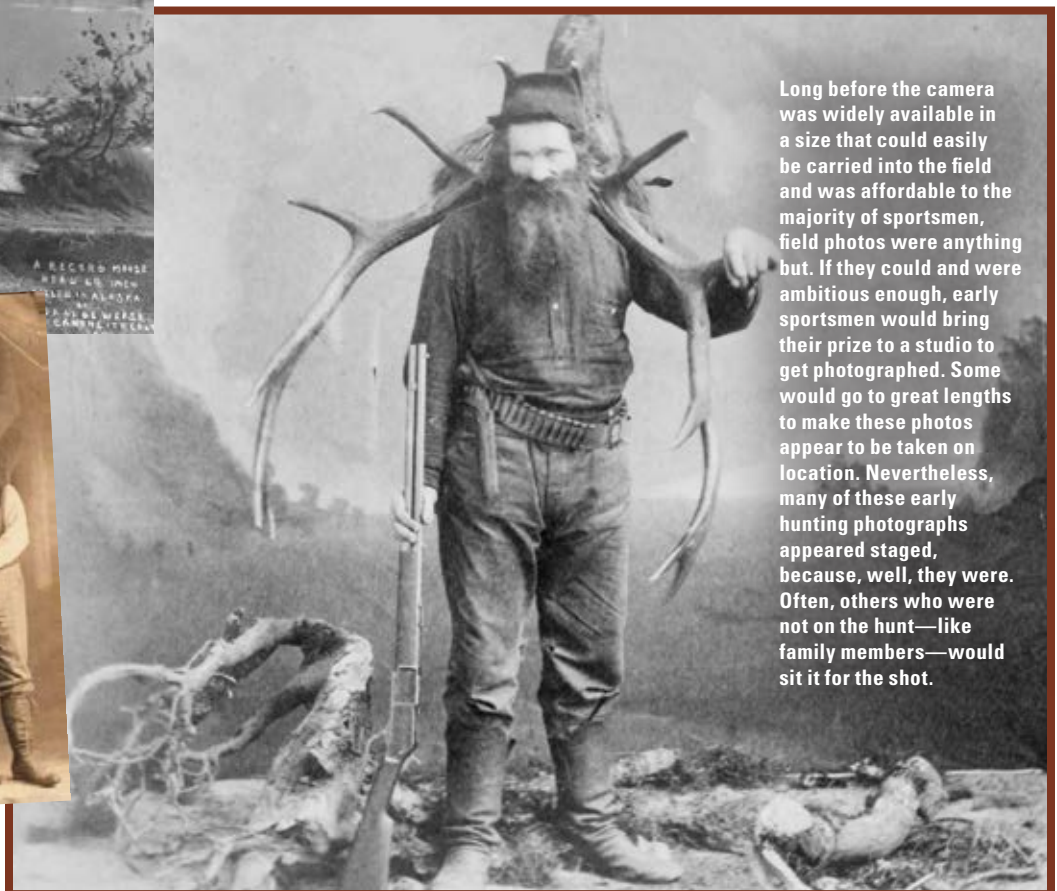


EVOLUTION OF THE ★FIELD PHOTO★ PART 1

A trophy is defined as a prize or memento. If that's true, then photographs from the hunt are as much a trophy as the subjects in our photographs. This includes what we as hunters commonly refer to as the "field photo." They are a part of history—our own history and the history of hunting in North America (and elsewhere). We thought it would be fun to take a look at how the field photo has captured this history and evolved over time.



A RECORD MADE
BY AN INDIAN
IN ALASKA
BY PAUL WELLS
CAMERATELLEN



Long before the camera was widely available in a size that could easily be carried into the field and was affordable to the majority of sportsmen, field photos were anything but. If they could and were ambitious enough, early sportsmen would bring their prize to a studio to get photographed. Some would go to great lengths to make these photos appear to be taken on location. Nevertheless, many of these early hunting photographs appeared staged, because, well, they were. Often, others who were not on the hunt—like family members—would sit it for the shot.



Eventually, as the camera did make it into the field, the staged studio shots gave way to the genuine field photo. The object was always to celebrate a successful hunt and capture the moment and the animals taken. In hunting's early days, game was abundant and viewed as being in unlimited supply. Many field photos of the day were taken to advertise the prowess of the huntsmen by showing camps and meat poles bending with the quantity of the take.



In the early days of the field photo, it was rare for the hunter to be empty-handed. Our firearms were just as much part of the story and the animals taken. A trusty rifle always seemed to make it into the photo. It, too, was part of the story, so much so that if the photo was taken back at camp, at home, or at some later date, it was the custom to still work the hunting rifle into the shot. This tradition exists to this day.

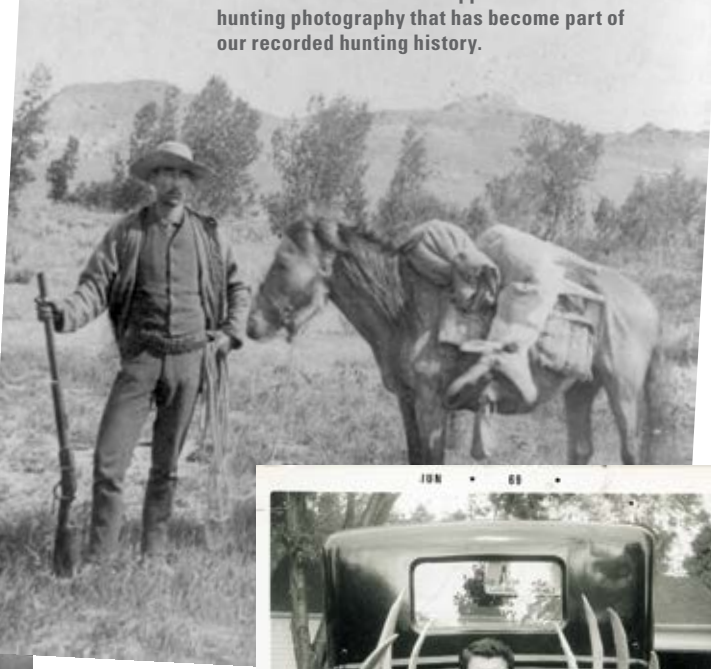


There was a time when it was automatic to rest one's rifle across the antler spread of the game taken, whether or not the hunter was in the photo. One could only assume this was more to boast the size of the trophy than an afterthought as to where to place the gun and get it in the photo. Our firearms are a part of hunting history then and today.





How we got into the backcountry, got around while in it, and made it back home or to camp again has always been a big part of the hunting story. Horses, mules, wagons and trains were common appearances in our hunting photography that has become part of our recorded hunting history.



As time marched on and our machines became a part of the hunt, they made it into the field photo. Trucks, cars, campers and even aircraft also told part of the story.



WANT TO SEE MORE FIELD PHOTOS FROM THE PAST?

VINTAGE HUNTING ALBUM
A Photographic Collection of Days Gone By

- Printed hardcover
- 200 pages
- 10 x 8 inches

BPVFP | \$29.95
ASSOCIATES | \$23.95

