

## Chapter 12 Catching coyotes

At Green River City I got a job with the Green River Live Stock Co. moving camp for a fellow by the name of Henry Hanson, I think he too was from Utah, the foreman was a fellow we called Basco Pete. I had secured ~~four~~ <sup>six</sup> no. four steel traps with double springs and we got out sheep wagon and started for the winter range, about the second day when I was moving along with my camp wagon on an old road I saw a coyote in the road ahead of me but I paid no attention or rather tried to make him believe it so he just circled out around in the brush to let me pass

As I got past him he stopped to look at me and I stopped my team and climbed up onto my bunk and put my gun through the littel windown in the back of the wagon and fired, that was my first coyote.

When we were at last settled where we could stay for a day or so I went out and set my traps and soon began to bring in the coyotes, Henry was very cooperative and seemed to be as interested as I was and just as anxious to find out each mornings results. Basco Pete would come to our camp and stay with us over night and the days I wanted to move my camp I had a hard time to go because he was that sort of fellow that he did'nt if he ever moved or not, Henry and I would get up, eat our breakfast, Henry would leave with his herd while I went and got my horses that were always turned loose at nights and feed them their grain and place their harness on and generally put the saddle on Petes horse and Pete would still be in bed, with my coaxing he would at last get up and streach eat the breakfast I had ready for him then sit down on the projection in the wagon and smoke a cigarette then get outside for a minute and come in again and sit on the projection and say "Me tak a rest" then light another cigarette and many mornings I drove off leaving him standing by the side of his horse smoking another cigarette and after I had caught several coyotes he would go to the other camps and tell them, "That dam Cook, he make more money dan I do".

The Green River Live Stock Co. was owned by four rail road men, however I never met but one whose name was McCune who come to see us once in a while, he was a very nice man, he too was interested in my trapping business and asked me to get

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him a bobcat for his wife, I told him there was no bobcats out there in the open range but if I got a chance I would try to get one for him so one day I took a pair of my traps and rode about five miles to some high bluffs where I was sure I could find bobcats, I set my traps and went back, in a couple of days I went back to get my traps and a cat too if I was lucky, I had a cat alright but it was not as pretty as some I had seen before, sometime later one morning I left camp to go to my traps, the weather was so stormy and foggy I nearly got lost, I didn't know where I was as all the flat country looked alike any time and in a fog well, a person could not tell which was east or west until at last I came to one of my traps with a coyote in it, that gave me my bearings again, I was so surprised because I had my directions all mixed, then another morning as I approached one of my traps that held a coyote I saw another one a little way off, all the gun I had with me was my 22 pistol so I took good aim and fired at it and to my surprise he fell but thinking I had only stuned him I ran over as fast as I could go and struck him behind the ears with the butt of my pistol breaking both sides of the pistol butt and on examining him I found my little bullet struck him right in one eye and he was perfectly dead, the coyote in the trap was a female and I think the one I shot was her pup.

All this time Henry was very nice he would say in the mornings "you go and look at your traps and I will wash the dishes" so one time I caught at two different times two small swifs in my coyote traps they are a sort of small fox with a very

round tail that sticks streight out behind when they run and they do run swiftly, they are of agray color and very pretty little things, their pelts makes a nice little rug so as Henry hdd been so good and told me he had two sisters who would appreciate them I gave them to him as he said "he would have them tanned and mounted and later I gave the bobcat to Mr. McCune although it was not too good he thought it was fine and thanked me very much for it.

Away down below Point-of-Rocks in a smoothe draw I set my traps one night and the next morning when I went to see I had caught the biggest gray wolf that I have ever seen, he was caught by a front foot and with the other he had dug a complete circle about six or eight inches deep out as far from the stake as the chain would allow him to go, he sure looked mean when I came to him but I soon finished him with my 22 pistol with a bullet between his eyes, as I attempted to carry him to camp I found I had a real load. Shortly after that when we were near Black Butts station I asked Henry, "Do you think you will be alright for a day or two while I go to Rock Springs or Green River and get the bounty on these pelts," sure he said go right ahead so I took my bundle consisting of twentynine coyotes and the gray wolf and went down to the station where I saw a young couple and when they saw my wolf they wanted to buy it for five dollars but as the county punched holes in the ears of all wolves and coyotes when they paid the bounty, they did 'nt want the ears punched but would take it if I came back with out the ears punched so I got on a freight train going to Rock springs and when I arrived there I took my pelts to Jack Anderson place and when I told

Sam noblets the bar tender where I was going he said, "If you will pay for a phone call and the train fare for him I will get the clerk to come up and accept them so you won't have to go to Green River so I agreed and the next train brought the clerk and he was very nice too when I explained about the wolf he told me, "just don't tell any body and we will forget to punch the ears on the wolf so I wrapped my coyotes pelts in a bundle and shipped them to a fur house in Kansas City and took the wolf back and sold it to the young couple and got my five dollars for it but the coyotes were not worth as much as they are now, they only averaged me about two dollars each or maybe two and a half, anyway I sure enjoyed the sport of catching them.

Soon after that we were moving back from the winter range and one evening when we were camped on a flat near a draw I saw an antelope coming across the flat towards our camp but a little to one side of it and went up another draw parallel with the first draw so I took my rifle and was running as fast as I could go up the first draw when all at once I looked up and saw it standing on top of the ridge between the two draws looking at me so I leveled my gun on him and struck him in the breast but he was very poor and our dogs ate the most of it. My brother Kib had written me that he was leaving the Nels Larson place he had been renting and if I wished I could rent it for \$160.00 per year as he had been paying. Larson's place was one mile south quarter west of Afton and was a quarter section of 160 acres, his lease expired on March first I had decided to take it and try farming so I quit and

went home to Afton again. Kib let me have some cows and farm machinery for the money I had loaned him and I had also sent him money previously ~~when~~ <sup>what</sup> ~~hat~~ <sup>at</sup> Davis and told him to buy me some cows. He had bought me three head from Lon Kennington over at Fairview but one of them was never delivered because Lon said "she had gotten into a mud hole and could not get out and died there."

I had to have a team of horses and I heard of one for sale by Clarence Holbrook over at Auburn, he was hauling milk to the creamery near afton and if I could meet him there he would show me the team so I went down there and saw them, after looking them over and listened to what they could do, some more of his talk I decided they would answer my purpose, they were almost pure white and his price was two hundred and ten dollars so I bought them and gave him the money in gold coin.