

An Authentic & Compact Camp with Style

by Mike Tatham

Last April, the Kansas Vigilance Committee (K.V.C.) hosted the “Two Gun” Regional Shoot. For this event I set up my well appointed tent and lived out of it quite comfortably for four days. My friend Dr. Bob (Robert Dorian) set up his very impressive camp next to mine. Between the two of us, we could have opened a small furniture store. A new acquaintance, Richard Gimbert (aka Major Matt Lewis) was suitably impressed with our style of camping. However, when he assisted Bob in breaking camp and loading the truck and trailer, he was daunted by the task. He was left with some doubts about the effort put into living in such luxury in the field. (Between the two camps were, two beds, half a dozen tables, nearly a dozen chairs and even a bath tub.)

The K.V.C. contingent to the Nationals consisted of 8 people, two dogs, seven tents and an RV. Bob and I again lived very comfortably in our “Taj-Ma” tents for a week. But I was still thinking about the mixed impression that we gave to Richard. So I decided to do an experiment.

In October the K.V.C. had its annual fall shoot at Duck Creek Dave’s Spread (Dave Sielert). For this event I decided to see how much of my normal well appointed camp would fit in to my Honda. (The reader should keep in mind that my Honda is a 1988 CRX. Read sub-compact. Small.)

My wall tent was out of the question because of the nine foot ridge-pole. So I went with my 10 x 10 pyramid, which only requires an eight foot center pole. Adding two 6 foot poles for the awning, ten tent stakes and a hammer, my lodging was set. By



the way the earliest mention of a pyramid tent is the 1841 book *Rocky Mountain Adventure* by Rufus Sage, and they are still available in the *1897 Sears Catalog*.

For my bed I opted for the Gold Medal Folding Bed, patented in 1890. (Known by most people as an army cot and mentioned by Richard Harding Davis in his *Notes of a War Correspondent*.) Upon the cot I laid my tick and two sheep skins. Then I topped it off with my bedroll of canvas, linen sheet, one cotton Mexican blanket and one wool blanket.

To make my tent a home required table and chairs. The most compact table that I have is one made from a description in *The Art of Travel* by Francis Galton.

(This neat little book was originally published in 1856.) The table is comprised of a set of legs like a common camp stool, only a little taller. The top is two boards 1 x 10 x 24 inches, that are attached along the long



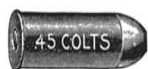
edge with two small brass hinges. When folded up the table takes up just a little more room than a T.V. tray.



My camp chairs for this outing were one camp stool and a canvas and wood folding contraption known the world over as a director's chair. (This sit-upon device was patented in 1863.)

The living quarters were now complete. Now I set about putting the rest of the weekend kit together. Two small trunks for shooting supplies and a small brass lamp, a carpet bag for clothes and pistols, saddle bags containing cooking/mess gear and a canteen. Additional space was taken by three long guns and a small brass lantern (thanks Kayleen).

Not only did all of this fit in to the Honda, I could still see out of the back. The moral of the story is that a person can go to an N.C.O.W.S. shoot, set up a camp that is as documented as an "Originals" outfit, live comfortably, and get all your gear in a small car.



Cowboy Lullaby
*The coyotes sing a lullaby
 The wind carries the tune
 The stars are the only light
 On a moonless night
 For a lonely cowboy
 A bedroll, six gun, and saddle
 Are all he owns
 The wild creatures
 Are the only friends
 For a lonely cowboy
 Wind, rain, and time
 Have etched a portrait on his face
 A portr! ait of pain and
 lonesomeness
 The world passes him by
 His lifestyle will soon die
 But on he rides
 Rides for the brand
 And rides for his pride
 Till he dies
 To be buried
 Somewhere on the prairie
 Where the coyotes can sing
 His final lullaby*

By Matthew Bohach