

**ROD, GUN, AND PALETTE IN THE  
HIGH ROCKIES, BEING A RECORD  
OF AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSIONS IN  
THE LAND OF THE RED GODS**

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Rod, Gun, and Palette in the High Rockies, Being a Record of an Artist's Impressions in the Land of the Red Gods by James Blomfield

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**JAMES BLOMFIELD**

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# Rod, Gun, and Palette *in the High Rockies*

Being a record of an Artist's  
Impressions in the Land of  
the Red Gods

BY JAMES BLOMFIELD



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By WILLIAM E. WAOR

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Soon after my return from Montana in the late fall of 1913, I showed to my artist friend, Mr. James Blomfield, some photo-prints which I had made along the Madison river and in the Teepee basin during late September and early October.

He was much impressed by them, and voiced the hope that some day he might be able to visit the section, and paint the rolling prairie vistas and embattled walls which the clear mountain air had permitted the camera to record.

As I had long desired one or two canvases that would be typical of the section, I then suggested to him that he arrange to accompany me the following fall, well knowing also that my own enjoyment of the trip would be greatly enhanced by the presence and influence of one who combined a keen appreciation of the wondrous beauty of the vast outdoors with the rare ability to make permanent with pigment and canvas the fleeting moods of the landscape's hour. He accepted the invitation then extended, and joined my genial friend Mr. Arthur L. Pratt and myself on the visit which we made to the same region in September and October of the present year.

This last was by far the most pleasant trip which I have ever made into this country, which I have visited annually for a number of years, and was made so by the companionship and work of the painter man. I found myself hanging about him and his work, constantly fascinated with the free though faithful handling of his color, and by his ability to preserve not only form and aerial distance, but also all the related substances of matter as Nature assembles them in the atmosphere appeared to be sensed by him, and unconsciously expressed through his brush.

Mr. Blomfield made some twenty-three studies in oil and water color, besides a book full of pencil sketches during the month he was with us, all of which were most satisfying to one who knows and loves the country at the time late fall, as chief femme du chambre, arranges the morning gowns and evening robes for Mistress Earth.

He was vacationing at his work, and the country and the air at the 6,700 and 8,000 foot elevations, at which it was done, were both a joy and an inspiration to him. He seemed to hear and understand the tongueless tattle of the vibrant mornings and the solemn speech of the sentinel hills at evening. As science has proven to us that sound and color are akin, so I may say that to me, Mr. Blomfield caught and fastened in a frame the songs of the waters and the wooded slopes, so that we may listen with our eyes.

Mr. Blomfield also kept a log of our trip, and I found his pen as facile as his brush, and that his log very naturally carried some splendid word pictures of the constantly changing environment of prairie, butte, stream, and mountain, in all their variation of tone and color as an artist saw them every day. He has written so charmingly and honestly of our simple camp life, its small events and good companionship, and enriched it with so many descriptions of the fields and hills as they smiled or sulked in alternate sun and shade that I determined to produce his log in permanent form. Mr. Blomfield has most kindly added to it a number of rapid pen drawings, from his own sketches.

I hope that the printing of this log will vivify the affection of its readers for the great outdoors, and the outdoor life.

It will do that, I am sure, for every one who has already tasted the nectar of the hills at morn, and if perchance some starved soul should scan this log who has heretofore by choice denied himself the hills and streams for town, and then, resolving to mend his ways, shall turn for himself with reverence and with joy the leaves of the Great Open Book, I shall be glad.

WILLIAM E. WROE

Chicago, November 1914.





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## THE FIRST DAY

"Who hath smelled wood smoke at twilight; who hath  
heard the birch log burning,  
Who is quick to read the noises of the night.  
O, let him follow after, for the young men's feet  
are turning  
To the camps of proved desire and known delight."

This day, Sunday, September 13, 1914, aboard the Overland Limited of the Union Pacific Railroad, some time after ten o'clock in the morning, and west of Columbus, Neb., the last place whose name the writer caught, begins this chronicle of the adventurers into the land of the Red Gods, whose faring forth commenced on the 12th.

It will be a journal, a running comment, a narrative, or a series of paragraphic digressions, all according to the way the writer feels, and the exigencies of travel and camp life let him, in the course of which he is apt to shift from the first to the third person, from the impersonally narrative to the personally meditative by turns, as the spirit moves him, regardless of the academic demands of literary unity.

The three men primarily concerned are thus identified:

William E. Wroe (Bill) of Chicago; Arthur L. Pratt (Art) of Kalamazoo, Mich., makers of papers and fish and some other stories alike of an exceeding wonderfulness; and James Blomfield (Jim), the guest of the said Bill, Englishman, artist, inditer and limner hereof, and a resident of Chicago, but otherwise not convicted of any crime.

On the edge of evening, the day before this present,



"Jim"