

THE BIG GAME HUNTING ENIMGA!

An Editorial

"To Be — or Not To Be — That is the Question"! —At least, as far as being a Big Game Hunter, is concerned in New York State.

How many of you hunters remember the good old tried and true method of controlling the deer population that was the practice of the Conservation Department before the State decided to commercialize on the deer harvest by selling "party permits"? Let's see now—that was just a few short years ago, wasn't it?

That was when the Conservation Experts would make a study of the deer situation and whenever they found it was overpopulated, would allow hunters to take a deer of either sex on the last day of the big game season. According to our memory, this was just about every other year.

During that period, the Conservation Department seemed well satisfied with their system and gave glowing reports on its success. Needless to say the farmers that fed the deer all year, as well as the hunters, were apparently happy with this approach. Everyone paid the same amount of money for a deer license (or was it a fee?); had an equal opportunity to bag a buck during the season; and if unsuccessful, had the odds improved by about 3-1 on the last day by being permitted to take either a buck or doe! This meant that a hunter could end up with just 1 deer a season — legally!

Then someone with big business ideas enters the picture — Why not capitalize on the deer harvest as an extra source of income. What the heck—if hunters will pay \$5.75 for a Resident Hunting & Fishing License, \$3.25 for a Big Game License and another fee to hunt deer with a long-bow — why not charge an extra \$5 for a party permit? Put it up on a 1st come — 1st served basis so that the advantage will be with the Big City Hunters — aren't they the ones that will spend the money?

So what happens? City Hunters invade the woodlands owned by local farmers — like locusts. Many of them are in parties where each member is wearing an armband which enables them to take a deer with or without antlers. This means that they can almost shoot at anything that moves — after all, they do have a big gang with them — they can move in on a patch of woods, order any lone hunters out, and then start blazing away. Thus they can wind up with 2 deer apiece — and perhaps wound several more that will die — but are too much trouble to track down. Then too — if they want to be on the illegal side — they can load the deer in their cars — go back to Rochester or Buffalo during the night — store their game and be back to have another "go at it" in the morning.

Does this sound far-fetched? Not by a jugful! Last year, 3 city hunters staying at the local Hotel bagged 4 bucks in the first day and a half of the season — legally. — If they had been like the party of 3 that we ran into last year who said they were from Rochester, they could have wound up with six deer — legally. Each one of them wore an armband and when questioned — "replied that they worked at Kodak and had other fellow workers go in with each of them" — all legal like!

How does the State like this "Party-Permit" system? Apparently fine! This year they have set a quota of a total of 48,800 permits at \$5 a piece — that figures up to \$244,000. Almost big business isn't it? Especially, when the State doesn't accept ownership of the deer, have to feed them, or accept responsibility for the damage done by them to the farmers crops or to the many motorists autos that are smashed up every year. Does this sound bitter? Maybe, since it cost us \$428 out of our own pocket a few years ago to fix up our Dodge after a collision with a big buck — and no collision insurance!

But how about the local Farmers and Hunters? How do they fare with the "Party Permit" system?

Do they get a six-day priority to apply for a party permit like landowners did in parts of nine Catskill counties this year? No! These are just trial areas. Furthermore, they don't have the free time or opportunity to collect un applications from fellow workers and get them in the mail early enough to be even assured of getting a party permit. (Last year our application was sent back with a notice that the quota was

already filled — and there were many other local hunters that had the same experience.)

This wasn't bad enough — this year we've had reports that some of the local hunters haven't even received their applications for party permits back, together with their deer hunting license and fee. We checked out 1 report last night and found it to be true. This hunter was told that some of the applications had been lost and the situation had been discussed at a regional meeting. He sent the application and papers in by registered mail and received a signed receipt back—so it must have arrived at its destination. How many more hunters are there in the same situation? Could this have had any effect on the 11th hour closing of the woods? Was this decision made ahead of time and with-held until the last possible moment so that all of the deer licenses could be sold that were possible?

We normally receive on an average of at least 2 news releases from the Conservation Department a week — but we haven't received anything so far on the hunting situation as far as the closing of the woods is concerned.

We know that the woods are dry and a fire hazard exists — but why weren't they closed at least 2 weeks ago? If it was the deer hunters they were afraid of as far as fire is concerned, why did they continue to sell licenses up until the last minute?

The Authorities have stated that the season will be extended to make up for the time lost that the woods are closed. But how will that help all of the hunters that have arranged their vacations for months in advance and didn't even have enough notice so that they could possibly try and make other arrangements?

How long will the woods remain closed? Will they wait until we have the needed 1-2 inches of rainfall that was stated as being necessary to avoid the fire menace, or will they open it up for small game only as is the current rumor? If they do this, what made the big difference — that shower Monday night?

As far as we personally and selfishly are concerned, the longer the woods are closed the better the chances are that our local friends and farmers will be able to get their quota of venison. We say this because there is bound to be fewer hunters afield — but how about the ones that won't be able to make it?

It seems about time that a good strong stand and policy is announced—and then followed, instead of all of these hours and days of indecision!

THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IS BASIC TO ALL YOUR AMERICAN FREEDOMS! Only as your newspaper is free to print the facts, can you be free to know them. Only as you know the facts, can you act wisely in the best interests of your Community, as you see them. In America, there is plenty of room for opinions. **THERE IS NO ROOM FOR RESTRICTIONS ON THE PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO KNOW THE TRUTH!**

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50 YEARS AGO

Nov. 26, 1914

J. H. Backus, Publisher

Mrs. Olive Rimick died November 12, 1914. A brother and a sister survive.

Mr. and Mrs. J. N. Wentworth are the parents of a daughter born November 4th.

P. C. Berkwater has been transferred from Mount Jewett, Pa., to Andover as Erie Station Agent.

Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Gilbert of Philadelphia, Pa., were weekend guests at the home of his brother, Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Gilbert.

Mrs. Sarah Burbank is spending a few days with her sister, Mrs. J. Q. Welch of Belmont.

Mrs. Bridget Garvin was called to Hornell, Wednesday by the death of Frank Eagen.

E. J. Atwood is in Syracuse on business this week.

40 YEARS AGO

Nov. 7, 1924

J. H. Backus & Son, Publishers

Lewis L. Bullard, 64, a life-long resident of Andover, died unexpectedly Sunday evening, November 2nd. Two brothers and three sisters survive.

The price of potatoes dropped to 30c a bushel Tuesday.

Mr. and Mrs. LaVern Kenyon of Tip Top are the parents of a son, born October 31st.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bennett returned Saturday from several weeks passed with relatives at Newberg, Canada (Rochester and Binghamton).

Mr. and Mrs. L. A. Johnson and daughter, Helen, have moved to Elmira.

Thomas McTighe of Syracuse visited Andover relatives and friends this week.

James Quinn, Jr. of Paterson, N. J., is spending a few days with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Quinn.

35 YEARS AGO

Nov. 2, 1929

J. H. Backus & Son, Publishers

Clinton Clair, 7-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Leon Clair, died Saturday morning in the Jones Memorial Hospital from tetanus infection. Besides his parents, three sisters and two brothers survive.

Miss Anna Michaels and Charles Lever were united in marriage October 26th.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Sutor are the parents of a daughter, born October 27th.

Edward and Augustus Lynch are taking in the Century of Progress Exposition at Chicago this week.

Miss Catherine O'Donnell of the Buffalo General Hospital was a guest of her father, Dr. C. W. O'Donnell the last of the week.

Mr. and Mrs. Francis Casey, E. C. Casey, and Louis Harkenrider left Saturday for the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago.

Mr. and Mrs. John Quigg and Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Murphy visited relatives in Conneaut, Ohio several days last week.

Oliver Kemp was in Woodhull Tuesday night and Canisteo Thursday night to play with the Harry Williams Orchestra.

Thanksgiving Day was first proclaimed nationally by George Washington — Factographs, Gives us still another thing to be thankful for—that George was so smart.

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