

STEVE WOODY, Cataloochee, NORTH CAROLINA, 1939./ Disc 012b

Want me to commence now? well, they was some fell- is that loud enough to talk? they was some fellows come here and was a-coming through from Swain, in here what they call on the Trail Ridge they'd been five bear had passed a-going on to Shanty Mountain, well and they, they was a little skiff PRON skift of snow and that was how come to see their sign, and uh we started, I got up some fellows, and we started out the next morning, and uh some of them didn't have no gun, and we got to the top of Shanty Mountain and we wanted to send some fellows to the uh stand and me and the fell-, me and another fellow by, Jack Williamson, was a-going in there to, going to scare them out, didn't think they'd gone to den, and uh we I, I had a Winchester, a thirty-eight Winchester, and I let a fellow have hit and that thowed PRON throwed me without any gun, a-sending him to the stand, and uh we went, we uh had some uh dogs, some bear dogs, and we went on and we're trailed them, cold-trailed them right on to the side of Shanty Mountain, and they'd gone to den, they'd dug them out a den right in under where an old big balsam tree had turned up and just made one little place a-going in, well the dogs broke from uh, broke, when we got up pretty close, why we couldn't do nothing with our dogs, they just broke, well when me and Jack, we was off twenty steps I guess from them or maybe more and Jack, he uh, they, the bear then, the old ones, they was an old, two old shes and three yearlings, and then the bears, they commenced snapping at the, at the dogs, and the dog was just a-grabbing at them, well after while an old one run out, she just run off, well, the next one come out was an old, uh was one of the yearlings, and we was in a laurel thicket and, and Jack, he, he had a gun, he had one of these here hog rifles, hit was a good one too, and if he'd a shot, uh shot the old one as she come out, why she'd just blockaded the hole and we'd a got all of them, but he never done it and here come that little one out, yearling out to him where we was a-standing in the laurel, and he just a-laid his gun down, just laid it, the, the gun down, a little skiff of snow in there and it went off scooting down the hill about thirty steps and uh he, h-, he just, he reached down and took it right by the side of the head, had, took it by each ear, and uh he says, I's up above the den, and uh he says "come here, Steve" he says, "come here and let's cut its damned heart out of it," well, I started to him, and as I went why there's a green brier caught me around the foot right in the instep and throwed me right into the mouth of the den, thinks to myself I'm gone this time sure, and uh here, here then they just kept a-coming out, here come the next old one, and they just kept a-coming out till out come five, well Jack, when he got to where I could get to him, well, I, I just as scared so bad I couldn't hardly do anything, and before I could get to him, why Jack, he had to turn that'un loose and he didn't have a thing on, only, on his shirt, only just his shirt collar, hit had tore everything off of him and the blood just a-flying out of him, and he had to turn hit loose, well, by the time that come on hand, why before I could get to him, why he had to turn it loose and away went the bear and they just kept a-coming out till they come out five, well then, then it took us about thirty minutes to hunt up his gun, where it'd run, scooted down in the leaves in under the ...

and away back there, way back there all the bear, and uh after we had nothing to do, we just put our dogs there after one of the yearlings, and

they run hit and, and treed it, run it off for I guess a, a half a mile down and, before they got up with it and they treed hit, well when we got there, why Jack, we'd got Jack's gun and uh when we got there, why he just went right in with the dogs, he just laid his gun down again, never offered to give it to me, he just laid his gun down, went right in with the dogs and here come the bear down the tree just jumping down thataway, and uh he just went right in with them, yes sir, he, him and them dogs, and I just stood back and watched them, and him and them dogs kill that bear, and they got hit right there at the tree and, and we had nothing to do, only just uh pick it up and start for home, and Jack naked all but his britches on, that's the last.