

# We Spent the **NIGHT** in the MOUNTAINS

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #43 —

**A**t 5:30 in the evening, the three rams abruptly filed down from the rim rock and began to graze on the high, rolling pasture. We had watched a band of nine rams the day before, but they were farther out and hadn't yet started to graze by 6:30; so we decided to pull out, ride back to spike camp and try again tomorrow.

The next morning we saddled up and made the three hour trip back, tied up the horses and eased into position below the top of a ridge; but the sheep were not where we had left them. Glassing around we found a group of three – including two big ones -- comfortably bedded in the rocks a bit closer than those of yesterday. It was 11:00 am and now it became a waiting game -- from a mile away.

A large drainage separated us from the sheep and once they started to move, it took us two and a half hours to climb down to the creek, cross it twice and climb back up the other side

*It had been nearly twelve hours since we had eaten our sandwiches, but now we had fresh sheep meat.*

to the area where the sheep were grazing. Going down wasn't so bad, but climbing back up was really tough.

At 8:30 pm the shooting started and ended with two very big, old rams on the ground. As difficult as it is to get in position to actually shoot a sheep, it's often said that the real work begins after the sheep is down. In my experience with sheep hunting, that's always been true!

Our guides dragged the two sheep together for pictures, then caped, quartered and cut them up. Their backpacks



Jeff Larkin (left), myself and Matt Fleming with their nice rams.  
We left the horses on the green flat above my head.

were full of meat, with the heads and capes tied on top. At 11:30 pm we started down off the mountain to the creek below; as we were above timberline and it wasn't quite dark enough for a flashlight, the going was relatively easy; it only took us an hour.

We made camp beside the creek; built a fire and cooked fresh sheep meat for a late dinner. It started to rain about 2:30 and we spent a few agonizing hours laying on the ground in our full raingear. At first light we side-hilled an hour or so to the horses; then rode back to spike camp, and the comfort of a tent – we had been away for 30 hours.

**"...the real work begins after the sheep is down"**

**Midway USA**

Larry Potterfield  
150 Miles west of Norman Wells  
Near the Canol Road  
Mackenzie Mountains  
Northwest Territories, Canada  
7 August 2012



*This picture was taken at first light. I probably look pretty comfortable, but the moss covering the rocks was only a couple of inches thick.*