink, coon or rat.

I can lay claim to one thing that but few hunters and trappers can do, that is for forty years I lost only two seasons from the trap line and the trail and each time I was detained by rheumatism. Once being taken down with sciatica while in the camp trapping and hunting, and it held me to my bed for several months hard and tight. I still have the greater part of my trapping and hunting outfit, and am still in hopes to be able to get out on the line and pinch a few more toes.

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