

# The UNORGANIZED ELK HUNT

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #69 —

It was the outfitter's first hunt; he had been a guide the prior year – and he had never hunted this ranch before. Also, he had booked far too many hunters and had to set up a second camp on another ranch - about 40 miles away. In the military they would say "Don't outrun your supply lines"; but that's exactly what had happened.

We overnighted in Montrose, expecting to head to the ranch after breakfast the next morning; however, the outfitter didn't show up till 10:30 and hadn't bought any of the supplies -- so we spent the next hour at the

grocery store, before heading

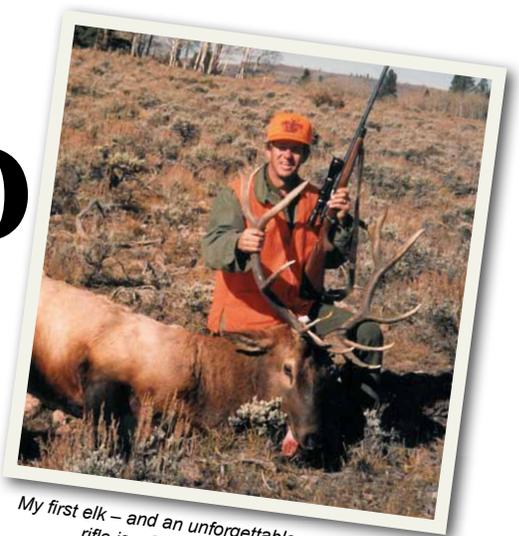
out - (Strike 1).

The ranch gate had the typical collection of locks linked together; unfortunately, our outfitter didn't have a key or combination for any of them. After an hour and a half, and several phone calls, he got it open - (Strike 2).

We arrived at camp about 4:30 in the afternoon; it consisted of a pull-type camping trailer

and a couple of tents. The outfitter had to get to the other camp, so he told us to fix our own dinner and he would be back before dark.

The weather was pleasant, and two of us prepared dinner in the trailer kitchen, while the other four hunters loafed outside. They came in for dinner and sat around the table in the rear and we two cooks walked back with the pans and bowls of food. Surprise, surprise – the support legs on the back of the trailer were still in the upright and locked



*My first elk – and an unforgettable experience! The rifle is a Remington 700 in 7mm Rem. Mag.*

position. As we crossed over the axle, the trailer tipped and sat up on its behind, putting the lot of us all in one heap -- with our dinner - (Strike 3).

The outfitter, also doubling as our guide, showed up three hours after dark, apologized and said he would get us up at five the next

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**"It was the outfitter's first hunt..."**

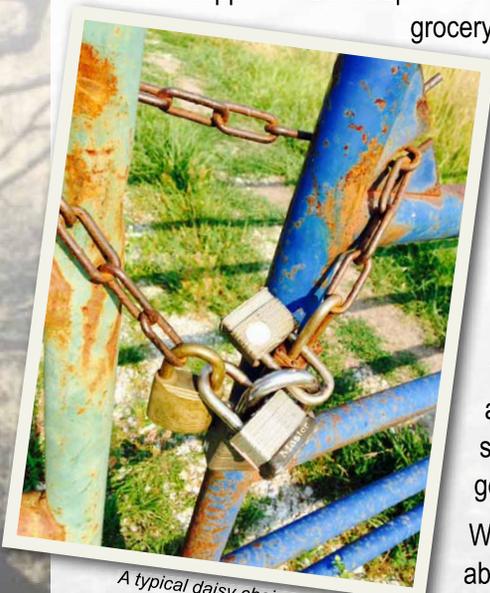
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morning; however his alarm didn't go off, so we got a late start - (Strike 3+).

I only had three days to hunt, but did shoot a small 6x6 bull the last morning. That day's guide asked if I knew how to gut one, and I said yes. He said "go ahead then, as I haven't gutted one in over twenty years" - (Strike 3++). It was the most unorganized hunt you could ever imagine, and an unforgettable experience.



Larry Potterfield  
Black Canyon of the  
Gunnison National Forest  
Montrose, CO  
October 1990



*A typical daisy chain of locks, where each lock belongs to someone who needs access to the property.*



*7mm Rem. Mag. is a good elk cartridge for all moderate ranges.*