

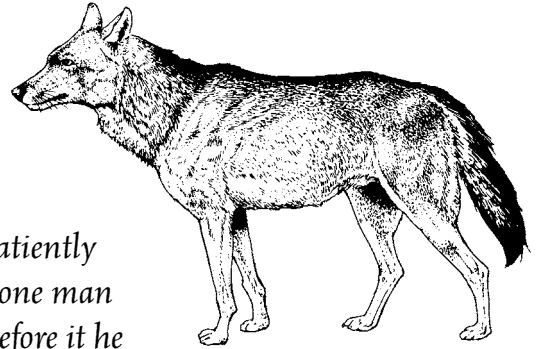
The Wolves

In January 1843, while encamped with a party of mountain men six or eight miles down the Platte River from Fort Lupton, Rufus Sage records the following story:

“Having awoke one moonshiny night, and observing an unusual number of wolves in the vicinity of camp, I seized my rifle and shot one of them; soon after I improved the opportunity to lay another prostrate, and in a few minutes subsequent a third fell in like manner; all at three ...shots.

A continuation of the sport seemed likely to detract too much from the hours of sleep, and so, placing the victims in front of the camp-fire, I addressed myself to repose.

A light snow fell in the interval, and sunrise found us all in bed, patiently waiting to see who would have the courage to rise first. At length, one man jumped up and turned to renew the fire. On noticing the wolves before it he wheeled for his rifle, in his eagerness to secure which he fell sprawling at full length.



“Hello!” says one’ “what’s the matter, my boy. Is that are a sample of the ups and downs of life?”

“Matter?” exclaimed our hero, gathering himself up in double-quick time, and rushing for his gun; “Matter enough! The cursed wolves have grown so bold and saucy that they come to the fire to warm themselves! Only look! A dozen or more of ‘em are there now, in broad day-light! Get up, quick! and let’s kill ‘em.

Aroused by this extraordinary announcement, the whole posse were instantly on their feet to repel the audacious invaders; when, lo! the cause of alarm proved three dead carcasses.

But, where did they come from? When were they killed? Who placed them there? These were questions none were able to solve, and in regard to which all were profoundly ignorant. Finally, the circumstance occasioned quite an animated discussion, which was soon merged into angry dispute; and, after amusing myself awhile at their expense, I unraveled the mystery, to the surprise of all.



“Can it be possible!” was the general exclamation, -“can it be possible that we should have slept so sound as not to hear the report of a rifle fired three times in succession, and under our very ears at that!...Why a single Indian could have come into camp and killed the whole of us, one after another.”