

July 24, 1943.

Traver's Animal Stories for  
Young & Old Children.

by  
Robert Traver.

1. Side hill gouger. "Beavers have teeth like Tojo."
2. Coyote trap.
3. Bear & cows.
4. Dan & bear in trap.
5. Loni - Good morning Mr. Bear.
6. Neil Stephens & the wolf in trap.
7. Fawn in beaver trap.
8. Nursing porcupine.
9. Skunk & litter. "Like a streamlined train"
10. Crane on fly.
11. The six <sup>undiscovered</sup> stumped fish =
12. Mother duck at Xmas. Kitty flew up in  
the cloths.
13. Forest fire
14. Deer yard

1st draft.  
July 24, 1943.

Travis' Animal Stories  
for Young and Old Children.

This book of animal stories is the result of the neglect of my work. You see, I am a lawyer, ~~and I like~~ but I would rather be <sup>out</sup> in the woods among the birds and <sup>with</sup> animals than sitting in my fusty old law office. It's a funny thing, isn't it? Here I <sup>practically</sup> stood on my head to learn to be a lawyer and now <sup>that I am one</sup> I want to be a game warden or a trapper or a hermit. <sup>Even a writer.</sup> I suppose there are hermits who want to ~~be~~ make themselves <sup>into</sup> lawyers, ~~hermits~~ <sup>doctors</sup> who want to make <sup>themselves into</sup> Ingrid Bergman, and she, the proud <sup>beauty,</sup> probably wants to drive a bus. My home is about the time of the last glacier. I live in the iron-mining town of Hematite, <sup>I was born there.</sup> which is near the cold, cruel Lake Superior on the northern shore of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. It is one of the most northerly parts of the United States, lying farther north than many places in Canada.

My name is Robert as everyone calls me Johnny.

If it were any farther north I would be  
~~in~~ singing "God Save The King." As it is,  
especially on Saturday nights, I proudly  
sing "God Bless America!"  
My town of Hematite and our other  
~~other~~ little mining towns' way up  
here are just little scars in the woods,  
joined by a few desolate roads which  
the tourists, ~~have~~ with their love for  
numbers, have called U.S. <sup>Highway</sup> 41<sup>2</sup> and  
2 and so forth. The rest is woods,  
rivers, streams and lakes and more  
woods, stretching nearly four hundred  
miles across the rugged wild Peninsula.

<sup>live in the old home I was born in</sup>  
I am married to a beautiful ~~lady~~  
lady called Grace, and we have  
three <sup>beautiful</sup> daughters: Elizabeth, <sup>aged</sup> nine; Julie,  
who was seven last summer; and little  
Gracie, aged two. Gracie looks so much  
like her Daddy that Mama calls her  
a slip - er - I mean - chip off the old  
block. Dear little Gracie, so full of  
fun and frolic - especially after midnight.

I have been going to the woods  
ever since I was a little boy. Especially,  
I love to fish. My first fishing trip was  
a wading trip <sup>on</sup> the Escumaba river, <sup>sitting in a pack sack</sup> on the big  
~~wading~~ <sup>shoulders of my Daddy,</sup> who I was about  
six then. My Daddy was crazy about  
the woods, <sup>too,</sup> and when he went to the  
Happy Hunting grounds, about eight  
years ago, he left three hunting and  
fishing camps for his six sons to fight  
over. What fun that has been.

It was on this first fishing trip  
that I began to observe animals. We  
were rounding a curve in the big river and  
came to where a big white pine tree had  
fallen across the river. Below <sup>this</sup> was a  
nice pool that even I, young Johnny,  
could see was a good spot. I urged my  
daddy to wade under the tree. "Daddy," I  
said, just as an six-year-old would,  
"I urge and implore you to wade under yonder  
tree."

Daddy mumbled some slang words  
under his breath - he was an old tease -  
spat out a word of Peerless juice  
(excellent for the teeth) and said:

"This is the end of the line, Son."

He pointed up at the <sup>old</sup> tree lying  
across the river. There <sup>crossing</sup> on the tree was a  
<sup>Striped</sup> mama skunk and seven <sup>Striped</sup> little skunklings  
trailing behind her. They looked like  
the streamlined train that goes roaring  
past your Daddy's platform when he is  
late for work.

Mama skunk and the seven little  
skunklings stopped. Mama Skunk looked  
at Daddy and me and <sup>began waving</sup>  
<sup>highly</sup> her <sup>tail</sup> <sup>arousing</sup> in the air. It began to smell like the <sup>train</sup> pulled  
Daddy retreated upstream.  
He took me to shore and said we would  
go back to camp. ~~Fishing~~ My first  
fishing trip was over.

"But, Daddy," I asked, as I trotted  
along behind him, "why did you

out all the skunklings on our  
gas stove.

quiet fishing on account of light  
pretty little animals?"

"They were skunks, Son" Daddy said.

"What are skunks, Daddy?"

"Skunks are animals with sacs,"  
my Daddy said.

"What are sacs, Daddy?"

Daddy walked along quite a while  
saying nothing.

"Really, what are <sup>skunk</sup>sacs, Daddy?"

Daddy spat again, washing out a  
colony of ants. He stopped and turned  
around and looked at me.

"Skunk sacs, Son, are sacks  
with a sock." "We buried your Uncle Otto's  
clothes, with him in them, because of them...."

"Yes sir, Daddy," I said, hitching my  
big fish reel, running to catch up with  
him.

That is the fithiest definition of a  
sac I ever heard.

TRAVER'S ANIMAL STORIES  
FOR BIG AND LITTLE CHILDREN

Chapter One

The Tale of the Seven Skunks

This book of animal stories is the result of the neglect of my work. You see, I am a lawyer, but I would rather be out in the woods among the birds and wild animals than sitting up in my fusty old law office. Isn't that grotesque?

It's a funny thing. Here I practically stood on my head to learn to be a lawyer and now that I am one I want to be a game-warden or a timber-cruiser or a trapper or a hermit. Even a writer. I suppose there are hermits who want to make themselves into lawyers, doctors who want to make themselves into Ingrid Bergman, and she, the proud beauty, probably wants to drive a bus.

My name is Robert so everyone calls me Johnny. My home is the iron-mining town of Hematite. I was born there about the time of the last glacier. Hematite lies near cold, cruel Lake Superior on the northern shore of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Why don't you look for it on the map? It is fun to look at a place that hasn't been bombed. This is one of the most northerly parts of the United States, lying farther north than many places in Canada. If it were any farther north, I would be singing "God Save the King." As it is, especially on Saturday nights, I lustily sing "God Bless America!"

My town of Hematite and our other copper -- and iron -- mining towns 'way up here are just little scars in the woods, joined by a few desolate railroads and wandering roads which the tourists, with their touching love for numbers, have called U. S. Highway 41 and 2 and so forth. The rest is dense woods, rivers, streams and lakes and more woods, stretching nearly four hundred miles across the rugged, wild Peninsula.

I live in the old frame house in which I was born. It has a big yard, with a playhouse in the back. The playhouse has blue shingles. I am married to a beautiful lady called Grace and we have three beautiful daughters: Elizabeth, aged nine; Julie, who was seven this past summer; and little Gracie, aged two. Gracie looks so much like her Daddy that Mama calls her a slip -- er -- I mean -- a chip off the old block. Dear little Gracie, so full of fun and frolic -- especially after midnight.

I have been going to the woods ever since I was a little boy. Best of all I love to fish. My first fishing trip was a wading trip on the Escanaba river, sitting in a packsack astride the big shoulders of my Daddy. I was about six then. My Daddy was crazy about the woods, too, and when he went to the Happy Hunting Grounds, about eight years ago, he left three log hunting and fishing cabins for his six sons and their wives to fight over. What fun that has been.

It was on this first fishing trip that I began to observe animals. We were rounding a curve in the big river and came to where a big gnarled white pine tree had fallen across the river. Below this was a nice lazy pool that even I, young Johnny, could see was a good fishing spot. I could see the dimpled rises of feeding trout. I urged my Daddy to wade under the tree. "Daddy," I said, just as any six-year-old would, "I urge and implore you to wade under yonder tree."

Daddy mumbled some slang words under his breath -- he was an old tease -- spat out a wad of Peerless juice (excellent for the teeth) and said:

"Not even if you'd beseech me. This is the end of the line, Son."

He pointed up at the big old pine tree lying across the river. It made a perfect bridge. There crossing on the tree trunk was a striped mama skunk and seven striped little skunklings trailing behind her. They looked like the streamlined train that goes roaring past your daddy's platform when he is late for work. And, in their way, they can be just as blinding.

Mama skunk and the seven little skunklings stopped. Mama skunk looked at Daddy and me and began waving her big bushy tail around in the air. The little skunks followed suit. It began to smell like the time I pulled out all the burners on our gas stove -- only more so. Daddy retreated upstream. He took me to shore and said we would go back to camp. My first fishing trip was over. I was filled with hot resentment. Have you ever tried your fill of hot resentment? Since food rationing, it is becoming a popular national dish.

"But, Daddy," I asked, as I trotted along behind him, "why did we quit fishing on account of eight such pretty little animals?"

"They were skunks, Son," Daddy said.

"What are skunks, Daddy?"

"Skunks are animals with sacs," my Daddy said.

"What are sacs, Daddy?"

Daddy walked along quite a while saying nothing.

"Really, Daddy, what are skunk sacs?"

Daddy spat again, washing out a colony of ants. He stopped and turned around and looked at me.

"We buried your Uncle Otto's clothes, with him in them, because of sacs.... Skunk sacs, Son, are sacks with a sock!"

"Yes sir, Daddy," I said, hitching my big fish creel, running to catch up with him.

My Daddy always made everything so simple. That is the pithiest definition of a sac I ever heard. Can you beat it?