

HORSE PACKING

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Horse packing by Charles Johnson Post

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CHARLES JOHNSON POST

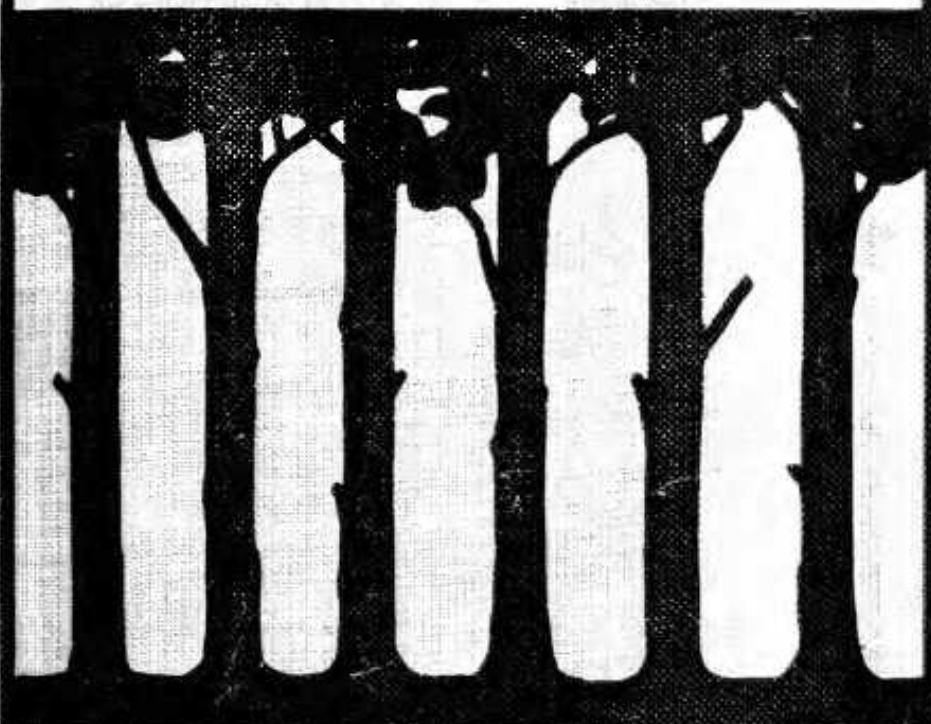
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A Manual of Pack Transportation



Number 49



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INTRODUCTION

Ordinarily a book of this kind needs no introduction; it either explains itself in the clearness of the diagrams and pages or else it is so didactically incomprehensible that no amount of introduction could possibly clarify the atmosphere.

But I am under obligations to various gentlemen whose suggestions, or methods, have appeared to me of great value in presenting and arranging this subject. There is the unknown gentleman—perhaps many of them—who have devised or evolved the typical method of preparing Army drill regulations of the United States. It is the most compact, exact and limpid method of standardizing and transmitting information of this character that has been devised. A thousand years from now men who have never seen the execution of an evolution of our present generation could work and drill in the forgotten manoeuvres with as great an exactness as soldiers are drilled to-day. And that is the test of clearness.

I have therefore adopted the method of the Army manual—not that I intend it as a rigid method of execution for packs or hitches, but that it is absolute in its

exact directness of explanation. Whether a packer sings out, "Kill 'em." or "Cinch!" is a matter of no importance—I have no intention of offering a mere vocabulary—but that, at certain stages of throwing a hitch, some signal facilitates the work, is a matter of importance. So I have given an apparent formality to methods solely for purposes of clearness. When two men understand each other—as I have seen a team of packers work in loading an Army mule—there appears a conjurer's rope that seems to fairly flow in even coils through the mazes of an intricate hitch, suddenly to grow rigid as the mule grunts while the watch has ticked off but fifty seconds.

I am also under obligations to War Department Document No. 360, a most interesting compilation of pack transportation in the Army, and to the able contributions that Mr. H. W. Daly, Chief Packer of the Quartermaster's Department has made to that Document, and to Col. Hugh L. Scott who assisted in its preparation. Colonel Scott describes Mr. Daly as one of the last of the old-time packers who grew up with the pack service under General George Crook. He ascribes to him the study that resulted in the discovery of the cause of the bunches that arise on the pack animal's body; to him also the method of curing the bunches and various inventions that have added greatly to the service and development of scientific pack transportation in the United States Army. I have given the detailed specifications for the aparejo from this document so that, if necessary, the aparejo may be made when needed.

I wish also to make my acknowledgment of appreciation to Sergeant Wiman of the Quartermaster's Department in charge of the pack transportation at West

Point. I first heard of the Wiman One-man Hitch, described in this present manual, from him. It is beyond question the best of all the one-man hitches.

Therefore, if this manual seems to have an Army flavor, it is by reason of collecting in a simple intelligible form all of the important hitches used in pack transportation and with such suggestions that they may be employed as circumstances demand. It is the purpose that this shall be offered for the needs of the explorer, the prospector, packer, the Army service or the pack service in the National Guard.

And I have relied upon diagrams to express the simple stages of a hitch.