

Chapter 8.
Still In The White Mountains

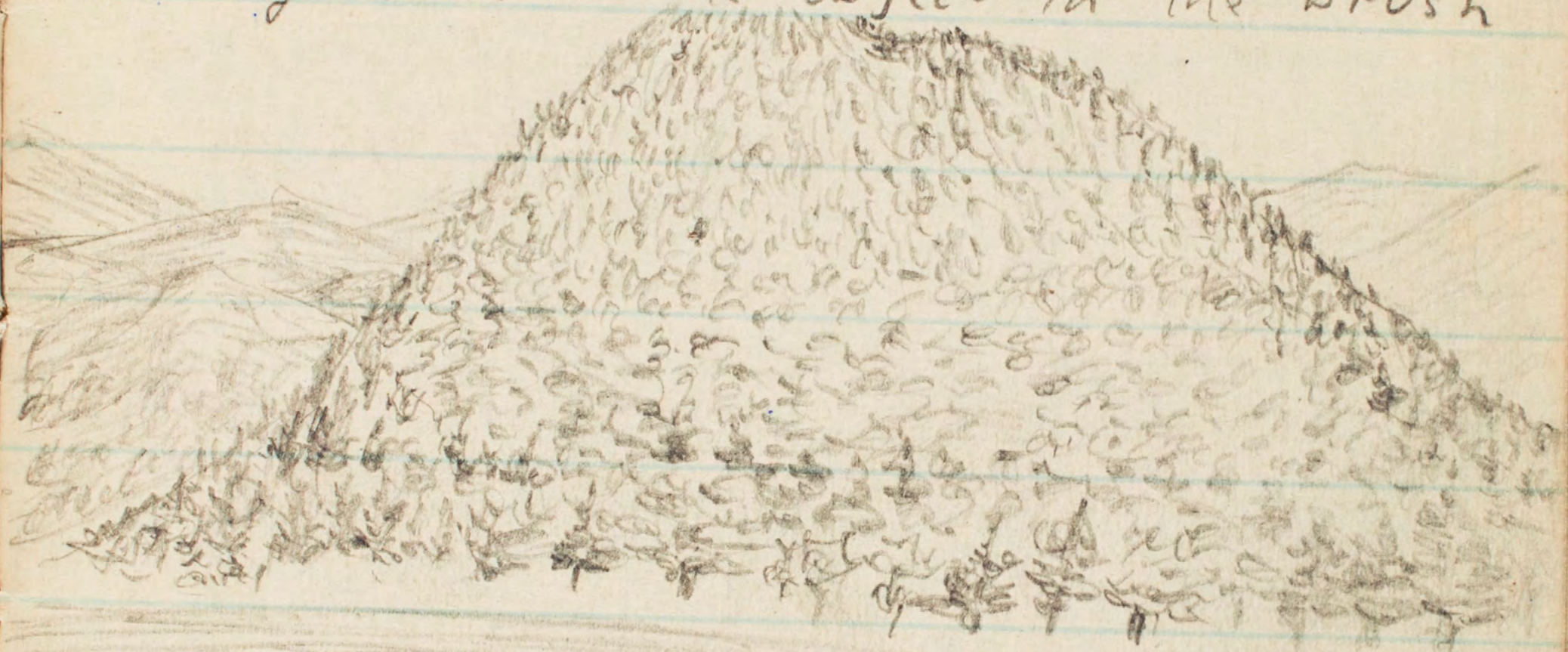
In good season Wednesday morning we were again on the road and had gone about a mile and a half when we came to the village of North Conway, this is quite a little village, it has two or three large hotels and is visited by many summer tourists who come to view the White Mts. Very pretty views of these mountains can be obtained from here, as we passed on forests bordered the road on every hand except where occasionally along the Saco River, which ran close to the road most of the way, there had been farms cleared which were now under cultivation, forest clad hills and mountains were in all directions now; while the White Mountains towered up in the North, at about noon we entered Lower Bartlett a village of only a few houses, and just as we were thinking of stopping for the night we came to the village of Jackson, here we bought what we should need for the next two days as it was the last village we should pass through for that length of time we then passed on a short distance and

26. SIX MONTHS IN THE
pitched our camp among a clump of
spruces by the roadside just beyond a de-
serted farm, some time along in the night
we were roused by the growling of our
dog, we both sat up and made sure of our guns
for we did not know what might be around as
we were among the mountains in a thinly set-
tled country, close to the foot of the great
white Mountains, and as the dog kept growling
we could see that he constant looked in
the direction of the woods instead of the



Our dog dancing around some object.
road, and the longer we waited the more
our spirits fell, and as we listened we heard
a slight rustle in the leaves, Rover heard
it too and made a dash through the side
of the shelter and we heard him rush off

into the woods when we heard him howl as though he was nearly frightened to death, we looked out between the bows on our shanty and by the light of the moon which was near its height, we could see our dog dancing around some object in the brush



Iron Mountain

but instead of a bear as we thought it might be we saw it was a black and white skunk, I then ran out with a small breech loading pistol and shot it, but as it was a white one we threw it away. The next morning we started on amid the mountains of Jackson headed toward the great peaks of the White Mountains, while close at hand were Thorne and Iron Mountains, the last named having an elevation of 2000 feet.

25 SIX MONTHS IN THE
above the sea, at noon we camped on a small
stream in Bran's Purchase, game was plenty here
among the mountains, partridges crossed the road
ahead of us or flew away in flocks from the
bushes at our side, while our dog quite fre-
quently started a rabbit which would run
across the road or hop along in it, and occasion-
ally we came upon a rabbit by the road side,
we shot what we needed, and let the rest go,
at night we stopped at the foot of Mt. Wash-
ington and put up a substantial shelter, as
we were to work we saw the sun go
down behind Mt. Washington. Though it
was only about five o'clock, we could see
the sun shining on the surrounding country
except where a lofty peak casts its shadow
across the landscape, and the mountains ~~are~~
were yet aglow in the autumn sunshine,
as it began to grow dusk and the mount-
ains became prominent against the sunset
sky, we sat at the opening of our camp
eating our supper, when the darkness had set-
tled down around us and we had closed
our camp and were lying with in there
came a faint, far-away cry from the

FORESTS of DIXVILLE

29

mountain-side, dismal and wild, it was the cry of some wild animal, probably a wild-cat, and before we fell asleep we heard it repeated several times beside the occasional hoot of an owl or the cry of some other night animal or bird, the next thing that I remember, I awoke with a start and the sen-



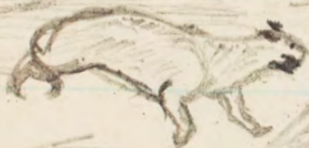
A small ravine

sation that I had heard something at no great distance as I sat up I could hear the low growl of Rover as he lay at our feet. I put my hand on my gun and listened, at last it was repeated up on the mountain side on the opposite side of a small ravine through which a brook ran, at the first note of the cry there was a strong imitation of a small child in distress, but as the note

30 SIX MONTHS IN THE
was again sounded I could plainly distinguish a weird catlike not slightly resembling what I had heard at night at home, but I now heard it with a feeling that my hair was rising and that not very slowly, at this moment Jack awoke and whispered "what is it?"

"Panther" said I, for by the descriptions I had read I made up my mind that it was that animal that I had heard, at that Jack sat up and grabbed his gun and we both slid in some heavily loaded shells from our cartridge belt and waited, we had not long to wait before we heard the cry again from across the ravine, it was coming nearer, again and again we heard the cry and each time it was nearer, our dog crawled close to our side and we could feel him shake from fear and occasionally whined, this kind of an animal was something he wasn't used to and he didn't like the sounds it made and we either for that matter, at last there came a cry from our side of the ravine, probably in the road, it had crossed the track and was now at hand, not another person within a mile or more of us, I could stand it no longer, I must at least get a view

of him and watch his movements, so I began making a small opening in one side of the camp, at last I looked through, it was moonlight outside, but just as I looked out out a cloud passed over its face and it was again dark, I waited though with an



unsteady feel till the moon again shone and after looking intently for a few moments, I caught sight of a long dark form slowly creeping through the woods in a direction partly toward the camp but as though he were going around it, his eyes shining like coals of fire in the dark as he kept them fixed on the camp. "Make an opening at our feet," I said to dark, as the panther was passing around

32 SIX MONTHS IN THE
where I knew that I should soon lose sight
of him, and as I watched I could hear Jack
working as though his life depended on it,
and I heard an involuntary "Oh" as he look-
ed out and caught sight of the animal,
though at a distance of only four or five
rods, he was so indistinct that we dared
not try a shot for fear of only wounding
him and so making matters worse, but we
kept pretty sharp watch, and could feel a
chill pass down our backs every time he
passed into the shadow of a tree where
we could not see him, when he had
come round the second time he had got
within a short distance of us and as he
came into an open space where the
moon shone full upon him, I aimed for
his head and fired, the panther leaped into
with a yell that as the stories say
"made our blood run cold" but instead of
falling dead he again struck on his feet
and I let Jack have a chance for a shot,
but before he could shoot, the brute sprang
upon the side of the camp and I thought
for an instant that he was coming through

but the roof held and before the panther could move Jack had fired a shot into the under side of him, and he let go and came onto the ground, where he laid till morning, we found Rover in under the brush we had brought in for a bed and he would not come out till daylight the next morning.



There lay the panther

we did not sleep any more that night and were glad when morning came, when it came light we went out side and there lay the panther in a heap on the ground, upon examining it we found that it had a ball through the head and another one through its chest barely going through the heart, we skinned it and threw the carcass into the ravine, the skin we stretched up on a large tree

that it might dry a little during the day while we were looking over the mountains. After breakfast Jack and I started up Mt. Washington to go to its summit, the sides of the mountain are wooded and in some places are very rough, a little before noon we reached the summit and what a view met our eyes, around us in every direction was a confusion of mountain peaks, forming great waves as of a gigantic ocean, on the south-eastern horizon was a faint silvery streak, it was the Atlantic Ocean sixty-five miles away. Lakes of all sizes, from Lake Winnipiseogee to mere mountain ponds were to be seen far and near, at the west the Green Mountains were distinctly seen and at the south and south-west are Mounts Monadnock and Kearsarge, close around us to the north were Mt Adams with an altitude of 5,794 feet Mt Clay, 5,553 feet and Jefferson 5,714 feet and others we did not know, then to the south were Mt. Madison with a height of 5,365 and Mt. Monroe 5,354 feet and many others, we ate our dinner here on the summit then began to descend, once while on our way down we glanced across to

side of an opposite mountain and there in a small opening among rocks and trees



Andros Coggin River

was a small herd of perhaps eight deer but as the law was yet on them it was not much of a temptation and as they soon bounded away into the forest we probably could not have got a shot at them anyway, partridges, rabbits and squirrels were plenty but as we had no use for them, we thought best not to waste our ammunition.

The only trouble we had that night from wild animals was the fighting of a couple of foxes in the ravine over the carcass of the panther, but it was so dark that we did not get a shot at them, the next morning

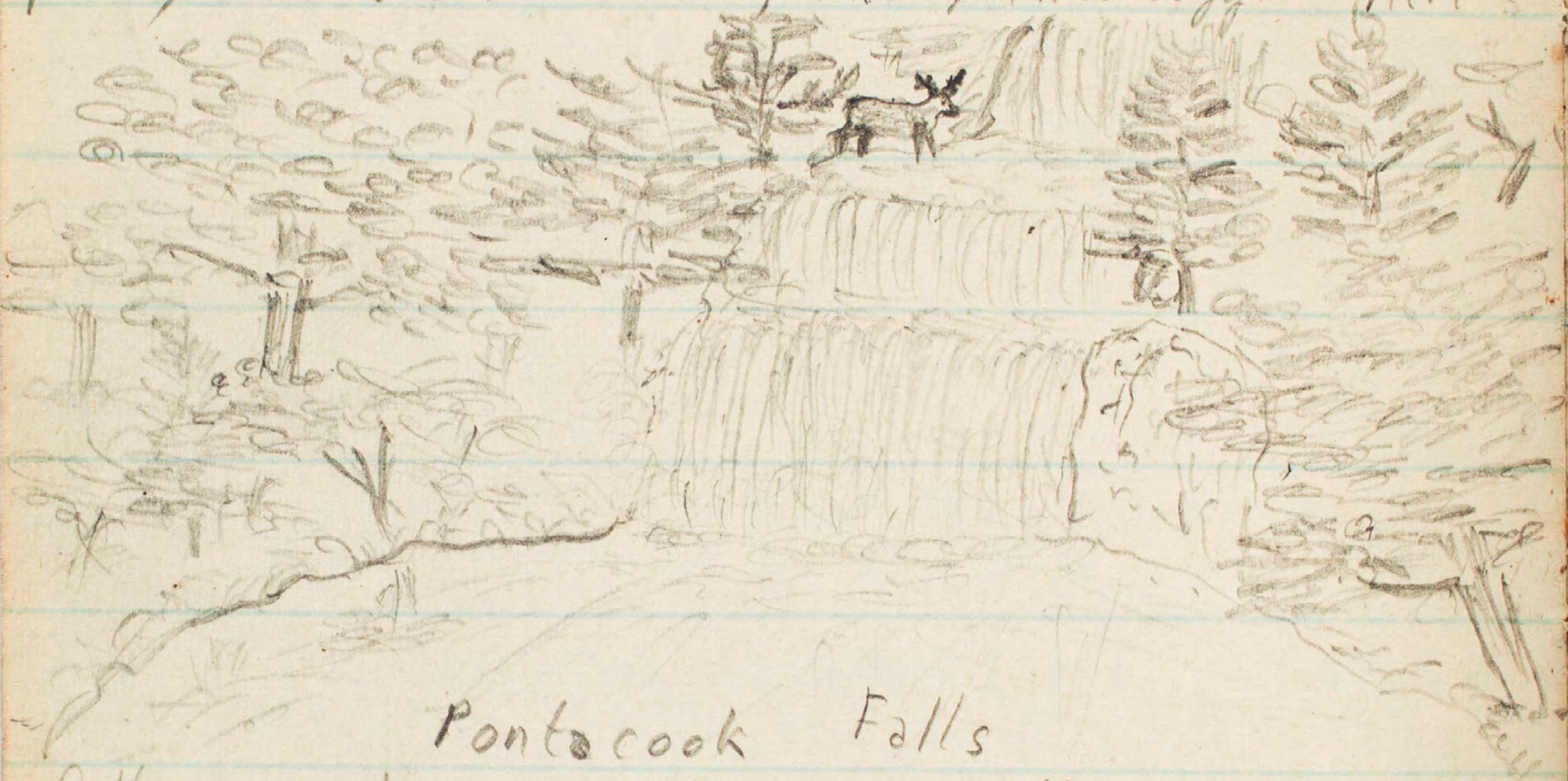
we turned our backs on Mt. Washington and its surrounding peaks, or as many of them as were behind us and headed for Gorham, at noon we reached the border of the town and stopped for dinner at a little brook by the roadside, and about the middle of the afternoon we came to the village of Gorham which is quite a thriving place and has a station for the Grand Trunk railway, from here can be seen many mountains, to the south-east at a distance of a few miles stands Mts. Moriah and Carter, each about 5000 feet in height. at the west Mt. Madison, in the north-west the Pilot Range while at the east are the Androscoggin Hills, a few miles beyond the village we camped for the night on the Androscoggin River, as it was Saturday night we must again make a two days stop, we looked at our calendar and found it to be the 11th of September.

Chapter 4

We reach Dixville.

The 12th of September which was Sunday we spent in camp, we wrote a letter home, and another to Francis' paper, we also wrote up the weeks experiences into story form, the day seemed long and uneventful after so many stirring events, but it was a relief to have a chance to rest after so many days of travel, though it had only been two weeks since we left home. The next morning we left camp and were again on the road, it would be but a few days now before we should reach Dixville, the road here lay along close to the Androscoggin most of the way, at about eleven o'clock we entered the village of Berlin Falls in the town of Berlin, this town appears to be principally engaged in lumbering, as we saw several mills, and passed through vast forests of spruce and pine, we saw some farms but they were scattering and mostly along the Androscoggin river, the town is a mountainous one, one of the principal elevations being Cate's Hill, just before night we crossed the

38 Six Months IN THE
Andros coggin River and came into Milan vil-
lage, a very small village on the Andros coggin.
Just beyond the village we stopped for the night.
The next morning we kept on up the Andros coggin
and at a little before noon came to the
pretty Pontacook Falls, this Andros coggin here.



Pontacook Falls

falls over to sloping ledges while there is
quite a rapid above them and a pool below,
as we stood below the falls on the further
side of the pool, and were watching the water
come over the falls, a splendid deer with large
branching horns came down to the side of
the rapids above and began to drink, we were
standing in the brush and it did not notice
us, we were so surprised at such a sight.

FORESTS OF DIXVILLE

89

and so taken with the beauty of the deer that for an instant we did not think of our guns. then they came up and were about to fire when our dog rushed out of the bushes at one side, the deer threw up its head and the next thing it was gone in the forest, I fired at it as it was disappearing in the woods but it only went the faster, Rover followed it for a while then gave up the chase and came back, we were disappointed somewhat but its beauty made us a little more willing to let it go, a little ways further on we came to where the Little Ammonoosuc flows into Androscoggin, here we left the Androscoggin and followed up the Little Ammonoosuc all the afternoon, at about four we came to quite a pond, the name of which we did not know, the pond was over a mile long and connected by a stream a few rods long with a smaller pond, as we stood on the shore of the pond a large hawk came sailing close to the water from the upper end of the pond, as he came opposite to us, he was but a short distance away, and I fired at him, at the same time there came a report from Jacks gun at my side, and the hawk drop-

FORESTS OF DIXVILLE

41

was a farm on the lower end of it, this pond we judged to be about a mile long and nearly a half wide, here after eating dinner we tried fishing a little, for though the law was on trout it was not on other fish, but the first fish that we hauled in was a half pound speckled trout, and a beauty it was too, the next two were flat-sides then came another trout, when we caught this we gave up fishing, for though we were out of the way of from the law we did not wish to catch many in disobedience

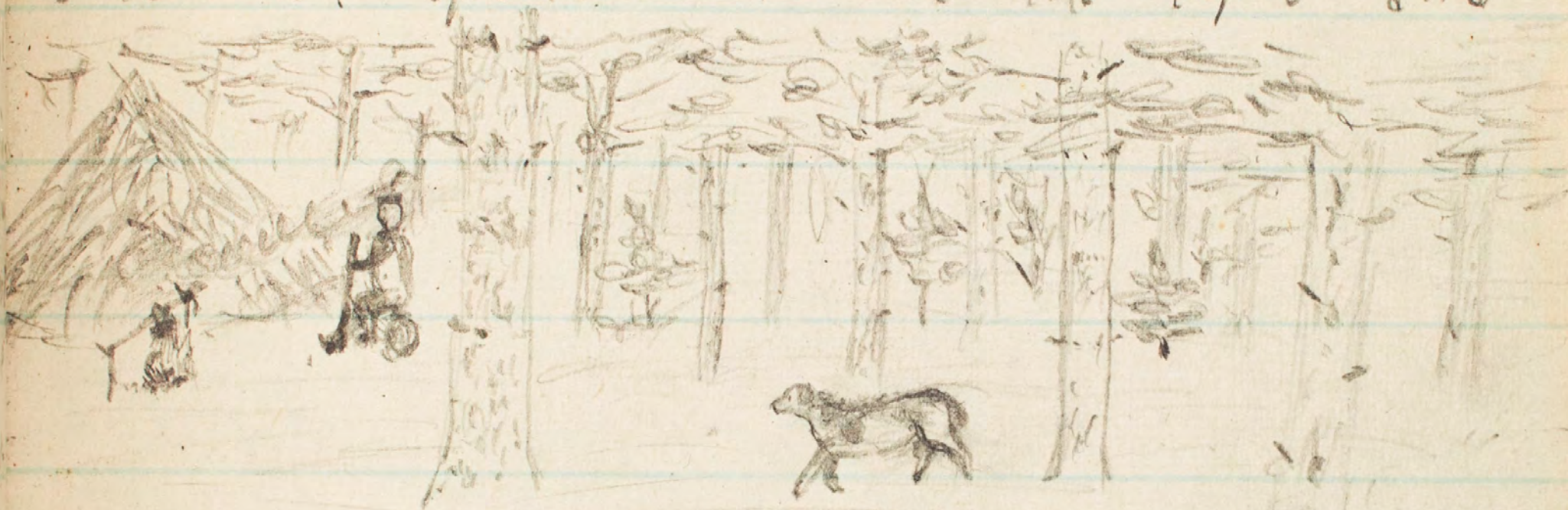


 we tried ~~to~~ fishing of its rules, after this we again went on through the forest, occasionally passing through a pasture partly overgrown with second growth spruces

and pines, and we passed a couple of farms during the afternoon, about night we stopped in what we supposed to be the town of Dixville, only one day more would bring us to our destination. Just after supper as Jack and I were seated by our fire a rabbit sprang by but a short distance away, Rover saw it and at once gave chase and for several minutes as we waited with guns ready for action we heard his bark sounding through the forest the all was still, and in a very short time Rover came into the small opening that surrounded our camp, nearly as fast as he left it but with his tail between his legs and every hair on end, and every few steps he cast a look behind as if fearful that something was following, the sight of our dog acting so was rather startling and put us on the alert for we knew not what, but dusk slowly came on and nothing had been seen or heard.

We threw on plenty of wood on the fire and made sure that there was enough near to last through the night, then retired but with an uneasy feeling, it was prob-

ably nearly three hours before ~~we~~ fell asleep, and then we did not sleep very soundly as we were frequently awake and the night passed all too slowly, we could not account for Rover's actions, and every time when we spoke it formed the topic and



Rover came with his tail between his legs even after it came light the next morning it often gave us quite a start as a dead limb fell of its own weight or some rabbit or squirrel stirred in the woods nearby, as we were preparing breakfast we caught sight of three or four partridges or no great distance, and as I had made up my mind that we had had a false alarm ~~and~~ I determined to try my luck for

44 SIX MONTHS IN THE
a bird, after following a couple of them
for a dozen rods or more I got a
shot at one of them and brought it down
but as I started to step forward and
pick it up I was startled to see
a large, black shaggy animal rise from
among a clump of hemlocks and start
toward the partridge. Then as it turned
and faced me with a low growl I real-
ized that I was confronted by a black
bear and as I afterward found out a large
one too, as this thought flashed into my



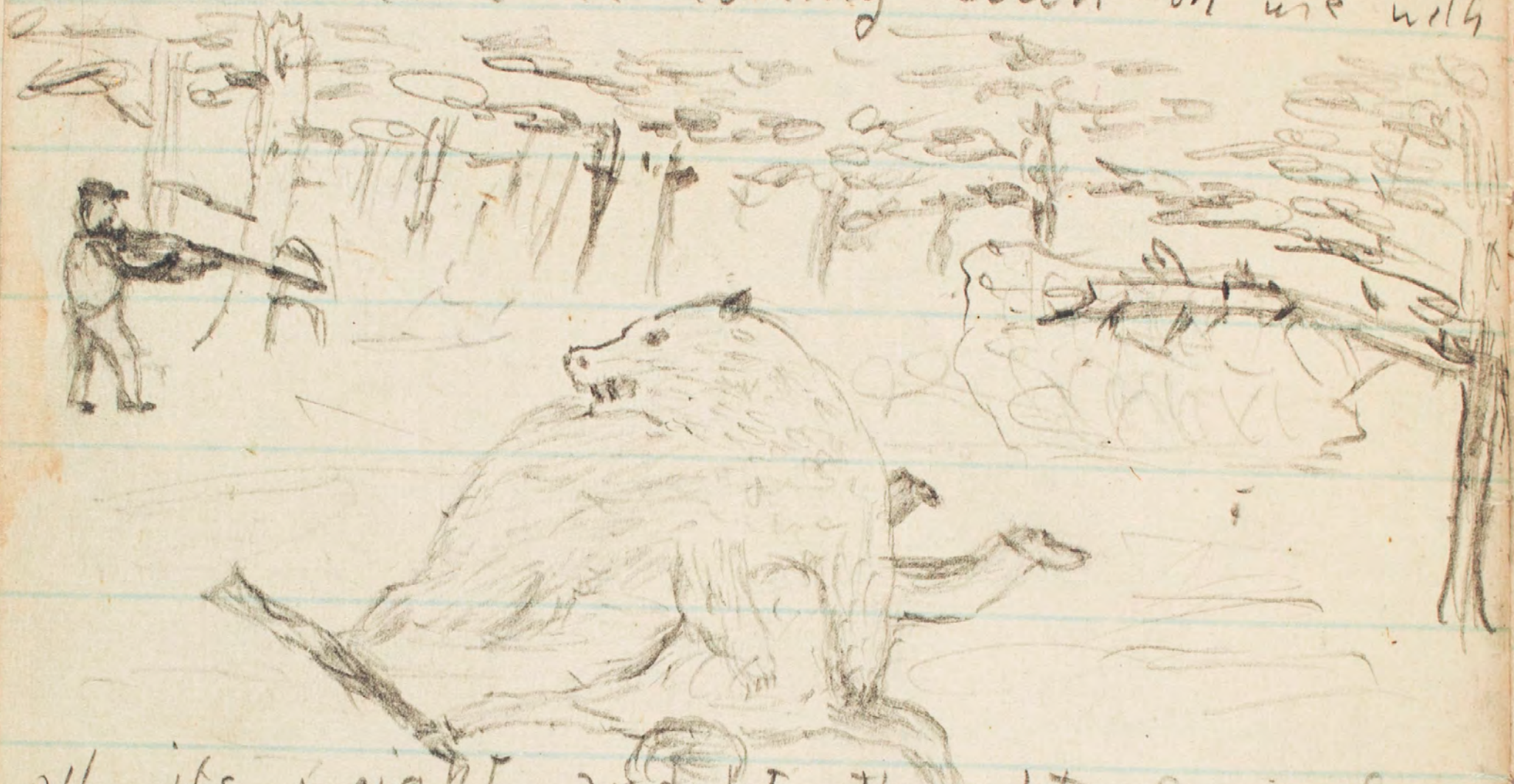
A large, black, shaggy animal
mind, I put my hand to my side for
a heavily loaded shell, but as I done so
the thought came, "there I have left

FORESTS OF DIXVILLE

45

my belt at camp and have only two common loaded shells with me. The bear dropped on all fours again and moved toward me with a shuffling gait, keeping my eyes on the bear. I partly turned and called to Jack to bring his gun and my belt. I then backed off in the direction of the camp with my eyes on the bear, it was but a few seconds before I heard Jack come running through the woods though it had seemed a good while, just as I heard Jack speak close to me, I struck my heel against a fallen log and over I went, I did not lay in that position long and when I came to my feet Jack stood beside me with his gun to his shoulder and not two rods off was the bear still advancing, as I arose I slid a shell out of the belt that Jack had brought and into my gun as I was doing so there came a report and the bear staggered but did not fall, then he came at us with a speed that nearly took our breath away and by the time I could bring my gun to my shoulder the bear was nearly to muzzle of

44 SIX MONTHS IN THE
it, I aimed the best I could and fired.
The animal gave a lunge forward, struck
me and knocked me flat on my back
at the same time coming down on me with



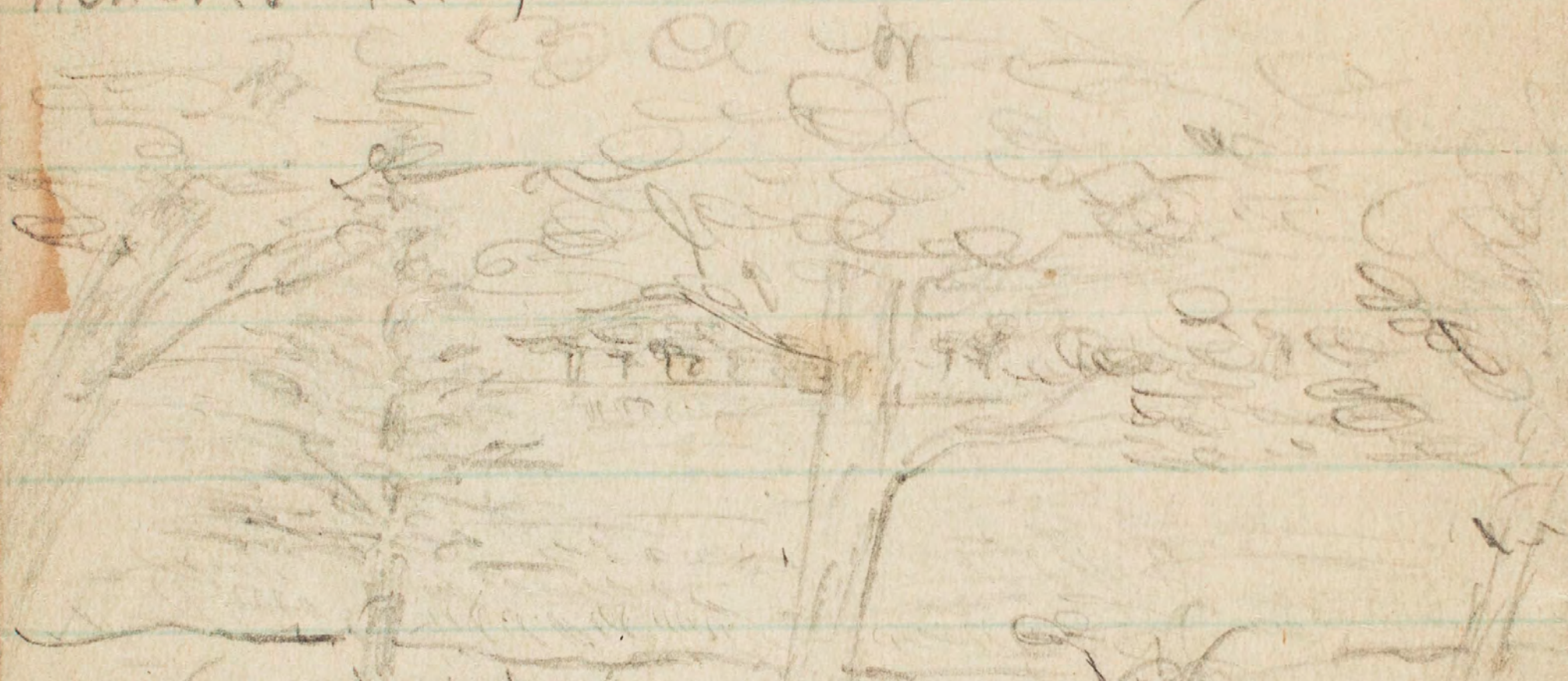
all its weight, and I thought for a few
seconds that I was a goner, it then rolled
partly off from me and tried to come on
to its feet, at this I rolled as quickly a
way from it as I could for my breath
was nearly gone and I felt as though every
bone was broken, The bear attempted
to follow me but Jack got in another shot
and the three wounds were a little too
much, the bear rolled over and was
soon dead, it took us over an hour to

FORESTS OF DIXVILLE

47

skin it, and during all this time Rover kept at a safe distance, but when we had rid it of its skin Rover seemed to consider it no longer dangerous, A little before dinner we again pushed on northward toward the mountains in the north part of the town, The northern part of the town seemed to be mostly mountainous, as a long range lay to the north and rose to quite a height, at about three in the afternoon we stopped for dinner on the side of the mountains among a thick undergrowth of moosebush while giant birches, and spruces stood over us, while occasionally a pine, maple or other tree showed its self among them, we now began to doubt the existence of a large pond on the top of such a mountain, after eating dinner we again kept on up following a small brook, jumping from one stone to another up some rapid, passing around some pool, cool and shady, beneath great overhanging trees, old and moss grown, again passing up through a sharp ravine, cut out during ages of constant

48 SIX MONTHS IN THE
work by this little brook, slowly we
neared the top of the mountain, at last
the brook passed in between two great
knobs of the mountains, whose sides at this
point rose almost perpendicular from the
stream to a height of seventy-five or a
hundred feet, and covered mostly with



we saw the pond through the trees
great yellow birches and rock maples
with a scattering of evergreen trees, we
had gone but a little ways further when
we caught sight of a vast expanse of
blue which at first we took for sky,
as we could but dimly see it through the
trees but as we drew nearer we saw
the pond we had been hunting for, stretch-
ing away before us.