

**SMILEY'S TOUGH FIGHT.**

**HE LAYS OUT TWO IMMENSE BEARS WITH A HICKORY CLUB.**

**An Act of Carelessness Which Came Near Costing a Man His Life—A Fight for the Carcass of a Deer—An Interesting Reminiscence Told by the Old Hunter.**

On the top of Smoky mountain, at least five miles from any settlement or farm, in the midst of the wildest part of this rough, mountainous section, there is an old hunter named Job Smiley.

Among the many narrow escapes he has had, one of the most interesting perhaps is the account, as he himself told it, of his fight with two full grown black bears, in which, with nothing but a big hickory stick, he comes off finally victorious, although terribly clawed and bitten. This is the story as he told it himself:

I was out hunting as usual one day on one of the cross ridges of the Big Smoky when I got on the trail of a big buck, which I followed for two hours before I got close enough to shoot. When I did get the chance the buck was about seventy yards below me on a narrow shelf, which overhung a rocky precipice of fifteen or twenty feet. I drew a bead on the buck and dropped him dead in his tracks. Then I did a very foolish thing—one I never did before and never will again, and that was this: I laid my gun down against a log, not even taking time to load it, and climbed down to the spot where the buck lay.

**THEY ALL GOT THERE.**

I got there safely, and so did a couple of thundering big bears about the same time. They had a den in the side of the mountain close by, and my shot alarmed them or they had been laying for the deer themselves. Well, they were there and so was I, and, unfortunately, I was without a weapon. I saw there was going to be trouble, and that I couldn't get back to my gun, so I looked about me quietly to see if I could find anything with which to defend myself.

Down close by my feet I saw a big hickory limb, which had been broken off in some of the fearful wind storms so common on the mountain. The stick was about five feet long and nearly three inches thick. Now, you can just imagine that I got hold of that stick mighty quick. It was fresh and sound, and an excellent weapon against one bear; but two—I had very serious doubts about the outcome in that case. This all occurred in a good deal less time than it takes to tell it—in fact, in less time than that both brutes were coming at me with open mouths. I waited until the first one rose to his feet, which they do when they are in for a fight, when I gave him a rap on the side of the head that knocked him down. Then I drew back my club just in time to strike at the other one. Somehow that bear knocked that blow off, and he did it so quickly that the force I had given it came near making me lose my balance. As it was, the infernal brute gave me a swipe with his fore paw which tore my hunting shirt at the shoulder into shoe-strings and ripped my hide and flesh clear across from the shoulder half way down my arm.

Before the bear could close in on me, however, I sprang back and drew up my club ready for another blow. The first one I had knocked over was now on his feet, and both of them having smelled the blood were in savage earnest, and it was now a fight to the death. They both came at me on their hind feet, about six feet apart and about the same distance from me. As they got close enough to reach I swung the big club down on a level, and just as quick as I possibly could I gave one of them a thundering poke square between the eyes. This was the fellow on my left. Then I swung the club to the right, and got in a pretty good one on the other one's neck. The bear I had struck between the eyes was badly hurt, as he laid right down and whined. I happened to turn my eyes in his direction and this gave the other one an opportunity, and the first I knew I was knocked backward and came near falling, with the bear close upon me.

**IN A TIGHT CORNER.**

There was no getting away this time. He had his fore paws around my left arm and waist almost before I knew it. Fortunately my right hand was free, and I shortened the club and battered him over the head while he clawed and bit me on the shoulder and across the back. We had it forward and back, the bear trying his best to get a hold on my neck or face, while I kept beating him over the head and body with the club. At last down we went on the ground; but just as I was going over I fortunately struck the bear on one of his eyes and knocked it out. The pain made him loosen his hold, and he never got another, for I got on my feet as quickly as I could, and brought that big club down square across his throat and killed him. I was pretty badly hurt and rather short of wind, but I knew I had better finish the other one mighty quick, for if he got up and fairly at me again I would be wiped out, so I jumped for him, and got close to him just as he was getting on his feet. Lord! how I did batter that fellow! I knocked him over and pounded him until I was out of wind and the bear beaten almost into a jelly.

Then I sat down and did what I never did before—kneled right over and fainted. I must have lain there an hour or more before I came to. It took two full hours to walk about two miles to my cabin, where, luckily for me, I found old Tom Bhakelock, another hunter, laying out a supper for himself. Old Tom soon had me spread out on the shakedown in the corner, and then he went to work to wash my wounds and tie me together again. After he had fixed me up in some sort of shape old Tom went to the place where I had the fight and skinned the bears and hung them up. When he came back the old fellow was dragging along three cubs about 3 months old. He found the bears' den and captured the cubs, which he pulled out with a piece of rope he always carried. That fight laid me up for about two months, but I came out as sound as ever.—Cincinnati Enquirer Letter from Graham county, N. C.

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**Weckbach's.**

**AT WECKBACH'S.**

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**AT**

**WECKBACH'S.**

**MARCH 19th.**

**Domestics.**

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