

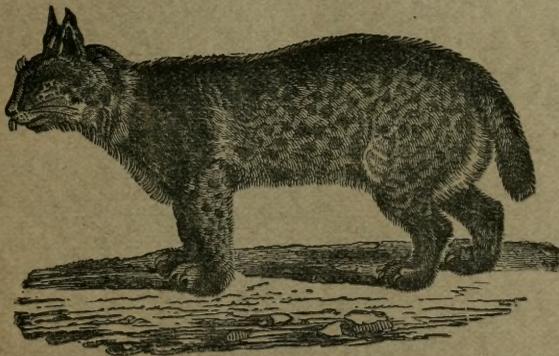
SK 305  
.L8 S5  
Copy 1

# Pennsylvania Wild Cats

BY

HENRY W. SHOEMAKER

(Author of *The Pennsylvania Lion, or Panther*)



ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA

PUBLISHED BY THE ALTOONA TRIBUNE PUBLISHING CO.

1916

Copyrighted: All rights reserved.



**"FRANCE" HOWER (1847-1915)**  
His faithful dog and two bob cats from Jack's Mountain

(Frontispiece)

# Pennsylvania Wild Cats

BY

HENRY W. SHOEMAKER

(Author of "The Pennsylvania Lion, or Panther")



*The patch is kind enough ; but a huge feeder.  
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day  
More than the wild cat. — Shakespeare.*



ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA  
PUBLISHED BY THE ALTOONA TRIBUNE PUBLISHING Co.  
1916

Copyrighted : All rights reserved.

SM305  
L8S5

\$0.50

©CA427546

MAR 27 1916

no. 1.

manuscript 716.

## INDEX.

---

Chapter	Pages
I. Introduction .....	6-7
II. The Wild Cat.....	8-10
III. The Bob Cat, or Catamount.....	11-13
IV. The Big Grey Wild Cat.....	14-16
V. The Blue Mountain Cat.....	17-18
VI. Mixed Breeds .....	19-20
VII. Cat Hunting .....	21-26
VIII. Cat Hunters .....	27-34



## INDEX TO ILLUSTRATIONS.

---

	Page
"France" Homer (Frontispiece).	
"Clem" Herlacher .....	9
Emmanuel Harman .....	12
Jesse Logan .....	15
"Jake" Zimmerman .....	23
"Phil" Wright .....	27
C. E. Logue .....	29
Sam'l Motter .....	31
Robert Karstetter .....	33



## PREFACE.

**A**FTER the widespread researches of S. N. Rhoads it might be said that there is little left to write on concerning Pennsylvania wild cats. However, there have been changes in the numbers and the future prospects of these most persecuted animals since "Mammals of Pennsylvania and New Jersey" appeared in 1903. In addition to offering a brief for the protection of the lynxes, space will be devoted in the following pages to the noble sport of cat hunting, and the bold spirits who took a leading part in the chase in Pennsylvania, past and present. But the main idea of this book is to obtain for the wild cats, now on the verge of extinction, a re-hearing on the trumped-up evidence against them—so that they may get another chance. Let us preserve this picturesque and useful mammal for future generations.

HENRY W. SHOEMAKER.

ALTOONA TRIBUNE OFFICE, FEBRUARY 15, 1916.

## I. INTRODUCTION.

WHEN, through villainous bounty laws, the existence of one of the most useful animals in Pennsylvania is threatened, it seems high time for a voice of protest to be raised. Immediately the question will be asked, what is the use of the wild cat? Its values are manifold. In the mountainous districts, where hunters are few and far between, rabbits, unless kept in check by wild cats, would become so numerous that they would destroy vast numbers of growing trees by eating off their bark. As it is the aim of all good Pennsylvanians to aid in the reforestation of the desolated areas in the State—after the forest fire menace has been checked, the wild cat should be preserved to help along the arboreal millennium. In the settled neighborhoods, where farmer boys and city hunters keep rabbits killed off, there is little need for wild cats. And the cats have the common sense to stay away from such localities, though they have on rare occasions come near barnyards or hen-houses. Such cats are renegades to their race and should be killed. But the vast majority of wild cats follow out their lives hunting rabbits, rats, mice, shrews and other vermin. They prey on the rats and mice which destroy the eggs of game birds. They eat much carrion, and as such are invaluable forest scavengers. They are performing faithfully the duties for which the same God who created us made them to do. If rabbits become scarce, wild cats decrease, just as does the Canada Lynx of the North; bounty laws are unnecessary, wasteful

and cruel, a sop thrown by crafty politicians to keep the mountaineer vote in line. If there were no rabbits in the mountains there would be no wild cats. Note carefully the sections of the State where cats are rare, all for the same cause—lack of food supply, when not wiped out by the mercenary bounty hunters. Those who slaughter wild cats wantonly are false to posterity, unacquainted with natural history, ignorant of the scheme of nature. There is some excuse to hunt wild cats for the sport, if no attempt is made to annihilate the species. It provides a grand chase for men and dogs, gives city men a love of the open, and when the cat escapes, furnishes fun for the cat. The wild cat is fairly valuable as a fur-bearer; its relative, the Canada Lynx, was much more so, but it is now totally extinct in Pennsylvania, at least the pure race. Therefore, as an aid to sylviculture, as a means of sport, and for its fur, the wild cat deserves protection. Its meat is considered very good. Such men as Dr. C. Hart Merriam and Prof. E. Emmons pronounce it most excellent. It was a favorite relish for the old pioneers in the Pennsylvania mountains and the Indians. Another cause for the protection of *Lynx Rufus*. And then there is the sentimental side, which side appeals only to the few. But it is real; animals have rights; they add to the sum total of the beauty and picturesqueness of this world of ours. We have no right to condemn a species to extermination that a Wise Power saw fit to create. It is presumption on our part. Who gave us such authority?

GIVE THE WILD CATS A CHANCE.

## II. THE WILD CAT.

WHEN, as a young boy, in 1897, the writer first paid a visit to Loganton, "the hunting capital" of Sugar Valley, Clinton County, and was invited to inspect the barber-shop trophy room of that prince of Pennsylvania wild cat hunters, Clem. F. Herlacher, the most noticeable object in the collection was a long-tailed, cat-like specimen which occupied the place of honor over the central mirror. "That is," said Herlacher, pointing to the trophy, "what the first settlers called a 'wild cat'; in reality it is the cub of the panther, *felis cougar*. The old-timers often ran across these huge kittens in the woods; they were always blundering into the traps, or their dogs were killing them, and they did resemble 'cats,' with their fluffy fur, broad faces, and long tails. But gradually the truth dawned on them when they found these 'wild cats' trailing along with mature pantheresses, or smaller-sized ones were taken from panther nests on rocky ledges. They were not wild cats at all, but half-grown or cub panthers. During the time when our forefathers were calling the cub panthers 'wild cats,' they were calling the true, stump-tailed wild cats 'catamounts,' making in that designation another absurd mistake. The true wild cat is the bay lynx, whereas the catamount is really the Northern or Canada lynx, always a rare animal in Pennsylvania, and unknown in most of the counties except in the 'Northern Tier.'"





"CLEM" HERLACHER, Loganton, Clinton County,  
Greatest living Pennsylvania wild cat hunter

At the close of this dissertation, the words of which became indellibly impressed on the writer's mind, Herlacher pointed to a second stuffed animal, on a shelf above another of the mirrors. "There," he said, "is a true wild cat—*Lynx Rufus*—a fine specimen; it weighed thirty-five pounds when I killed it two years ago near 'Captain Green's Trench,' in Green Gap, down the valley. See, it has a short tail, about six inches, is more distinctly mottled than the panther cub, its fur is shorter and smoother." The writer then inquired where the panther cub had been obtained. Herlacher replied that he had on two successive years—1892 and 1893—secured panther cubs from a nest in the Panther Rocks, in Black Wolf or Treaster Valley, Mifflin County. He had trailed the old panthers on their regular crossing from Sugar Valley. It was in Treaster Valley that the noble Pennsylvania lion or panther made its last permanent abode in Pennsylvania, the cubs taken by Herlacher being, as far as known, the last panthers born in a wild state in the Keystone Commonwealth. As curios they were in great demand, but he regretted not having taken them alive. The great hunter had given away all but the one adorning the shelf above the central mirror. Later it became moth-eaten and was thrown away. Alas! for a priceless natural history specimen. And from the above it will be plain to the readers of these pages that the original "wild cat" was the panther cub, the wild cat of today is the bay lynx, the real catamount is the Canada lynx. But the next few chapters will go

into these matters more in detail. Emmanuel Harman, of Mt. Zion, Clinton County, aged 84 years, and many others, have regaled the writer with the story of the wild-cat panther-cub blunder of the "pioneer naturalists."



### III. THE BOB CAT, OR CATAMOUNT.

C. W. DICKINSON, experienced hunter and naturalist, of Smethport, McKean County, describes the true Pennsylvania wild cat (*Lynx Rufus*), sometimes called the Bob Cat, and erroneously called the Catamount, as follows: "The size of the average grown wild cat is: Length from nose to base of tail, 30 inches; tail 4 inches; weight, about 26 pounds. The longest cat I ever saw weighed tipped the scales at just 32 pounds. The wild cat only raises one litter of kittens annually, the time they are born being the 15th or 20th of April. The number of kits in the litter varies from two to five. The weight of a kitten at eight months after birth will be from thirteen to seventeen pounds. It takes them about three years to get their full growth. It is the opinion of many of the old hunters that the cat, as well as the panther, did not like to stay in a locality inhabited by the grey wolf, as the wolf usually roamed about in droves or squads of from two to ten or twelve in a pack. It seems that the cat family was deathly afraid of the wolf family. Their fear was due to the superior numbers of the wolf family traveling together. It was really surprising how fast the cat family increased in this locality after the wolf became extinct. There are three times as many wild cats in McKean County today as there were fifty years ago, notwithstanding they have been hunted hard since the bounty laws were enacted. Yet

I do not think there is more than one cat now to where there were three fifteen years ago, while grouse and rabbits, both "snowshoe" and "cottontail," are also decreasing. The wild cat is a great hunter. Naturally he is a night prowler. He is fond of 'coon, rabbit, ground-hog, all kinds of birds that he can catch, and he can capture a mouse as quickly as a house cat. Wild cats are handy with their paws; they have large nails, which are as sharp as needles." The present range of the wild cat is practically the same as it was when S. N. Rhoads' admirable work on Pennsylvania and New Jersey animals appeared in 1903, which was the entire State of Pennsylvania, except Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Washington Counties in the west, and Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia Counties in the east, thirteen out of sixty-seven counties, but its numbers are now sadly diminished since Rhoads made his researches. Preying as it does on sickly and weakly game birds, it was a tower of strength in combatting the "grouse disease" and the "quail blight," and also kept in check the ravages of destructive rabbits and other small mammals. In every district where it has been extirpated the game birds and game animals have decreased with it, until it would look that tame or hand-raised game will alone survive the next quarter of a century. The folly of destroying the wolf, fox and wild cat will not be understood until it is too late. Nature decrees all forms of life or none—except the domesticated or semi-domesticated speci-



**EMMANUEL HARMAN**, born May 27, 1832  
An authority on the cat family in Central Pennsylvania



mens of animals and birds. If the present bounty law, giving \$6 for every wild cat's scalp, is continued, few cats will be left in the State by 1921. They are wholly absent from many localities where they were fairly numerous five years ago. They are practically extinct in the Blue Mountains, the Bald Eagle Mountains, and the main chain of the Alleghenies. In Northeastern Pennsylvania a few are taken annually at Blooming Grove Preserve, in Pike County; in Clinton County some are trapped every year in Otzinachson Park—drawn thither by the rabbits and entrails of deer—but these preserves will be responsible for the destruction of all the cats in their respective localities; they will last longest in parts of McKean, and Cameron Counties, away from settlements, in the Seven Mountains in Centre and Mifflin Counties, and in Eastern Clinton County, in the Zimmermān country, unless destroyed by the increasingly frequent forest fires. There is a great diversity of coloring in specimens of Pennsylvania wild cats. They are mostly of a cinnamon brown color, black striped or spotted on the legs and shading into a white or marbled on the belly. Some are of a rich chestnut brown in color, beautifully spotted with black, while a few are of a grey-drab in color, the black markings resembling bars rather than dots. They usually have a white patch on the ears.

#### IV. THE BIG GREY WILD CAT, OR CANADA LYNX.

**J**OHAN G. DAVIS, old-time woodsman of McElhattan, Clinton County, gives the best description of a mammoth Canada Lynx (*Lynx Canadensis*) killed by John Pluff, at Hyner, in that County, in 1874. Pluff, who was a noted hunter in his day, died in January, 1914, in his 74th year. One evening when Pluff was at supper, he heard a commotion in his barnyard. Taking down his rifle he hurried out, only to notice a shaggy animal moving about among the feet of his young cattle. Courageously driving the steers into the barn, he came face to face with a gigantic Canada Lynx, or what was called, in Northern Pennsylvania, a "Big Grey Wild Cat," or catamount, to distinguish it from the smaller and ruddier Bay Lynx. Taking aim at the monster's jugular, Pluff fired, killing the big cat with a single ball. The shot attracted the neighbors, among them Davis, and they gazed with amazement at the giant carcass, the biggest cat killed in those parts since Sam Snyder slew his 10-foot panther on Young Woman's Creek in 1858. The Canada Lynx measured four feet ten inches from tip of nose to root of tail (the tail measured four inches) and weighed seventy-five pounds. The next day being Thanksgiving, it was supplemented to the turkey feast, and all enjoyed the deliciously flavored white meat more than





**JESSE LOGAN (1809—1916)**  
**An Indian Hunter of Warren County who killed many wild cats**

the conventional "Thanksgiving Bird." This lynx was probably a straggler from the Northern Tier, as none of its kind have been about Hyner since. At the same time the Canada Lynx has been killed in many parts of Pennsylvania, as far south as the Seven Mountains and Somerset County, some claim, but never frequently. Jesse Logan, Indian hunter, of the Cornplanter Reservation in Warren County, who is now 107 years old, says that he cannot recall Canada Lynxes ever having been plentiful in any part of Northern Pennsylvania.\* Clem Herlacher has killed a number of these animals in Clearfield and Cameron Counties, but in widely different localities and different dates. He describes the Canada Lynx as follows: "The two most remarkable characters of the Canada Lynx are the beautiful pencils of black hair which ornament the ears, and the perfect hairiness of the soles of the feet, which have no naked spots or tubercles like other species of the feline race. The catamount, which is the true Pennsylvania title for this animal, is of an ashen grey in color, with a ruff of stiff dark hair about its neck and looks 'chuffier' than the common wild cat; it most resembles an Old English Sheep Dog. I know nothing of its domestic habits, though I believe it formerly bred in some of our northern counties. Dr. Merriam says that it has two kittens at a birth. The biggest catamount I ever killed measured, exclusive of the tail, forty inches, the tail measured four inches, or an inch shorter than most wild cats. Catamounts were

---

\*Jesse Logan died February 17, 1916.

driven into Clinton and Mifflin Counties by forest fires from their northern range, but never remained long. I think that the Canada Lynx is now totally extinct in Pennsylvania. It was a fierce fighter, but I have heard of Seneca Indians who tamed it to follow them about like dogs. Among the Pennsylvania Dutch it was supposed to be endowed with the power to look through opaque bodies, hence the old expression of a person with keen sight being 'lynx eyed.'” Rhoads records instances of catamounts taken in Cameron, Potter, Columbia, Forest, Lackawanna, Lycoming, McKean, Monroe, Pike, Wayne, Somerset and Tioga Counties. Jesse Harman and son Ed., accompanied by Sam Motter, “California Sam,” a noted trapper, took a catamount at the head of McElhattan Run, in Clinton County, early in 1903. Out of a dozen cats caught by these hunters that winter it was the only Canada Lynx. It weighed sixty-five pounds and measured exactly five feet from tip to tip.



## V. THE BLUE MOUNTAIN CAT.

AN animal so widespread in its range as the wild cat doubtless has had many diversified types, even sub-species. Hunted for the most part by unscientific persons, no descriptions have been kept, all have been classed alike in the bounty records. A few years ago, while in conversation with the venerable artist and nature-lover, C. H. Shearer, of Reading, the subject turned to wild cats. "Are you aware," said the old naturalist, "that the wild cats from the Blue Mountains east to the Delaware were vastly different from the cats found in other parts of Pennsylvania? I am not certain of any marked difference between, say, the cats of Potter County and those of Fulton County, except perhaps that they reached the maximum of size in the central part of the State, in the Seven Mountains. But in the Blue Mountains, and on Penn's Mount, we used to take a cat vastly different from the cats of the Juniata country. In my opinion the Blue Mountain cat was the 'mountain cat' described by Loskiel. Its coloring, according to that early observer, was 'reddish or orange colored hair, with black streaks.' As a boy I used to trap many of these cats in Irish Gap and at the head of the Schwartzbach, back of Tuckerton. These cats were short-coupled, compact, rather short-legged, with long, wavy fur, much like the modern pet Angoras in confirmation, ex-

cept for the short tails. Ten or fifteen pound cats were big specimens. In winter time they were pale greyish colored, like the Canada Lynx; in summer, orange color, and instead of being dappled were striped like tigers. When I first saw the cats in Central Pennsylvania I was struck by the difference—the Juniata cats were so ungainly, with higher hind legs than front legs, they were usually so meagre looking, their noses were longer. When I was a boy, before the Civil War, Blue Mountain cats were common in all the hilly regions in Berks, Lancaster, Lebanon and Lehigh Counties. I have not seen one since about 1870.” The writer at once started on a search for the hide of a Blue Mountain cat, being rewarded by securing a fine hide, corresponding exactly to Shearer’s descriptions. The hide was of a mature bore cat in its winter coat, which had been killed, according to Paul Weber, the Reading taxidermist, in the Blue Mountains, near Millersburg, in 1864. In color it closely resembles a Canada Lynx; its legs are very short. A large stuffed wild cat in the bar room of the hotel at Upper Bern, Berks County, said to have been killed in the Blue Mountains near Shartlesville in 1892, has none of these characteristics. It is a typical Bay Lynx. William Henne, a wild cat hunter of Strausstown, Berks County, declares that for a time both varieties existed in the Blue Mountains.

## VI. MIXED BREEDS.

**M**IKE SULLIVAN, a very intelligent bar clerk at Johnsonburg, Elk County, called the writer's attention to the length of the tail of a mounted cat in the hotel at that prosperous lumber town. "A great many wild cat hides, taken in Elk, McKean, and Forest Counties are shipped to a fur dealer in town," said Sullivan, "and I have been struck by the length of their tails. I put a foot rule on this one, and it measured exactly twelve inches. That cat, I am told, weighed forty-one pounds. We have quite a few varieties of cats in these parts. First of all, there is the Canada Lynx, grey in color, with tabs on his ears and hair on the soles of his feet; a big, fierce fellow, often weighing fifty pounds. He has always been a scarce cat, even the Indians say he was never plentiful. Secondly, there is the true wild cat, or 'Bob' cat, reddish in color, mottled like a fawn, smaller than the Canadian Lynx, but with a longer tail. Thirdly, there is the tame cat gone wild—escaped from lumber camps and the like. Some of these grow very big, and in one or two generations are brindled and bushy tailed. Many people call them 'coon cats.' Then we have the fourth kind, the mixture, hybrid or mongrel, whatever you call it, between the Canada Lynx and the Wild Cat, or Bay Lynx. In my opinion, that cat on yonder shelf is a cross between a lynx and a Bob Cat. Old hunters tell me that the product of that cross has a longer tail than either lynx or Bob Cat—a throw back to the type of long ago. There may also be crosses between lynxes

and Bob Cats and tame cats gone wild; it happened in the old country, why not here?" The above observations, which have also been advanced by C. W. Dickinson, of Smethport, have a considerable element of common-sense to them. In deer breeding there is a tendency to throw back to good-headed, or poor headed ancestors, as the case may be. In South Carolina there are frequent cases of palmation in the deer, due to some English fallow bucks liberated by planters in the Eighteenth Century. A cross between two varieties of short-tailed lynxes might provide a longer tailed type. In other respects the cat in the Johnsonburg house showed an accentuation of characters. Its hind legs were apparently twice the thickness of the front legs, and very much longer. It was an unsymmetrical animal. Perhaps much of this was due to faulty taxonomy, but that would not account for the length of the tail. Its color, a darker grey than the true lynx, was almost of a drab hue. It was darker about the head, but there were no regular spots. The Canada Lynx early succumbed to changed conditions in his faunal zone, the forest fire, the clearing, the drained swamp, the passing of the northern hare, but for a time his blood will live on in the crossbreed with the more adaptable Bay Lynx. As these long tailed cats are said to be plentiful in the wilder sections of Northwestern Pennsylvania, it may be that this new race will possess the power to best endure existing conditions—though S. N. Rhoads says that such a cross would be infertile.

## VII. CAT HUNTING.

C. W. DICKINSON describes cat hunting in Pennsylvania in the following language: "Wild cats are hunted with hounds chiefly. If pursued by a fast hound, the wild cat will either go into some rocky ledge or go up a tree, as he can climb a tree as easily as a squirrel can. If a hunter has a good cat dog it is quite exciting sport. I know, as I have often been on a cat hunt. It is a sport that ought to be preserved." One of the very best out-door-life articles that has appeared in a sporting magazine in recent years is J. B. Sansom's contribution entitled: "Cat Hunting: A Real Winter Sport," in the January number of "In the Open." It describes a thrilling cat hunt in which "coon dogs" were used on A. R. Van Tassel's ranch in Cameron County, not far from Sinnemahoning. The hounds, which had never previously been used on cats, took to the sport at once, and three cats were secured on the hunt. A. Phillips, a Lock Haven cat hunter, has used Airedale terriers successfully, securing several fine wild cats by this means on Scootac Run, Clinton County. William Henne, a noted cat hunter, residing at Strausstown, Berks County, trained beagles to trail wild cats in the Blue Mountains, when cats were plentiful in that region, twenty years ago. One Christmas eve his dogs started a wild cat which headed toward the mountain back of Fort Northkill. While

passing along an old lumber road a second cat leaped from a persimmon tree on the back of the unsuspecting Nimrod. A struggle ensued, in which Henne was badly clawed. Eventually he shook off the cat, which was killed by the beagles, and, continuing the hunt, secured the second cat at its den on the top of the mountain. George Potts, of Millersburg, Berks County, hunted wild cats with fox hounds, trained especially for cat hunting, and with considerable success for twenty years after the close of the Civil War. Cat hunting is usually carried on when there is a good "tracking snow." C. E. Logue states that this winter he shot four wild cats "ahead of his dogs" in Northern Clinton County. This grand sport is little prosecuted in Pennsylvania, most of the cats being trapped, a mean advantage to take of a noble game animal. Wild cats make delicious eating. Not only the old mountaineers, but such discerning naturalists as Dr. Merriam and Prof. Emmons have attested to this. As a source of food supply the wild cat deserves protection. Dr. Merriam, in this connection, says: "I have eaten the flesh of the wild cat, and can pronounce it excellent. It is white, very tender, and suggested veal more than any other meat with which I am familiar." The flesh of panthers and catamounts was also highly spoken of by the Pennsylvania backwoodsmen. Lion's meat was regarded as a delicacy by the French soldiers in Algeria. The wild cat is worth hunting, as he is a bold, courageous animal. He will fight to the last breath, and has no fear of man or dog. Last summer





**"JAKE" ZIMMERMAN**

**For Years a Terror to the Bob Cats in the White Deer Creek Narrows**

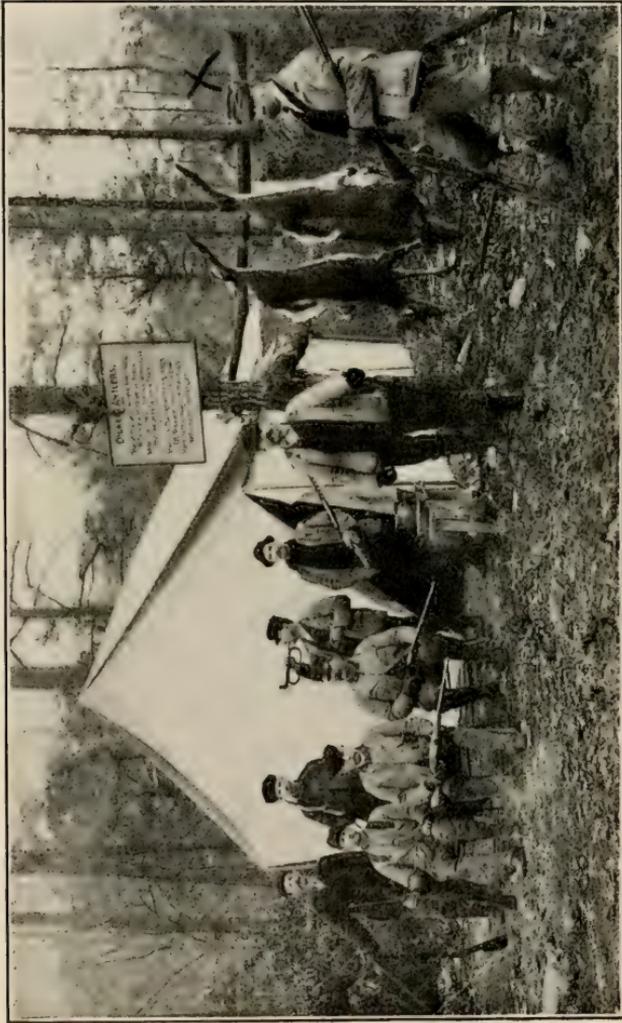
Jake Zimmerman, the celebrated guide and hunter of the "Zimmerman Country," in Eastern Clinton County, was followed by a wild cat four miles one night, while driving from White Deer Hole Valley to his home in the mountains. It bounded along by the side of his horse and wagon, every few leaps uttering a piercing cry. Others who have been followed at night by wild cats are Lincoln Conser and W. J. Phillips, of McElhattan, Clinton County, and Reuben Stover and daughter, of Livonia (Stover's), Centre County. Rev. D. A. Sowers, of Lock Haven, met a finely spotted wild cat standing on a log in the forest near DuBois, during the deer hunting season in 1914. As it appeared to be unafraid the young hunter promptly ended its life with a well-directed bullet. According to C. W. Dickinson the skin of an average Pennsylvania wild cat (if prime) is worth about \$1.25. Finely mottled hides bring much higher prices. Mounted specimens sell for about \$10 apiece. In the form of rugs they bring from five to eight dollars, according to size and markings. C. H. Eldon, the gifted Williamsport taxidermist, has mounted several thousand Pennsylvania wild cat hides during the past thirty years. The alleged destructiveness of wild cats, at most a specious argument, is crushed like an egg-shell by the testimony of C. E. Logue, gamekeeper at the extensive Otzinachson Park Preserve in Northern Clinton County, the "type locality" of the Bay Lynx in Pennsylvania. Within the enclosure of this preserve, which embraces over three thousand acres, several hundred deer are kept. In Mr.

Logue's experience he found only one case where a deer had been killed by wild cats. In this instance it was a very old deer, and may have been found dead by the cats, which dragged it a hundred feet down a hill over the snow and devoured parts of the carcass. Logue has never found evidence that fawns have been molested by the cats. Fawns have no scent, hence cannot be trailed by cats; the mother deer are well able to care for them. He classes the wild cats as "game hogs" as regards rabbits and rats, but capable of causing little trouble to game birds or deer. Yet the management of this same park continues the unscientific methods of the gamekeepers of the Middle Ages, ordering Logue to trap wild cats, foxes, and other useful mammals incessantly. We have progress in every other branch of human activity except game propagation, and the results show it. Dr. Warren mentions a cat which followed a young swain in Southwestern Pennsylvania, going home from courting his "best girl," finally "treeing" him on a fence, and keeping him there until daylight. "Link" Conser, of Clinton County, had an almost similar experience during his courting days on the ridges south of the "Sugar Valley Hill;" in his case the cat kept crossing and recrossing the road in front of him, sometimes lying down and purring at him. This kept up until daylight, when the cat vanished. A. R. Sholter reports another case from Weikert, Union County. One night, some years ago, when returning from a call, he had occasion to walk along the tracks of the L. & T. Railroad. When oppo-

site Chimney Rock a cat appeared on the ties in front of him, trotting on ahead, and sometimes crossing and recrossing the tracks or lying down and rolling. Dr. Warren wonders if the Pennsylvania wild cat could by any possibility be the patron saint of young lovers! In order to show the extent of the slaughter of wild cats in the Keystone State by professional bounty hunters, the following figures, quoted from Dr. Warren's statistics on the subject, may be of interest: In Clinton County, the "cat stronghold," in the years 1885 to 1896, inclusive, 298 bounty claims were paid on wild cats. The largest number in a single year was in 1891, when 91 scalps were brought in. During the first six months of 1914, bounties were paid on the scalps of 62 wild cats in Clinton County. In Clearfield County, during the seven years, 1890-1896, bounties were paid on 430 cats. In February, 1916, two well-known citizens of Clearfield County killed a wild cat at Crystal Springs, which weighed 46 pounds. It was four feet long. In Centre County, 1885 to 1895, inclusive, bounties were paid on 252 wild cats. In Potter County, 1885 to 1896, inclusive, bounties were paid on 264 cat scalps. During January, 1916, bounties were paid on the scalps of 45 cats in Potter County. In Sullivan County, from 1886 to 1896, inclusive, bounties were paid on 224 cats. In Huntingdon County, between 1886 and 1896, inclusive, bounties were paid on 127 of these animals. In Franklin County, 1885 to 1896, inclusive, bounties were paid on 196 cats; in Fulton County, during the same period, on 89 cats, and

in Cambria County, also between 1885 and 1896, inclusive, on 136 cats. During January, 1916, bounties were paid on 221 wild cats in Pennsylvania. And "game," that is, grouse, quail and rabbits, are scarcer now than with all these cats in the woods. When it is considered that in the eighties and nineties the bounty amounted to only two dollars per cat, and up to 1915 four dollars at most, the toll to be taken at the present bounty of six dollars per cat means extermination. A rogue's march is going on of lazy ne'er-do-wells, idlers and thugs, going to the forests to destroy an animal that the Creator put there for a wise purpose. The presumption of politicians who encourage this in the face of facts is disgusting and discouraging. The writer has no complaint against the man who hunts for food, or fur, or for love of the chase; but he who wipes a species off the face of the earth for a few dollars is earning tainted money and is a traitor to all the higher instincts of his race. The large numbers of starving, emaciated wild cats shot in the open woods and fields this winter shows that with the scarcity of rabbits the wild cats of themselves will vanish from the face of the earth.





PHIL WRIGHT (At Extreme Right)  
Premier Cat Hunter of Southern Pennsylvania

## VIII. CAT HUNTERS.

**H**UNTERS specializing on wild cats were never numerous, consequently the roster of celebrated Pennsylvania cat hunters is not a long one. Most cats, as before stated, have been taken in traps, depriving the sport of its real zest. Except in winter time, when the country is open, the wild cat is difficult to locate. Its coloring blends with rocks and branches; it is quiet and unobtrusive in the extreme. Dr. B. H. Warren, now Director of the Everhart Museum at Scranton, in his valuable treatise, "Enemies of Poultry," published at Harrisburg in 1897, thus describes the "favorite haunts" of the cats. These consist, he says, of "forests, rocky ledges, briary thickets, slashings and bark peelings strewn with decaying logs, fallen trees and brush piles, grown up with rhododendron (buck laurel)." At night the wild cat, like the panther, is much in evidence. A. R. Sholter, a young hunter of Weikert, Union County, describes the nocturnal cries of wild cats answering one another—one on Paddy's Mountain and the other on the White Mountain, the valley of the Karoondinha reverberating with the savage love notes. Professor Emmons, in describing the panther, says: "Though it will not venture to attack man, yet it will follow his track a great distance; if it is near the evening, it frequently utters a scream which can be heard

for miles." J. W. Zimmerman and others who have been followed at night by wild cats report the same habit, though the cat's cry is much fainter than that of *felis cougar*. Friends of Clem. Herlacher claim for him the distinction of being one of the most famous cat hunters in Pennsylvania in present or former times. They aver that he killed fifty Canada Lynxes, at the recital of which record the modest Nimrod "just whittles," taking pains to remind his friends that he has slain half a hundred wild cats, some of them after spirited combats. But in his hunting days in Clearfield County he surely killed many catamounts. Ranking high in the lists of cat hunters is Sol. Roach, who hails from Windber, Somerset County. Roach is accredited with killing half a hundred wild cats, six of them in one week, at the Bear Rocks, at the head of Beech Creek, in Centre County. John P. Swope, the Huntingdon County trapper, has probably taken more cats than any other hunter of the present day in Pennsylvania. He is credited with having trapped at least 500 cats, sometimes thirty in one season. C. E. Logue, in connection with his duties as gamekeeper of Otzindison Park in Clinton County, has trapped probably 100 wild cats, some of them large specimens. Phil. Wright enjoys the distinction of having killed more wild cats than any hunter in Southern Pennsylvania. This Nimrod has taken at least 100 cats of various sizes. W. H. Workinger has taken many cats in the Seven Mountains. This hunter, who resides at Milroy, Mifflin County, in January, 1916, caught two cats, one





C. E. LOGUE  
The mighty cat hunter of the Sinnemahoning

weighing sixty pounds, the smaller one thirty pounds. The big cat measured  $37\frac{1}{2}$  inches from nose to root of tail; the tail measured  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches. "France" Hower, who was accidentally shot in a fox-trap last summer, was a terror to the wild cats of Jack's Mountain. In his long career as a hunter he probably killed fifty of these animals. George Potts, of Millersburg, Berks County, was for years the leading cat hunter of the Blue Mountains. Between dogs and traps and still hunts he undoubtedly killed over one hundred Bay Lynxes and Blue Mountain Cats. Abe Simcox and his son John killed nearly half a hundred cats along the south slope of the Sugar Valley Hill in Clinton County. David A. Zimmerman and son Jake killed twice that number in eastern Sugar Valley and the White Deer Narrows. Earl Motz, "the schoolboy hunter" of Woodward, Centre County, has killed many wild cats in the Pine Creek Hollow. E. N. Woodcock and Leroy Lyman, noted Potter County hunters, undoubtedly killed over one hundred wild cats apiece. Dr. W. J. McKnight, of Brookville, in his "Pioneer Outline History of Northwestern Pennsylvania," says: "The catamount is larger than the wild cat. They have been killed in this region six and seven feet long from nose to end of tail. They have tufts on their ear-tips, and are often mistaken for panthers. George Smith, a Washington Township early hunter, who resided in the wilds of Elk County until his death in 1901, killed in this wilderness five hundred catamounts and six hundred wild cats." Bill Long, the "King Hunter" of

Jefferson and Clearfield Counties, who died in 1880, is mentioned by Dr. McKnight as having killed in Pennsylvania five hundred catamounts and two hundred wild cats. His son, Jack Long, who died at his home, two miles from DuBois in 1900, killed, according to a statement made by him to Dr. McKnight, "wild cats and catamounts without number." E. H. Dickinson, pioneer hunter of McKean County, killed a number of Canada Lynxes, or catamounts, during his early days in the Northern Pennsylvania wilderness. He died in 1885, aged 75 years. With his son, C. W. Dickinson, he helped kill his last catamount in November, 1867. In commenting upon the Canada Lynx, Dickinson is quoted thus by S. N. Rhoads: "We have a cat in McKean County yet that is called a lynx, because of its size and color. Some of them will weigh as high as forty-four pounds. But they are a darker grey than the lynx. I believe they are a cross between the lynx and the common wild cat." The true lynx is a silent animal, not given to whining or screaming like the wild cat, except when badly wounded. Rhoads states that the early Swedish settlers on the Delaware called the lynx the "Warglo," or wolf-lynx, and the wild cat the "Kattlo," or cat lynx. Among the Pennsylvania Germans the lynx was called the "Harsh Katz," and the wild cat the "Wild Katz." The French in Clearfield County, in the Loup Run Country, now corrupted into "Loop" Run, who came mostly from Picardy, called the lynx or catamount the *Chet Cervier* and the wild cat the *Chet Savage*. No list of Pennsylvania cat hunt-





**SAM'L MOTTER, Mt. Zion, Clinton County,  
Better known as "California Sam"  
Famed for catching wild cats alive with his bare hands**

ers would be complete without a mention of Sam Motter, better known as "California Sam." He was left a fortune by an uncle who went to California in 1849. Sam Motter's specialty, as long as the supply of cats lasted on the head of McElhattan Run, in Clinton County, was catching these animals alive with his bare hands. His dogs would trail the cats to their dens, where Motter would dig them out, and with deft movements seize them by the throats. He sold the cats at good prices to zoos, shows, hotels and fanciers. Robert Karstetter, of Loganton, Clinton County, often used his coon dogs to trail wild cats with considerable success. Dan Long, who killed the last wolf in Berks County, in Shubert's Gap in 1886, killed many wild cats and Blue Mountain cats during his eventful career as a hunter. In the county records of Berks County, *Lynx Rufus* is classed as a "catamount," and the Blue Mountain cat as "wild cat." During the years 1885-1893, inclusive, bounties were paid on thirty catamounts and wild cats in Berks County. Of these eleven were classed as "catamounts," the heavy type of Bay Lynx. The Canada Lynx has not been observed in Berks County for many years. The Seneca Indian doctors used the fat, blood and excrement of wild cats as a cure for divers maladies of mankind, including baldness, gout, the falling sickness and shrunken sinews. They recommended coats and leggings of cat fur (worn fur inward) for various aches and pains in bones and joints. Wild cats will breed in captivity if given a large enclosure, but kill their

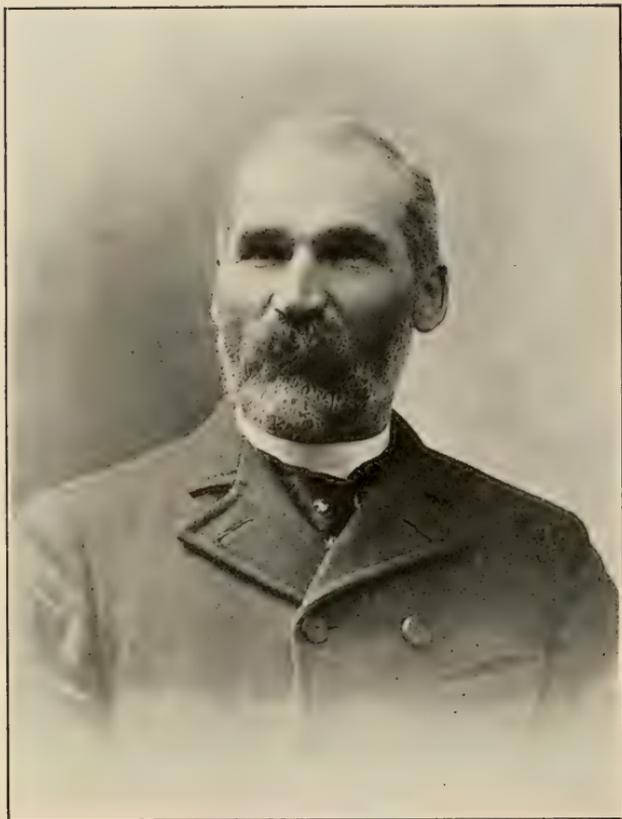
young if they are born in close confinement. A "breeding cage" should contain running water, trees to climb on, and much dense foliage. It should be wired, of course, on top, to prevent the agile animals from climbing out. Wild cats in captivity prefer as food the entrails of animals and fowls, chicken heads, cow and horse heads, fish heads, berries, potatoes, grass, bugs and grubs, but be sure that they get plenty of fresh water. They often become friendly and playful, and will have as much enjoyment out of a ball of catnip as a tame "tabby."

"California Sam" gives these quaint views concerning the Pennsylvania wild cat:

"It appeared to me an opportune time to write a few lines on the wild cat to clear up in the minds of the younger generation some of the stories that have been told to me when but a boy, some hair-raising tales of the monster 'catamount,' 'wild cat,' 'bob cat.'

"Now let me say I live in the southeastern part of Clinton County, Pennsylvania, and in my fifty years of travels in the forest, so well I became acquainted with the cat that I could communicate with an old bore cat. This is what he once told me: 'My mate met with a sad failure when she jumped in Sam Motter's face. Although Motter is only a small man, my spirits dropped out of my long legs when I saw the ease with which he handled his 80-pound pack, and it occurred to me that my little 25 pounds of nerve and sinew would count little in case of any serious trouble with Mr. Motter. I therefore got out of his way. I wish





**ROBERT KARSTETTER.**  
A Veteran Clinton County Cat Hunter

to say to the younger sportsmen that my breed of cats do not attack men under any circumstances when we can get away. In fact, we do not like men at all, and I have heard old hunters say, when talking over their campfire, that as many years as they had been in the hills they never had seen a mean, quarrelsome cat, and they wondered where they kept themselves. We wild cats have no special range, but come from the highest peaks to the lowest bottoms in the day time and sleep in some dense thicket or in some cave or under some rock where the sun does not penetrate. As cool dusk comes on we prowl softly about, looking for lazy snowshoe rabbits or some grouse or field mice. Many an unsuspecting brood or aged drumming cock have I devoured as the light grew dim in the spring evening. It is very amusing to sit and watch an old cock grouse, as he swells and walks along his log. And when he has his thoughts full of his sweetheart and begins to drum, I just make three jumps and then with one stroke I crush the life and conceit out of him. Of course squirrels, small birds and even fish are all acceptable when they are foolish enough to come my way. I am also very fond of the remains of deer or other dead animals when killed by hunters. When I am angry I don't stand with my ears pitched forward like a horse, neither do I show my teeth and growl. When I get mad I lay my ears well back, just as any other cat does, and the madder I get the lower I lay them, producing a snaky expression.

In order to get any large and satisfactory photos of me you must either tree me or catch me in a trap.'

So I will close my quotation. Oh, how dear to my heart is my old hunting coat, my old shooting coat that has worn me so well, for weeks at a time in all kinds of weather, and if it could talk, many's the tale it would tell!"

---

*GIVE THE WILD CATS A CHANCE.*





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 002 911 091 8

