

David's War Diary

David's War Diary was written in March of 2001, approximately 6 months before the New York World Trade Center was destroyed on September 11.

This short "novelette" revolves around a young man who finds himself unexpectedly in the middle of a World War that is being fought on United States soil. The story reveals what the young civilian does in his effort to stay alive and evade the enemy forces. It contains a number of useful survival tips which are embedded throughout the twelve chapters. For example, in the first chapter there is an explanation of how to determine compass directions at night just by looking at the moon.



Click on the first link below to begin reading the story. If you don't enjoy it, you can always stop reading at any time.

David's War Diary - Chapter One

Today I found the book. It was the first book I had seen since the worldwide book burning four months ago. I eagerly picked it up and turned to page one. And I looked down at a blank page. It was a diary. A blank diary. My eyes filled with tears.

As I look back at those first few words I have just written above, I realize I have not started my story very well. Although I do not have much formal education, I can read and write. And before the war started, my favorite leisure activity was reading. Although I have always been poor, I never had any trouble finding a book to read.



That was before the war began. Like all wars, this one began in a very normal way. And for several weeks I frequently listened to the war news on the radio. But since the war was being fought on the other side of the ocean, I thought it would have no impact on me. I was wrong. The war engulfed us before we could do anything to protect ourselves. I was lucky. I lived through that first awful day of destruction.

I was also lucky in another way. The war was being fought without nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons. Although every nation had those options available, they decided to use the old fashioned weapons of World War II instead. But they didn't need airplanes to drop their bombs. During the past twenty years every major city in the world had dozens of bombs smuggled into them by their enemies. Those bombs had been strategically planted where they would do the most damage. All the telecommunication, power, gas, and water companies had been carefully targeted throughout the world. When the war escalated, each nation simply triggered their prepositioned bombs by remote control. A few cities (such as Washington, D.C. and Moscow, Russia) contained so many prepositioned bombs that they were totally destroyed in a matter of minutes. But most cities only suffered normal damage. However,

their utility infrastructure was completely destroyed. And without fresh water being piped into the cities, fires quickly raged out of control in many areas. After the fires died out, life in the cities became impossible due to the lack of drinking water. Almost everyone evacuated their homes and moved into a government shelter of some type. However, not all of us accepted the hospitality of our governments. Some of us decided we would wait and see what happened next.

After all the prepositioned bombs had been remotely detonated, foreign armies began invading their enemies. Within one week at least five major nations had their troops entrenched on United States soil. And then the fighting started moving from place to place as the troops destroyed one area and then moved on to the next area. About two weeks after the foreign troops arrived here in the United States, I heard the "rumor." The enemy was burning every book they could find. Therefore I was not surprised when, at a safe distance, I saw the enemy destroy the local public library. However, I was surprised when I saw my fellow countrymen assist in the book burning. A small group of misfits went about collecting every book they could find and they delivered them to the enemy in truck loads. For each truckload they were given one week's supply of food and five gallons of gas for their truck.



That this tragedy was happening everywhere at the same time I did not learn until later when I had the chance to visit other partially destroyed towns. I gradually became aware of the fact that the one thing that was missing in every home, store, and building was a book of any type. I was confident that some people loved books as much as I do, and they had found some way to hide and preserve the books they treasured. But until today I had not found a single copy of any book.

That is why I was delighted to find the book inside the desk of the partially destroyed office building I had entered to spend the night. There was nothing of interest in the desk except for the book and two writing pens. The printed title on the cover of the book was "Diary." When I opened the book to read the words therein, my heart sank. The pages were blank. All blank. For some unknown reason, the person who bought this book had never written a single word; not even their name or the date.

I was heartbroken. But then I saw an opportunity. I could write my own diary. I could tell the world how my life had been destroyed by this war. And that is what I am doing now.

The biggest decision I had to make was where to begin. I decided not to bore you with the details of my birth and early life. They were too ordinary to be of any interest. I decided to begin with the events of today. I have to call it today because I don't know what day of the week it is. I'm not even sure what month it is. Before the war began about four months ago, every day was so predictable it was a simple matter to keep track of time. But after the war started I was not concerned about what day it was. My complete attention was focused on finding food and water, and staying one step ahead of the enemy so I would not be killed or captured. When I find out what day it is, I will insert that information in this diary for anyone who is interested.

My writing hand is getting tired so I think I will go to sleep for the night. The wind is blowing through the broken windows of this war damaged building so I will definitely need my blanket tonight. But I have a roof over my head so I don't have to worry about getting rained on while I sleep.

Day Two

A terrible creaking sound woke me this morning. At first I didn't know what it was and then I felt pieces of plaster falling on me. I grabbed my boots in one hand and my equipment belt in my other hand and I ran into the street to safety. As the dust settled I looked back at the office building where I had spent the night. The upper floors of the building had totally collapsed into one big heap on the ground. My sleeping blanket, my backpack, and my weapon were under a pile of rubble about ten feet high. The futility of trying to recover my lost belongings was obvious to me.

It was time to take inventory. My civilian clothes had become rags some time ago and I now wear whatever I can find that will fit me and not be too tight. I don't mind if my clothes are a little loose but I can't tolerate clothes that are too tight. A few weeks ago I found some hunting camouflage clothes in an attic in a partially destroyed home. The camouflage pattern is great when I am in the woods but terrible when I am inside a town.

I also have a medium-size waist pack that contains seven military food ration bars, about four ounces of salt, a compass, a flint and a piece of steel, a fork and spoon, a steel drinking cup, a military can-opener, a fingernail clipper, a toothbrush, eight thin snare wires, twenty feet of strong nylon twine, twelve feet of fishing line and several fish hooks, and a road map of this state.

I have a very nice hunting knife that has one advantage that is also its main disadvantage. It has a hollow handle with a screw on cap. Inside the handle I have my three remaining matches, a sharpening stone, and six aspirin tablets, all individually wrapped in clear plastic wrap. When the cap is screwed on tight, the handle is waterproof. But because the handle is hollow, I know I cannot use the knife as a hacking tool or the blade will break off from the handle. Therefore I have always been careful when I use my knife since I am aware of this weakness. If I find a good hunting knife without a hollow handle, I will probably exchange my knife for it.

I also have a 30-ounce belt canteen and it is about one-third full of water. I keep a thin clean cloth in the bottom of my canteen pouch. All of the above items are attached to my equipment belt. Before the ceiling collapsed I also had a backpack that contained several other useful items but nothing that is worth digging through ten feet of rubble to recover. Therefore I made the decision to abandon my backpack and my primary weapon of self-defense. I will have to rely on my knife and my wits to keep me alive until I can find a replacement weapon.

I need to say a little more about my salt. In my opinion, salt was the best kept secret in the United States prior to the war. Every doctor and magazine article stressed the fact that we needed to reduce our salt intake. "Don't add salt to your food at the table. Commercially processed foods contain all the salt your body needs." And that was true. However, naturally grown foods don't contain any salt. And you can't find salt in the woods. But our bodies need salt to function properly. The bottom line is that salt is as precious right now as silver or gold. That's why I always keep what little salt I might have in my waist pack. My life and my health depends on it.

My boots are probably my most valuable asset. Without them, travel would be painful, difficult, or maybe even impossible. I have always been very particular about my footwear. For the past few years I have always worn ankle-high lace-up hiking boots with grooved soles. I would only buy boots that felt good on my feet when I first put them on. I am not one of those people who believe you have to break in your shoes for them to be comfortable.

After the loss of my weapon, my next most important concern is that I only have the one pair of socks I am wearing. They are in okay condition but they will not last more than another ten or fifteen days before

tiny holes start to appear. Wherever the holes appear, a blister will soon follow. If I had a needle and some thread I could sew up the holes. But I learned from experience that the sewn area will still rub a blister on my foot. My socks are also the reason I carry my fingernail clipper in my waist pack. I use it to keep my fingernails and my toenails trimmed short. Long toenails can destroy a good pair of socks after only two or three days of hiking.

Before the war began, I didn't truly understand how important my feet were. It wasn't long before my opinion about my feet changed. If my feet hurt, itch, or are bleeding, I can't travel very well or very far. Before I lost my backpack, I had four extra pair of socks. I rotated them very carefully. Each night I would remove my socks, wash them and hang them near the fire to dry. Then I would wash and dry my feet. I would then take a clean pair of socks from my backpack and put them on. I have avoided all types of foot fungus and blisters that way. I can still wash my feet and my one pair of socks each night to avoid the foot fungus. But I have no way to avoid the blisters unless I can find some more socks within the next week or two.

My three major priorities: a new weapon, food, and socks.

I need to clarify something right now. Before the war began I would never have considered taking something I hadn't paid for. But the war has changed that. I still refuse to steal. But if I find something that has the appearance of being temporarily abandoned, then I will confiscate it in order to stay alive. I think the difference between me and the average thief is that I know I don't have any right to the things I take. And my conscience bothers me tremendously. Maybe when the war is over I can somehow make amends by helping people less fortunate than I am. I don't know. I will cross that bridge when I get to it. For now, I only ask that you not judge me too harshly for eating any food that I happen to find, or wearing any clothes that happen to fit me.

I walked about two miles through the remains of this war ravaged town but I didn't see anyone. However, I didn't know if the town was completely deserted. There are survivors everywhere. But generally we don't reveal ourselves to each other. If I see someone else first, then I try to remain concealed until they have passed me by. I am confident others have seen me first and they practice this same strategy.

From past experience I knew I would probably not find anything of value in this burned out town so I made my way to the edge of town and entered the woods. I consulted my map, looked at my compass, and made a mental note of where the sun was and the best route to the next town.

My primary objective is to return to my hometown in the southeast and see my parents. The economy went downhill about a year ago and most of us lost our jobs where I lived. The only decent job I could find was in the mid-west. Since I was single I moved to the mid-west and got a new job. But the war has changed my priorities. All I want to do now is to get home safely and see if my parents and two older brothers are okay.

It was early morning so I started my hike through the woods. When I am in the woods I always travel quietly by day. If I am following a road, I travel quietly by night. Even at night the main roads can be extraordinarily dangerous, so I try to strategically select which roads I will follow. Dirt roads are usually safer and can be traveled during the day. However, the main roads contain numerous gangs of thieves and cutthroats that prey on passing travelers. Travel by car is also impossible because of the numerous roadblocks. When you see a roadblock you don't know if it is the enemy, or our own military, or a band of renegades. The



other reason I am on foot is due to the fact that the gas stations are all closed. Only the military has access to gasoline.

Travel by night along a secondary road is not very difficult if the moon is shining. In fact, I use the moon as a guide when I have to choose between two forks in a road. Except for the few nights when the moon is full, the bright side of the moon always points in the direction of the sun. Between sunset and midnight it will point west towards the setting sun. After midnight it will point east towards the rising sun. When the moon is full, I use my compass. It is very easy to read under a full moon.

I also travel alone. By necessity, not by choice. On three occasions I have teamed up with other people but I never stayed with them for more than a day or two. They couldn't resist the urge to talk as they walked. I have no objection to conversation, but not while I am traveling. Talking distracts you from paying close attention to the area ahead and around you. And you can't hear your surroundings when someone is talking. And it alerts anyone who might be ahead that you are coming their way. That's why I travel alone. So far I haven't met anyone who could abstain from conversation while walking.

That's all I can think of at this time, so I will put this diary away for now.

David's War Diary - Chapter Two

Day Five

Nothing important has happened since my last entry. I found a stream shortly after I entered the woods three days ago and I followed it. At one spot the stream formed a small pond about eight feet deep and 20 feet across before it continued its way through the woods. I camped there the first night and fished from every bank of the small pond. I caught two small fish that I would have thrown back during normal times but which I kept and ate due to the circumstances. I had better luck with my eight snares. I caught one squirrel late in the evening and another one the following morning.

I always stop about three hours before sunset to set my snares and to make camp. I then check my snares just before dark. And again at sunrise. And again two hours after sunrise. Then I collect my snare wires and start hiking again. I call them snare wires but that's not what they were when I found them. One day while I was casually searching a flower shop I noticed some thin green wire that was used to tie silk flower arrangements. I cut the wire into different lengths (between 6 feet and 10 feet) and I have used it successfully as snare wire ever since.

Let me also mention my drinking water. First I pour whatever water I can find through a clean cloth to filter out any large impurities. Then I hard boil the water for 1 or 2 minutes in my steel cup. I only put boiled water in my canteen to drink. So far I have been lucky and I have not had a case of the runs since before the war started. I still have all three of my matches. I use my flint and my piece of steel to start my fires. It is slow and tedious work but I refuse to waste my remaining matches. I may get sick one day and not be physically able to start a fire with my flint. If that happens, then my matches could save my life. Without water I am dead, and without boiled water to drink my chances of survival are very slim.



I wish I could find a butane cigarette lighter. Before the war started I could have bought all the lighters I wanted for under a dollar each. Hindsight. One of the many inexpensive things I could have done that would have made my life so much easier today.

I don't eat breakfast. When food is available, I eat lunch and a late supper. I don't miss breakfast. After the first few days of doing without breakfast I realized that, contrary to what I had been taught, breakfast isn't the most important meal of the day. Even if I have not eaten the night before, if I get a decent night's rest, I can travel for several hours the following morning before I start getting weak from fatigue. That's when I eat my lunch. If I am low on food, I skip supper. I stay alive that way. And I have lost about 20 pounds. But I have added a few pounds of muscle in my legs. I am now thin but not emaciated. And except for being hungry most of the time, I actually have never felt better in my entire life.

I have to mention my dreams. After the war began, they gradually changed. I don't dream a lot, but my dreams now are usually about food. Foods I once had easy access to but didn't appreciate. Corn on the cob. A baked potato with butter. A glass of cold milk. Raw vegetables and fresh fruit. Cheese. Freshly baked bread. I read the words I have just written and they are very precious to me. But I sincerely doubt if you can appreciate them as I do unless you have been hungry for some extended period of time during your life.

By following the stream, I have come to the edge of another war ravaged town. I watched from the edge of town for a short period of time and saw no movement anywhere. I then picked out the house I would attempt to enter to spend the night. I always try to pick the least desirable house in the immediate area. It is usually the safest place to spend the night. Around dusk, while I could still see well enough to move safely but could not easily be seen from a distance, I made my way to the house and went inside. It was abandoned. I spent the night in relative comfort.

Day Six

Most of the homes on the outskirts of town were partially destroyed or burned to the ground. In the small business section, most of the buildings were also either partially or totally destroyed. I spent the entire day looking for something to salvage but I found nothing I wanted to take with me. I found a lot of things that were in good condition, but as I have already mentioned, I am not a thief. I am only looking for things that will help me survive the remainder of my journey.

Day Seven

I entered the main business district of town around noon. In the downtown area most of the buildings have vending machines and a small lounge area with a coffee pot and a microwave. Sometimes these break rooms are on the first floor but frequently they are on an upper floor. It is also very unusual for me to be the first one to find them. But on those rare occasions when I find a break area that hasn't already been looted, then I am in junk food heaven.

I was exploring the second floor of a building when I heard voices in the street outside. I crept to a position near one of the windows and carefully peeked outside. I saw a group of armed men. That didn't alarm me because anyone who can find a weapon carries it with them nowadays. What did alarm me was the foul language the men were using. Every sentence was punctuated with several words of profanity. I have nothing against a cuss word every now and then when the occasion warrants it. But my Dad always told me that you can't depend on a person



who uses profanity in every sentence. (My Dad also told me not to trust a man who hits a woman.) Therefore I remained in hiding to let those people pass. It seemed the wisest course of action since I only had my hunting knife for self-defense. To my dismay, they entered a building a short distance down the street and two rough looking men stood guard outside the door. I remained very quiet and waited. After about 10 minutes I decided that building must be their headquarters, so I crept quietly across the room and down the stairs and out the back door into an alley. I entered a building on the opposite side of the alley and closed the door behind me as quietly as I could. I then felt a little safer.

The building was not in bad condition, except for the fact that it was very old and the glass had been broken out of all the windows. I explored the ground floor and found nothing of value. I even looked in the small closet beneath the stairs but it was empty. As I started up the stairs my foot broke through the fourth step. After I got over the initial scare, I pulled my foot free from the broken step and I saw something inside the hole. It was a backpack. I realized the pack was too big to lift through the hole, so I returned to the closet below the stairs and I examined the small wall directly below the bottom steps. It was a simple wood panel that was held in place at the top and bottom by eight small nails. I carefully used my fingernail clippers to get a grip on the small nail heads and they withdrew from their holes very easily. I then removed the thin wood panel and gained access to the secret compartment below the first six stairs.

I was rich. I had found a backpack and two duffel bags. One duffel bag was full of food. The other duffel bag contained a nice variety of clothing. The backpack contained a magnificent collection of camping gear. Evidently someone who previously worked in this building had secretly stashed these supplies under the stairs in the event the war started while he was at work. He was very foresighted. But since the war began in the middle of the night, he hadn't gotten trapped here in the city and been forced to hike his way home.

I didn't want to unpack and examine everything here since I was still so close to that band of men I was trying to avoid. So I put the pack over my shoulders and I picked up a duffel bag in each hand. Then I carefully made my way across several city blocks before I stopped in another abandoned building to rest.

The first thing I did was go through the duffel bag containing the food. It contained four cans of Spam, four cans of Chili with beans, 20 packages of dry gravy mix, 10 packages of dry chili mix, 12 pounds of white rice, 12 pounds of wheat berries, 5 pounds of instant potatoes, 5 pounds of dried beans, 5 pounds of dried corn, 5 pounds of dry noodles, 100 small tea bags, 12 packets of hot chocolate mix, 2 pounds of powdered milk, 1 Pound of White Sugar, 2 Pounds of Pickling Salt, a half-pound of round peppercorns, 1 pound of miniature Tootsie Roll candy, 1 pound of individually wrapped caramels, and 1 pound of individually wrapped assorted hard candies. There were also a few simple recipes. I was rich. I couldn't resist opening one of the caramels and putting it into my mouth to melt while I went through the other things I had found.

Next I examined the backpack. It was externally mounted on a metal frame and it had shoulder straps and waist straps. Tied to the outside of the pack I saw a collapsible shovel and a single-shot over-under combination 20 gauge shotgun and 22 caliber rifle. A decent supply of ammo was in one of the outside pockets of the backpack. I loaded one shotgun shell into the upper chamber and one 22LR bullet into the lower chamber. I clicked the rifle closed.

There were four large pockets on the outside of the backpack and two major compartments on the inside of the pack. I am not going to bother listing what was in each area. Instead I will just list everything I found.

Comb, razor, toothbrush, small tube of toothpaste, dental floss, chapstick, unbreakable mirror, safety glasses with flip-down sun-glasses, small shampoo, small hand lotion, sewing kit, nail grooming kit, tweezers, small fingernail brush, two ear plugs, Q-tips, compass, miniature weather thermometer, whistle, magnifying glass, bar of Ivory soap, bar of Lava hand soap, wash cloth, bath towel, ziplock bag containing 40 paper towels, multi-tool, thin steel wire, two butane lighters, two waterproof containers of strike-anywhere matches, duck tape, sharpening stone, pocket knife, can opener, fork, spoon, enamel dish plate, six-quart enamel cook pot with lid, Teflon coated skillet, wide-mouth funnel, long wooden spoon, long plastic fork, two small stainless steel cook pots with lids and with copper bottoms (one pot fit inside the other pot), stainless steel cup, dish cloth, dish towel, metal scouring pad, rubber gloves, 100 coffee filters, ten empty 1-gallon ziplock freezer bags.

Also a Buck hunting knife with a gut hook, hatchet, commando saw, small fishing tackle set, small solar-powered portable radio, large flashlight, small flashlight, four spare flashlight bulbs, twelve rechargeable AA Ni-Cd batteries, topographical map of the local national forest, 9X12 camouflage tarp, heavy duty hooded rain poncho, 100 feet of strong nylon cord, 500 feet of nylon string, insect netting, jungle hammock, blanket, small pillow.

Also four assorted paperback novels, deck of playing cards, book of solitaire card games, book of puzzles, two pens, five Yahtzee dice, 20 Yahtzee score sheets, pad of paper, survival manual, book on edible wild plants, first aid manual, small but comprehensive first aid kit, box of 100 band-aids, assortment of medicine tablets, 100 aspirin tablets, 100 Ibuprofen tablets, 200 multivitamins, bottle of ThyroBlock, tube of clotrimazole cream, set of surgical tools, set of dental cleaning picks, set of lock picks, needle nose pliers, Deet insect repellent, sun block, gun cleaning supplies.

I was confident the paper towels weren't included for normal kitchen applications. Their most likely use would be as industrial strength toilet tissue. And I wouldn't use the rubber gloves to wash my dishes. I would wear them when I cleaned fish and skinned animals. The rest of the time they would remain inside one of the ziplock bags to keep the odor from spreading to the other items in my backpack.

The small flashlight operated on a single AA battery. I transferred it to my waist pack. It would be nice to have light in the middle of the night for an emergency trip to the bathroom. The large flashlight took four AA batteries. It was unique. It was made by Garrity and the top of the flashlight could be lifted up and the unit would function as an area lantern. If you left the top of the flashlight in the closed position, it provided a very powerful beam of light.

There were also a few family pictures in the backpack. I reverently placed those pictures on a nearby desk. They weren't my family but I knew those pictures were valuable to someone.

There were three other items in the backpack that I want to mention separately.

First, there was a Katadyn pocket water filter with instructions. I don't know why they call it a pocket filter. It wasn't very big and it only weighed 18 ounces, but it would never fit into my pocket. It had a 0.2 micron filter that would remove harmful microorganisms and it would yield drinking water at the rate of one quart per 90 seconds. And the filter would process 13,000 gallons of water before it had to be replaced. This unit was worth its weight in gold to me. Sometimes the only reason I built a fire was to boil some drinking water. This unit would eliminate



my need to build a fire unless I needed to cook my food. In order to get the maximum life out of the Katadyn filter, I intend to pour my water through a coffee filter (or clean cloth) before I put it through the Katadyn filter. The instruction page that was with the filter had been hand stamped with the name of the company that sold the unit. Before the war began the Katadyn Pocket Water Filter could have been purchased for \$159.95 from the following source:

<http://store.yahoo.com/truefoods/2012000-.html>

Second, there were four-ounces of 68% Calcium Hypochlorite granules and some instructions. This is the stuff they use as shock treatment in swimming pools. The instructions that were taped to the small bottle were very informative and therefore I decided to copy them into my diary below:

***** Begin Copy *****

How To Purify Water

1. Pour water through a Filter (Coffee Filter, T-shirt, Pillowcase).
 2. Bring water to a temperature of about 70°F or higher before the next step.
 4. Add 1/96 Oz. per Gallon Water (A pinch between thumb and finger).
 5. Wait 30 Minutes.
 6. A Chlorine smell, OK to drink. No chlorine smell, add another pinch and wait 30 minutes.
 7. A Chlorine smell, OK to drink. No smell, discard and start over. Too many germs in water.
- NOTE: Start small and add chlorine. Too much chlorine is bad for you.

***** End of Copy *****

It seemed redundant to me to have the world's best Katadyn water filter and some chlorine granules to purify water. You would only use one or the other but never both at the same time. However, I wasn't going to leave either one of them behind. If I found that I didn't need the chlorine granules, maybe I could trade them to someone for something I did need.

Finally, the backpack contained an Aladdin Stanley wide-mouth 24-ounce steel thermos bottle. Inside the thermos I found a ziplock bag of white rice, a ziplock bag of wheat berries, and some instructions. The hand-written instructions were very informative and I am going to copy them into my diary below because I think you might also find them interesting:

***** Begin Copy *****

Thermos Cooking Instructions

Reasons for Thermos Cooking:

1. Requires less energy (firewood).
2. Retains more nutrients (vitamins and minerals).
3. Prevents cooking odors from attracting enemies or bears.

You will need: A thermos, a long wood or plastic spoon, a wide mouth canning funnel, and a cook pot.

Wheat Berries (Wheat Kernels)

Put one-half teaspoon of salt, four ounces of wheat berries, and eight ounces of water into a pot or saucepan and bring to a rolling boil, stirring the entire time. Quickly but carefully pour the contents from the pot through a wide-mouth funnel into your thermos. Put the cap on the thermos firmly, but not too tightly, and lay the thermos on its side to evenly distribute the contents in the boiling hot water. Wait 8 hours or overnight. Pour the contents of the thermos into a bowl. Four ounces of dry wheat berries will yield about 3/4 pound of cooked wheat and several ounces of vitamin and mineral enriched water. Be sure to drink the water. It has a pleasant taste and many valuable nutrients.

Stew

If you use raw meat, slice the meat into short, thin pieces so it will cook evenly throughout. Brown the meat slightly before adding the other stew ingredients. Put all stew materials in some water in a pot, bring to a rolling boil and transfer everything to your thermos. Cap firmly and lay the thermos on its side. Wait 4 hours. Nothing leaves the thermos during the cooking process so you end up with a better tasting, more vitamin enriched stew than if you cook it in an open pot.

Rice

Prepare rice according to the package directions (1/2 cup rice and 1 cup water). Bring water to a rolling boil in a pot. Then add the rice and stir for 30 seconds. Transfer to the thermos and cap firmly. Lay thermos on its side. Wait the required time (usually 20 minutes). Transfer the rice to a plate and enjoy.

Wheat Sprouts

You need two clean, empty glass jars, 16 ounces or larger (pickles, sauce, etc.) Use a thin nail to punch 50 small water (air) holes in the lids of each jar. Or you can use plastic zipper bags or plastic food saver containers. Anything that allows the water to be drained off the wheat and allows air to get to the moist wheat berries. In other words, don't seal the zipper bags completely. And don't snap the plastic lids on; just rest the lids on top of the containers (keeps bugs out). In the evening, put four ounces of wheat berries into the first jar. Fill the jar half-full with water (cover the wheat with water) and let it soak overnight. Drain and drink the soak water the following morning (it is full of vitamins). Turn the jar upside down and let it drain completely. Cover with a small towel. Four hours later, half fill the jar with water, wait two minutes, drain and cover with a towel. Every 4 hours, half fill with water, wait 2 minutes, drain, and cover with a towel. The purpose is to keep the wheat moist but not water logged. Just before going to bed at the end of the day, start the second jar (4 ounces wheat and 1/2 water). You now have a system that will keep you in healthy, nutritious food every day. The following day, fill the first jar with water every 4 hours, wait 2 minutes, drain and cover. At the end of the day, the wheat in the first jar will have small white sprouts extending from the ends of the kernels. It is part grain and part fresh vegetable. It has a high protein and vitamin content and it is a more complete food. Remove the sprouted wheat from the first jar, and refill it with fresh grain and start the process over again. Prepare the sprouted wheat using the thermos cooking instructions for wheat berries above.

***** End of Copy *****

That was everything I found in the large backpack. I was very pleased. The person who put that pack together did a really nice job and I will always be grateful to him.

Finally, I closely examined the clothes in the second duffel bag and I quickly realized they were much too big for me. I transferred them to the top of a desk near the front door for someone else to find. The only

clothes items I kept were six pair of socks, one pair of soft cotton gloves, one pair of leather work gloves, and one cotton ski mask. The duffel bag also contained a 45 caliber semi-automatic pistol, a pistol belt, a holster, four extra seven-round clips, and one box of 50 hollow point bullets. I loaded all the clips, put one clip into the pistol, and adjusted the pistol belt to fit my waist. This required cutting about 15 inches off the end of the belt and punching a new hole for the belt buckle to hook into.

Then I slung the pack onto my back. I picked up the food duffel bag in one hand and my new rifle in my other hand, and I made my way to the front door. There was no reason to explore in this town any further. I had all I could carry and enough food to last me several weeks. I only needed to escape into the woods and all would be well.

I arrived at the front door, which was actually lying on the floor. I paused and listened but I heard nothing out in the street.

Very carefully I made my way across several city blocks to the edge of the business district and I entered a medium sized building to spend the night. I was trying to put as much distance as I could between myself and that gang of men I had seen earlier. However, I was carrying about 100 pounds (more or less) of equipment and supplies and I was getting very tired. About two-thirds of the weight was in my food duffel bag but I had no intention of leaving any of that food behind.

The first thing I did was remove my backpack and then I found my new Teflon coated skillet. I was getting ready to open my food duffel bag when I saw a human shadow on the building across the street. The sun was setting and therefore everything was casting long shadows. I picked up my rifle and moved quietly to a hidden position beside one of the front windows so I could get a look at the owner of that shadow as they passed by in the street outside. Another moment or two elapsed and then the shadow became an attractive woman. I call her attractive but I don't know if you would. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. She had shoulder length straight black hair. It was the blackest hair I had ever seen. She was dressed in civilian clothes but she was carrying some type of military rifle. She was moving very cautiously towards the southeast. In less than a minute she was out of sight. During the short time I had been watching her I had completely forgotten about my supper. But now my mind returned to the business at hand.

Ever since I had first seen those cans of Spam and Chili a couple of hours ago, I have not been able to get them out of my mind. Before the war I had eaten a variety of foods, including healthy foods and junk foods. Therefore my body was accustomed to occasionally getting some really greasy food to digest. However, since the war began, greasy foods have been almost impossible to find. Consequently, for the past two hours my stomach has been continuously reminding my brain that satisfaction was only a can opener away. That's why I opened one of my cans of Chili with beans and heated it in my new Teflon skillet. It was the most delicious meal I have eaten in a very long time. I know that including this paragraph in my diary will lower my credibility in the eyes of some people, but I had to record this event because it was extremely significant to me.

A short time later I unwrapped one of the miniature Tootsie Roll bars and let it melt in my mouth. It had been a long time since I had any type of chocolate in my mouth and I thoroughly enjoyed it. That night I didn't brush my teeth. I wanted the sweet taste to remain in my mouth as long as possible. I eventually pulled my new blanket over me, adjusted my new pillow, and went to sleep.

David's War Diary - Chapter Three

Day Eight

It was raining when I woke up this morning so I decided to relax and not travel today. The first thing I did was carry all my belongings to the top floor of the building where I had spent the night and I made myself comfortable in one of the end offices. It had been raining for at least an hour and I knew the rain had washed the impurities out of the air. I took my tarp up onto the roof and secured it at an angle so it would direct rain water into my six-quart cook pot. It was late summer and the rain felt good on my face. I returned to my backpack and removed my bar of Ivory soap, my little bottle of shampoo, and my bath towel. I then returned to the roof and removed my clothes and washed them in the rain. I laid my clothes across a nearby roof vent cover so the rain would wash the soap out of them. Then I lathered up and took my first really good bath in over a month. It felt so good. As I was showering I thought of all the hot showers I had taken earlier in life. Showers I had taken for granted and not really appreciated. If I survived this war and things returned to normal, I would remember to appreciate the simple luxuries of life in the future.

I returned to the top floor of the building and dried off with my bath towel. I strapped my 45 to my waist and then I wrapped myself in my blanket.

I got the small portable radio out of my backpack. I read the instructions and I was so impressed with the radio and its many options that I must tell you about it. It was designed to pick up AM and FM stations, TV sound, the police bands, the aircraft bands, the weather band, and a complete range of shortwave bands from around the world. It could be powered in five different ways. It could be plugged into a normal 120-volt wall outlet. It could be plugged into an automobile cigarette lighter. It could run off four AA Ni-Cd batteries. You could rotate its built-in hand crank and recharge the four batteries. And it had a built-in solar panel. About three hours of direct sunlight would recharge the four batteries and provide about five hours of listening pleasure. It had a standard telescoping antenna. And it had a separate wire antenna that you could clip to the main antenna and increase the radio's range so it could pull in shortwave stations from around the world. It also had an ear plug for listening privacy. The invoice was still in the box with the radio. It only cost \$69.88 and before the war began it could have been ordered as Item #310 from:



http://www.y2knorth.com/dynamo_amfmsw.html

As I was looking at the radio it occurred to me that I could use its solar panel to recharge all my AA Ni-Cd batteries. In the future I would always have power for my flashlights and my radio.

I installed four of the AA batteries in the radio. I then rotated the hand crank for about 30 seconds just to make sure the batteries had some charge in them. Then I turned the radio on. I couldn't pick up any local AM or FM stations. I didn't know whether or not they were still broadcasting. So I switched to one of the shortwave bands and I picked up a lot of stations. Most of them were talk and about half were in English. The only subject was how the war was going. I kept changing the channel until I found a station that was playing soft music. Just music, no words. I turned the volume down very low, leaned back in my desk

chair, put my feet up on the desk in front of me, and relaxed. The music was so peaceful. It occurred to me that I had an entire orchestra at my disposal. Their only job was to play beautiful music for me to relax by.

And then I had another one of my revelations. For thousands of years only kings and queens could afford the luxury of having an orchestra play just for them. I was enjoying something only kings and queens once had the pleasure of enjoying.

And then something else occurred to me. Before the war began I had actually lived better than most of the kings and queens of the distant past. Even though I had never been rich, I had lived in a heated and air-conditioned apartment. I had hot and cold water instantly on demand. I didn't have to wait for my water to be heated and delivered to me. And I'd always had an indoor bathroom. I didn't have to make a trip to an out-building to relieve myself. And I had a refrigerator in which I could stock any food I desired at any time of the year. Fresh fruit and vegetables in the middle of winter. Any kind of meat I wanted. And international cuisine from any country in the world. And I only had to work an eight-hour day, five days a week. The rest of the time was mine to enjoy. I could watch color movies on TV. Or I could read any book I wanted.

Before the war, I had lived a life of luxury. My living conditions had been far superior to almost everyone who had lived during the past several thousand years. And that included kings and queens of the distant past. I have no idea why this thought didn't occur to me before the war started. If it had, I would have enjoyed my life so much more back then. And if things ever return to normal, I will definitely enjoy my life more than I ever did in the past. The things I once complained about now seem so very trivial. It's sad that it took this unfortunate turn of events to bring me to my senses.

I returned to the roof and I collected my clothes and brought them inside to dry. I also collected some of the water from my six-quart pot to drink. I knew rain water was safe to drink without boiling so I enjoyed a nice cup of fresh rain water.

Then I returned to my office chair. The music was still playing on my radio. For some reason I opened the drawers of the desk where I was sitting. I didn't find anything unusual. Mostly files and papers and a few bound reports. I flipped through the file folders but I didn't see anything of interest. Then I ruffled through the papers and they were even more boring. So I looked at the reports and they also looked boring. Research reports. Evidently the man who previously occupied this desk had once worked in a number of different jobs and he kept copies of his most important work so he could document his resume.

One report in particular captured my interest because he had written a note on the cover page that read, "This report cost me a good job. However, one day I will do a more extensive in-depth study on this subject and I believe it will make me famous. Not rich, just famous."

I had nothing else to do so I read the entire report. It was fascinating. In fact, it was so enlightening that I am going to copy the "Executive Summary" and one of the "Tables" from that report here into my diary.

***** Begin Copy *****

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to document my preliminary findings with test subjects who followed a prescribed course of medication and treatment. The test subjects were volunteers who came to our research clinic for free treatment. However, their particular medical complaints weren't of interest to the

other researchers. Since I was the most junior member on the research staff I had the final opportunity to decide if I could use them before they were turned away. Most of the subjects had at least one of the medical conditions the other researchers were interested in, but it was always complicated by an advanced case of AIDS.

I decided to experiment with possible treatments for the AIDS virus and see if the treatment had any positive impact on the patient's other medical complaints. As you know, my research funding was extremely limited. I only had an annual discretionary budget of \$10,000 which I was permitted to spend before submitting a formal research proposal. Since I wanted to experiment on 50 different subjects, I had to select a plan of treatment that cost less than \$200 per subject. In reviewing the literature available on the Internet, I decided to experiment with Dr. Robert C. Beck's Blood Purifier. His unit was powered by a single 9-volt battery and it would send a very small electrical current through a person's skin into their wrist arteries. The electrical current would kill any harmful microorganisms that were in the person's blood as the blood circulated through his wrist. No surgery. No medications. And everything worked off an inexpensive 9-volt battery. The unit was called a Silver Pulsar, Model ZBB5, and each one sold for \$195. Dr. Beck was retired and he did not market the machines himself. However, he very generously permitted anyone to manufacture and sell the units he had designed without paying him any royalties of any type. I ordered 52 of his Silver Pulsars from SOTA Instruments at the following Internet address:



<http://www.sotainstruments.com/products.html>

I carefully selected 50 test subjects. Each subject had a different primary medical problem in addition to AIDS. A list of the subjects and their medical problems is in the appendix. I carefully demonstrated the use of the Beck machine to each patient in my office. When I was certain they could do the treatment on their own, I turned the unit over to them and asked them to fill in a simple data collection sheet on a daily basis. A statistical summary of the data from those sheets is in the appendix.

After one month of treatment, 20% of the patients reported feeling better. Blood samples from all the subjects showed 74% of the patients had fewer destructive microorganisms in their blood.

I immediately followed up on the 20% of the patients who reported feeling better. I discovered they had also begun using the Beck Blood Purifier to make Colloidal Silver (C.S.) according to the instructions that came with the unit. I then demonstrated to all the test subjects how to make Colloidal Silver and I asked them to take one tablespoon four times per day.

After another month of treatment, 44% of the patients reported they felt better. Blood samples showed 92% of the subjects had healthier blood. I then asked each of the subjects to bring me a sample of the C.S. they had made in their homes. I had to find a way to measure the concentration of C.S. in each sample so I searched the Internet and found a very simple battery operated C.S. meter manufactured by Hanna Instruments called the TDS-1 Meter. It sold for \$39 and I purchased one off the Internet from the following company:

<http://www.utopiasilver.com/orders.htm>

The C.S. made at home by the patients ranged from a low of 1-ppm to a high of 18-ppm. Most of the samples also contained other compounds because the subjects could not afford steam distilled water and they were using tap water instead. I realized this was introducing a variable into my findings and I needed a way to control it. So I experimented with the Beck unit and I made C.S. myself. Even though I used

every possible control technique, my batches ranged from between 5-ppm to 12-ppm in concentration. I knew I could solve this concentration problem by mixing two or more batches together and that would yield any concentration I desired. But I was really curious if I could find a more consistent method of making C.S.

Another Internet search yielded a Constant Current Machine that used two flat silver electrodes instead of the two thin silver wires. I ordered a Model SG5B for \$139 because it would operate using either 120-volt house current or a standard 12-volt car battery. I purchased the unit off the Internet from the following company:

<http://www.silvergen.com/>

After exactly four hours using steam distilled water, my batches were consistently between 8-ppm and 11-ppm. This was a tremendous improvement. The Model SG5B was far superior to the Silver Pulser for making consistent Colloidal Silver. However, it could not be used to purify the patient's blood. Only the Beck machine was capable of doing that. To reduce the number of variables in my experiment I decided I would make the Colloidal Silver and give it to my patients at a consistent strength of 10-ppm.

At the end of the next month, 64% of the patients reported feeling better. And blood samples showed 98% had healthier blood. However, the patients were returning to the clinic for more C.S. at different times during the month. When questioned, they admitted to consuming more C.S. on the days they felt the worst. Further questioning also revealed that the subjects were not following my original instructions on how long to use the Beck Blood Purifier each day. It appears that some subjects were more desperate and they used the machine for two or three times my original recommended time period.

I did a statistical analysis and compared the amount of time a patient used the Beck machine each day to the reduction of harmful microorganisms in their blood. This analysis is in the appendix. There was an 86% correlation between longer machine usage and a higher reduction in harmful blood microorganisms.

An analysis was also conducted on the secondary medical problem originally reported by the AIDS subjects. 22% of the subjects experienced a complete healing of their secondary medical problem; 28% experienced a significant improvement in their secondary medical problem; and 36% experienced a stabilization in their secondary medical problem. Only 14% of the patients experienced a decline in their secondary medical problem. Please remember this data is based on chronically ill AIDS patients. A breakdown of this data is in the appendix.

Finally, blood samples from two of the subjects (4%) revealed no trace of AIDS in their blood after three months of treatment. Although this is not a statistically significant percentage, please remember that the controls for this experiment were being developed as the experiment progressed.

Based on this preliminary research, I am requesting funding for a more detailed study using the Beck unit in conjunction with Colloidal Silver. A proposed funding budget and a funding request is included in the appendix to this report.

End of Executive Summary

Table 4 (From the Appendix)
Recommended Starting Dosages For Next Research Project

Colloidal Silver Dosages are Based on Limited Experiments with AIDS Patients at 10-ppm
These are Experimental Dosages and They Must Be Adjusted by a Physician for Each Patient

Internal: (Sore throat, bladder or kidney infection, bronchitis, etc.) Hold 1 or 2 tablespoons of solution under your tongue for 2 minutes and then swallow. Repeat every 3 to 4 hours. For sore throat, also gargle before swallowing.

External: (Burns, rash, skin sores, wounds that don't heal properly or infected wounds) Put 3 or 4 drops on the infected skin surface. Repeat every 2 hours. (Or cover area with damp C.S. gauze.)

Ear: (Ear ache) Put 3 or 4 drops on the end of a Q-Tip and carefully swab out the ear. Repeat 2 to 4 times a day.

Eye: (Pink eye, eye infections, or minor eye injuries) Put 2 drops in corner of eye. Repeat up to 4 times a day.

Nasal: Put a small amount in an atomizer and spray a fine mist up each nostril. Repeat up to 6 times a day.

Anal: Insert 1/2 to 1 ounce into the anal canal using a laxative type anal applicator. Repeat up to 2 times a day for no more than 3 consecutive days.

Vaginal: (Yeast infection, itching, etc.) Put 1/2 to 1 ounce on the area of discomfort either on or in the vagina using a douche applicator. External application can be repeated up to 6 times per day. Internal application should be done once a day for no more than 3 consecutive days.

***** End of Copy *****

After I finished reading the above report, I opened all the drawers in the desk where I was sitting and I found six new 9-volt batteries. I also found one of the Beck Units in an unopened box. I opened it and I was surprised to see how small it was. It would fit in my shirt pocket. The unit contained instructions and two silver wires for making C.S. And it contained two wrist straps so I could attach the electrodes to my wrist and use it to clean my blood. The 9-volt battery sends a very small electrical charge through your skin into your wrist arteries and it kills any and all bacteria or virus microorganisms that are in your blood as your blood circulates through your wrist. The instructions that come with the unit explain a few safety precautions, such as using the unit for short time periods at first and gradually increasing the amount of time you wear the unit.

I put everything I had found into my backpack. The next time I got sick, I was going to experiment with this machine myself.

David's War Diary - Chapter Four

Day Nine

The sun was shining when I woke up this morning. I packed all my belongings and I made my way to the edge of town. I walked about two miles through the



woods until I found a dirt road that appeared to be headed in a southeasterly direction. I followed the dirt road until it crossed a small stream. I then traveled a short distance up the stream and spent the night.

Day Ten

Today began the same as any other. I woke up, stretched, and began folding my sleeping blanket. As I was folding my blanket I heard a voice say, "Freeze." I did.

When I was five years old I accidentally crossed paths with a rattlesnake and I remember freezing without anyone telling me to do so. Instinct. I escaped being bitten by that snake by following my natural born instincts.

Today when I heard the word "Freeze" I froze just like I had done when I was a child. And I waited.

After a few seconds a female voice said, "I have you covered with a fully automatic rifle. If you move I will cut you to pieces with so many bullets that all the King's horses and all the King's men won't be able to put you back together again. If you understand what I just said, say 'yes' but don't move a muscle."

I said, "Yes."

"Good," she said. "You speak English. Now listen carefully. Very slowly lift your hands and put both your hands on top of your head."

I slowly put my hands on top of my head and I waited until she spoke again.

"I saw you yesterday afternoon only by chance. I followed you here and I hid while you fixed supper and went to sleep. After I was certain you were asleep, I moved off into the woods and got a little sleep myself. I woke up about two hours ago and I carefully moved back into position so I could wait for you to wake up. I am telling you this so you will know I could have shot you at anytime but I didn't. I don't kill unless I have to. But I have killed and I will do it again. So please don't give me a reason to shoot you. If you understand what I just said, say 'yes' but don't move a muscle."

Again I said, "Yes."

"The reason I followed you is because I am low on food. I have money so I can pay for any food you might wish to sell. I can pay in silver coins. Real silver. If you have any extra food you would like to exchange for silver coins, then I would like to buy it. If you don't have any food to sell I will leave you alone and I won't hurt you. If you do have some food to sell, we will reach an agreement on how much I should pay, and then I will leave and not hurt you. Regardless of whether you have any food to sell or not, I will not hurt you if you follow my instructions and don't make any quick moves. And whether or not you sell me any food, I will be not be staying for breakfast. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"If you have any food you wish to sell, then say 'affirmative.' If not, then say 'negative.' You can think for a moment before you respond."

I knew the answer but I pretended to think about it. Silver coins could be a real asset if I had to trade for something in the future. Everyone will accept silver and gold. But everyone won't trade for clothes, or bullets, or food. My food duffel bag was extremely heavy and it was really slowing me down. If I

exchanged a few pounds of my extra food for a few ounces of silver coins, then I could make better time as I traveled. So I opened my mouth and said, "Affirmative."

"Excellent. Now here's how we'll handle the transaction. I want you to keep your back to me at all times and keep your hands on your head until I tell you to lower them. My rifle will always be pointed at the center of your back and if you turn around to look at me, or if you make any sudden movements, I will unload my rifle into your body. If you understand, say so."

"I understand."

"Good. Is your extra food in your duffel bag on that rock?"

"Yes."

"This is what I want you to do. Without standing up, get to your knees. Move on your knees over to your duffel bag. Keep your back to me and don't take your hands off your head. You can start moving whenever you are ready."

I obeyed and gradually moved to a position beside my food duffel bag.

"In a minute or two I will toss a canvas bag onto the ground beside you. When you hear the bag land on the ground don't let it scare you. Remain perfectly still until I give you more instructions."

I waited and a few seconds later I saw a canvas bag hit the ground about two feet to my left and a little in front of me.

"When I tell you to, you can take your left hand off your head and reach out and pick up my bag. Leave your right hand on your head. Okay, pick up my bag with your left hand."

I reached out and got the bag and drew it forward and put it on the ground directly in front of me.

"Now listen carefully. I am behind some very good cover and I have my finger on the trigger of my rifle. You may use both your hands to open your bag and transfer whatever food you select into my canvas bag. But first I want you to move my canvas bag to your left side so I can see what you put into my bag. When you open my canvas bag you will find a few empty ziplock bags and a few empty plastic containers with snap-on lids. You can put the food into them if you need to in order to keep it clean. I can't recognize the food at this distance, so tell me what each thing is when you put it into my bag. When you have finished, tell me that's all you want to sell, and I will give you more instructions."

I opened my duffel bag and removed five pounds of white rice, five pounds of wheat berries, two pounds of dry beans, two pounds of dry corn, two pounds of dry noodles, two pounds of instant potatoes, ten tea bags, one-half pound of powdered milk, one-half pound of salt, one ounce of peppercorns, ten small Tootsie Roll candies, ten caramels, and ten hard candies. I looked through my duffel bag once more and I decided to add one can of Spam and one can of Chili to her canvas bag. I had described each item as I put it into her bag and I concluded by saying, "That's all I want to sell."

A very gentle female voice responded, "I had no idea you were so rich. I envy you. But I always keep my word. Will you accept eight silver dollars in exchange for all that food?"

I thought for a moment and I realized that hunger was affecting her sense of value. I had been hungry many times in the recent past and I understood her predicament. Therefore I replied, "Before the war started, silver dollars sold for about \$10 each. I know the price of silver has doubled since then, so silver dollars are worth about \$20 each right now. And before the war started, I could have bought the food I just put into your bag for about twenty dollars. I also know that food is currently selling for at least six times its pre-war price. Therefore, all things being considered, I can't accept your offer because my conscience would bother me for the rest of my life. I think you are offering me too much money. I believe six silver dollars would be closer to a fair price at this time. Is that acceptable to you?"

A few moments passed and neither one of us spoke. I could hear a small bird in a tree not too far away. Then I heard a soft female voice say, "Yes. I will leave six silver dollars on top of the rock beside your bag when I pick up my canvas bag. But right now I want you to put your hands back on top of your head."

I did.

"Now move on your knees straight ahead to that pine tree about fifteen feet in front of you and then stop. And don't look behind you."

I moved on my knees to the pine tree and stopped.

"Now keep your hands on your head and don't look behind you. You appear to be an honest man but I don't know for sure. If you turn around or lower your hands, I will kill you. That would make me sad, but you would be a lot sadder. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"Don't even think about moving until I tell you to."

I stayed on my knees with my hands on my head. I may not be very smart, but I was smart enough to know that if I moved I would be dead in a matter of seconds. I listened as footsteps moved very quietly to the canvas bag and stopped. About two minutes later I heard footsteps retreating to the edge of the clearing.

"Our transaction is complete. I verified what you put in my canvas bag and then I put six silver dollars on the rock beside your duffel bag. Now listen very carefully. When I tell you to, I want you to count very slowly to 5000. After you start counting I am going to quietly make my way back into the woods. As I leave I am going to have my rifle pointed at you until I can't see you anymore. If I see you turn around, or if I hear you stop counting, I will shoot you. When you reach 5000 you can do anything you want to with one exception. Don't follow me. If you try to follow me, I will shoot you. I am very serious about this. I know the direction you came from and the direction you were headed when you made camp. Your safest bet is to keep going the way you were going before you stopped to make camp. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"After I leave here I will find a good place to stop and make sure you aren't following me. If I see you following me, I will kill you. I don't want to kill you, but I will. My life means as much to me as your life means to you. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"Good. Now start counting very slowly, as loud as you can, beginning at one and continuing to 5000."

I began counting, "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. ..." After what seemed like hours I finally reached, "4997, 4998, 4999, 5000."

I rolled onto my back and stretched my arms and my legs. I had cramps in every part of my body. But I was alive. A few minutes later I walked over to my food duffel bag. Sure enough, there were six silver dollars on the rock beside my bag. Three of them were minted in the early 1900's and they each contained about 3/4 of an ounce of silver. The other three were minted in the late 1900's. They were bigger and they each contained one ounce of silver. I was pleased with the transaction. I put the silver in my pocket.



I then looked at the ground around the rock. No footprints that I could see. I moved carefully over the ground in the direction from which I had heard the voice but I saw no footprints. Oh well. I would never be able to identify this "Cinderella" by her slipper size but I would never forget her voice. Maybe our paths will cross again. And maybe they won't. Only time will tell.

I packed my things and I followed the stream back to the dirt road. I then continued down the road in the direction I had been traveling. I had no intention on following her. She was right about my life being important to me. She had paid a fair price for the food I was willing to sell. The transaction was over. I couldn't blame her for being careful or for wanting to travel alone. She reminded me of me.

David's War Diary - Chapter Five

Day Sixteen

When I started hiking this morning, I discovered some deer tracks that ran parallel to a small stream. I decided to sit a short distance from the stream and wait as the sun continued to rise higher in the sky. I had waited well over an hour when I saw a medium size deer traveling parallel to the stream and coming in my direction. The deer was moving slowly and I had picked my location so the gentle breeze would blow my scent away from the stream in the opposite direction. When the deer was almost adjacent to me, I was looking directly at its side and I aimed about six inches above its front leg and about six inches behind the front of its chest. It was the perfect "heart" shot and I took it. The deer leaped forward a few feet but collapsed almost immediately. I made sure it was dead and then I gutted the deer and removed all its internal organs.



As I was working two men approached me. I had been concentrating on my task of gutting the deer and I had not noticed the men until they were just a short distance away. I mentally lectured myself for not being more careful.

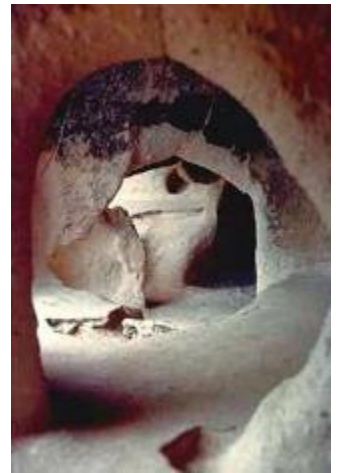
Both men stopped when they were about ten feet away and they greeted me in a very civil and pleasant manner. It had been a long time since I felt comfortable around strangers but these two men didn't make me nervous in any way.

One of the men said they had been hunting unsuccessfully for two weeks and their family was completely out of fresh meat. Then he asked if I would consider trading half my deer for any other provisions I might need. I really didn't need an entire deer right now but I did need a lot of other things (especially toilet tissue) so I said that would suit me fine.

They offered to suspend the deer from a pole and carry it back to their camp where I could look through their provisions and a suitable trade could be established. I agreed and we were soon traveling back to their camp. I was surprised it was only about a half-mile on the other side of the hill where I had shot the deer. We stopped outside the entrance to a cave and a man came out. The first two men told him about their agreement with me and then he came forward and shook my hand and introduced himself. They he called out and two women and three young children came out of the cave. Everyone greeted me, shook my hand, and told me their name. They were all related by either blood or marriage. However, it was too many names and too many new faces for me to remember in that short period of time.

One of the men offered to butcher the deer and another man offered to take me inside the cave so I could look through their supplies and we could reach an agreement on what a fair trade would be. I selected two rolls of toilet tissue, one bar of deodorant bath soap, and one tube of toothpaste. The deal was settled.

I heard someone ask for a cup of water from the other side of the cave. I looked and saw a teenage boy lying on a cot. I asked if he was okay and I was told he had been sick for several days and he wasn't getting any better. One of the women asked me if I had any medical training and I said no. Then I remembered my Beck Blood Purifier. I showed it to the boy's mother and I let her read the information I had copied into this diary. That was all I let her read because this diary is still very personal to me.



She discussed the matter with her husband. They didn't have any distilled water but they did have some rain water which they put into a pressure cooker. I watched as the man took a short coil of 3/8-inch copper tubing and fitted it to the pressure relief opening in the lid of the pressure cooker. He then put the cooker over some red hot coals. And he bent the copper tubing so its other end was over a clean pot a short distance from the fire. When the water in the pressure cooker began to boil, the steam escaped through the pressure relief opening in the lid and traveled up to the top of the copper pipe. As it circulated down through the coils in the pipe, the steam cooled and became water again. The water gradually dripped out the end of the tubing into the clean pot. I made a casual remark that the setup looked like a moonshine still and several of the people laughed. One of the men said it was the same basic principle but instead of distilling alcohol, they were distilling water.

I have never been much of a drinker but I did enjoy a glass of beer or wine occasionally. So I asked if they had any moonshine they would care to sell. Everyone laughed. One of the ladies told me they had never made any moonshine or brewed any beer. However, every fall they had always fermented 3 or 4 gallons of wine using grapes from their small vineyard. That would last them an entire year. Unfortunately, when they evacuated their farms, they only brought their most basic necessities with them and that didn't include the little bit of wine they had left.

The boy's mother then asked me if I would help her attach the Beck unit to her son's wrist. I explained that I had never actually done it before. However, I had seen the many diagrams and drawings in the research report I had left behind. So I agreed to assist and we both followed the instructions that came with the Beck unit. We both felt the boy's left wrist and together we located the two pulse points on the inside of his wrist. I marked each artery with a thin black ink line on the inside of his wrist. Then she put a little salt into a small cup of water and mixed it up. She dipped each cloth covered electrode into the salt water and placed them parallel to the boy's arteries. Then I wrapped the Velcro strap around the boy's wrist to hold the small electrodes in position. I inserted a fresh 9-volt battery into the Beck unit. I then plugged the other end of the electrode wires into the Beck unit and turned it on. I told the boy to rotate the dial until he could feel a tingling in his wrist. He was impatient and rotated the dial too fast and yelled. He tried again more slowly and gradually found the correct setting for him. I told him to lie still and relax. After 30 minutes he should turn the unit off and remove it.

The boy's mother invited me to join them for lunch. One of the women prepared a delicious deer stew that was absolutely delightful. As we were eating and talking, I asked them if they intended to make jerky out of some of the deer meat and save it for the winter. They said they had been so short of fresh meat they hadn't considered that option before. They asked me how I normally made jerky so I told them.

"To make jerky," I said, "you slice the meat into strips in the same direction as the muscle. Each strip should be about 1 inch wide and 1/4 inch thick. The length isn't important. Be sure to trim off all the fat because the fat will not cure properly and it will spoil the meat.

"To support the meat while it is drying you can hang it over a clean straight pole. Or you can push a thin wire through one end of each piece of meat and then hang your string of meat between two trees. The most important thing is that each piece of meat should not touch itself or another strip of meat.

"There are two ways to dry the meat. First, you can dry the meat in direct sunlight. You need to protect the meat strips with cheesecloth or screen wire so the birds can't eat them and the flies can't lay eggs on them.

"However, the best method is to dry the meat strips over a fire. Dig a hole in the ground and start a fire in the hole. Don't use soft wood such as pine because the pitch will taint the meat. When the fire has burned down to hot coals, hang the meat between two stakes about two feet above the hot coals. The air should feel hot to your hand but it should not burn your hand. You don't want to cook the meat. You only want to dry it. You should add a few damp hardwood chips to the coals to make smoke and the smoke will put a protective coating on the meat. The heat and the smoke keeps the birds and the flies away.

"Periodically bend the meat strips to test them for dryness. Properly dried meat will crack or snap when it is bent. If it bends without cracking, it still contains too much moisture. If it crumbles then it too dry. It will still be edible but it will have lost some of its nutritional value.

"Store the dried meat strips in any container that will protect them from insects. Properly dried meat jerky is safe to eat for at least a year or more. It can be eaten dry but it usually tastes better if it is dipped in water for a short time just before you eat it. Or it can be added to a stew. And that's all I know about meat jerky."

We finished lunch and sat around chatting for a short time longer. These people were extremely polite and friendly. They invited me to spend a few days with them while they made a supply of Colloidal Silver and experimented with the Beck unit on the boy.

That night we had deer steaks. And I had a very pleasant night's rest.

Day Seventeen

I woke up early in the morning and I noticed one of the men wasn't inside the cave so I asked where he was. I was told it was his shift for guard duty and that he was somewhere outside. Later I learned the three men take turns standing guard for 2 or 3 hour shifts during the night. I volunteered to take a shift of guard duty but they declined my offer. I wasn't the least bit offended because I knew they were only being protective of their loved ones.

The three small children and I played a variety of games that day. We still had plenty of fresh deer meat and some of it had been sliced into jerky and it was drying nicely over a bed of red hot coals. It was a simple matter to keep an eye on the jerky while I played with the children. I grew very fond of those children. Late in the afternoon I made a decision. I opened my food duffel bag and counted out five small Tootsie Roll bars, five caramels, and five hard candy balls which I returned to my bag. Then I took the remainder of the candy and gave it to one of the women and told her it was a gift for the children. When the children saw the candy, they looked at me as if I was Santa Claus. The lady told the children they could each have one piece of candy after supper. From that moment on the only question the children had was, "How much longer before supper?"

After supper that evening the teenage boy said he was feeling better. He didn't feel well enough to get up and do his chores, but he said he was definitely improving and he hoped he would be up and around in a day or two. He was still using the Beck unit twice a day and drinking two tablespoons of C.S. four times a day.

Day Eighteen

I spent today hunting with the men. I wasn't lucky enough to shoot another deer but I did bring in some small game with my snares. The men were interested in learning my technique for setting snares so I showed them.

You need a six to eight-inch loop at the end of the snare and this loop must move freely or the snare won't close properly when it needs to. I always make a very small non-slip permanent loop in one end of the wire and then I thread the opposite end of the wire through this small non-slip loop. I pull the end of the wire through the small loop and I form a slip loop about eight inches in diameter.



Next I find a strong straight stick between 1 to 2 inches in diameter. I use my hatchet to cut two shorter sticks from the long stick. The first one I cut about 18-inches long and the second one I cut about six-inches long. Then I sharpen one end of the 18-inch stick. In the other end of that stick, I cut a notch about one-half inch deep and about one inch from the end. The notch looks like the right-half of the capital letter "M" with the level side towards the short end of the stick and the sloped side pointing towards the long end of the stick with the sharp end. I then cut one end of the shorter stick so it will fit into the notch in the longer stick. It should fit so the two sticks can't be pulled straight apart but they can easily be disengaged if you move them in any direction except directly against the two mating notches.

Then I find a spot to set my snare, such as a narrow game path, or between two logs, or between two rocks. I look for small animal tracks or where the natural obstructions of nature will force a small animal to travel precisely through a narrow area.

I carefully drive the long stick between 10 to 12 inches into the ground with the blunt end of my hatchet. Next I wrap my snare wire around the short six-inch stick about two inches above the notch. I then place the 8-inch wire loop at the narrow spot in the trail and support its lower end about two inches off the ground with two small twigs. Then I find a nearby sapling (or overhanging tree branch) that has some spring in it when I bend it over. I pull the sapling down and wrap the wire around the sapling and then I mate the notch in the short stick to the notch in the long stick. The spring in the sapling keeps the pressure on the short stick and the two sticks will remain together unless they are pulled from any direction other than straight up. When a small animal comes down the trail there is a good chance they will get their body or neck caught in the 8-inch loop as they are passing and pull the wire so the two notched sticks separate. The sapling then returns to its upright position pulling the noose tightly around the animal and holding it several feet off the ground. This keeps it from being eaten by small wild predators until I return several hours later to check the snare. And since I use wire the small animal can't chew or claw its way to freedom.

That's the way I set my snares most of the time. There are lots of other ways to set snares or dead falls, and each one is usually best suited for a specific type of terrain.

There is one more thing. You can't place a snare in one spot and then leave it there continuously. If you do catch something then the chances are pretty good that you have depleted the wildlife in that specific spot. If you don't catch anything it generally means you are not in a high-traffic area. Finally, the sapling gradually loses its spring the longer it remains bent over. Therefore, it is usually best to move your snares to a new location every two or three days. And that's pretty much all I know about snares.

When I returned to camp later that evening I discovered the teenage boy was moving around and he had done some of his chores. He said he still felt just a little weak so his Mom had him continue with his Beck treatments and C.S. dosages.

Day Nineteen

When I got up this morning, I began feeling really guilty about eating the food that belonged to these people. I made a decision. I opened my food duffel bag and I set aside one pound of white rice, one pound of wheat berries, one pound of dry beans, one pound of dry corn, one pound of instant potatoes, four packages of dry gravy mix, two packages of dry chili mix, five tea bags, a little sugar, a half-pound of salt, and some peppercorns. I put those items, and the small amount of candy I had previously reserved, into my waist pack as emergency food rations so I would have something to live on when I left this group of "cave" people and continued my journey towards home. I didn't know how much longer I would stay with them, but I wanted to be ready when I felt it was time to move on. I then gave my duffel bag with the rest of my food to one of the ladies and told her to add it to the group's food supplies.

Day Twenty

I woke up and got ready to go hunting as I normally do. One of the men told me they wouldn't be hunting today because it was Sunday. They were going to have worship services and I was welcome to join them. I didn't want to offend anyone so I sat through about two hours of Bible reading and discussion. Later that afternoon one of the men engaged me in conversation and he tried to tell me about God and Jesus but I

politely told him I had my own personal belief in God and I didn't feel the need for organized religion at this particular time in my life. He was very gracious and he accepted my answer without any hard feelings. I congratulated myself for getting out of that sticky situation without offending anyone.

Day Twenty-Two

Shortly after I woke up this morning one of the men asked to speak with me in private. As politely as he could he asked me if I had any spare clothes besides the spare socks I washed every night. I told him no. He said that was what he suspected and then he handed me a decent looking shirt, a pair of used blue jeans, and some underwear. The underwear was new and still inside its plastic wrapper. He said they were a few of his extra clothes and he would like for me to have them. I offered to pay for them but he refused.

Then he very casually asked me how long it had been since I had a bath. I knew what he was getting at and I smiled. I wasn't offended because I knew I smelled a little rank. I told him that I thought right now would be a good time for a bath. I got my new bar of deodorant soap, my bath towel, my recently acquired extra set of clothes, and I made my way to a private spot near the creek. I scrubbed my old clothes down really good and I hung them on the bushes to dry. Then I took a much needed bath. I put on my extra set of clothes and they fit reasonably well. I then collected my wet clothes and made my way back to the cave. I hung my wet clothes on some bushes so they would dry in the sun. I was really beginning to enjoy life again.

David's War Diary - Chapter Six

Day Twenty-Four

Nothing important has happened since my last entry. Since I have not been traveling during the day, I have been able to bring in enough meat each day to feed myself and at least one or two other people. But I have not shot another deer since the one I bagged when I first met these "cave" people. The other men in the group had done better. Over the past few days they had shot two more deer.

This morning I went hunting alone at dawn and I returned empty handed. I hoped I would have better luck in the late afternoon. I decided to hunt to the southeast for a change. I walked about a mile and found a good spot to sit where I was completely hidden but where I had a clear field of view down an old dirt road in both directions. A small creek ran close against the opposite side of the road at this point, and I suspected this would be a natural watering spot for wild animals.

I had been sitting quietly for almost an hour when I saw someone walking down the road. I remained absolutely still and I watched as a young woman about my age walked past me with a small bucket in her hand. She stopped at the point where the creek and the road were only a foot or two apart and then she lowered her bucket down into the water. When her bucket was full she started back down the road in the direction she had come from. Before she was out of sight I saw her turn into the woods. I waited a minute or two and then I traveled quickly but quietly through the woods adjacent to the road. I stopped across the road from where I saw her enter the woods. It took me a few minutes but I eventually saw



movement about 100 feet into the woods. I cautiously and very quietly made my way to a position near her camp so I could observe what was happening.

The woman was alone. There was only one backpack and one blanket near the campfire and I figured it was hers. She had balanced her bucket of water on three flat rocks over some red hot coals. She was boiling water. She just sat there looking at the water waiting for it to boil. Her back was facing me so I couldn't see her face. Then she removed her cap and her straight black hair fell to the top of her shoulders. It was the "shadow" woman I had seen in the street a couple of weeks ago. Then she started talking to herself. Instantly I recognized that voice. It was also my mysterious "Cinderella." I was both delighted and angry at the same time. I was delighted to have found her. But I was angry that she had not given me a chance to prove that I was a decent person.

I made a decision. I said, "Freeze."

The woods never seemed so quiet as they did at that instant. I saw her flinch and then she remained perfectly still.

I said, "Slowly put your hands on top of your head."

She complied.

Then I said, "I am not going to hurt you if you follow my instructions. Don't make any sudden movements. Do you understand?"

In the weakest voice I have ever heard, she squeaked, "Yes."

Then I asked, "If you have any food to sell, I can pay with silver. Do you have any food to sell?"

I saw her shudder. A moment later she said, "No."

For some reason, I asked another question, "Do you have any food at all?"

"No."

When she said no, I could feel the hunger in her voice. So I made another decision and said, "Please don't be afraid. I'm not going to shoot you. May I please enter your camp?"

She said, "Yes."

I walked around her campfire and sat down facing her. I said, "I have my supper in my waist pack. Would you care to share it with me?"

A small tear began to form in her right eye and she quickly turned her head to the side so she could wipe it away. She replied, "That would be very kind of you and I accept."

I removed some rice, several strips of dried deer meat, and a tea bag and put them on the rock beside the fire. I watched as she transferred some of the boiling water to a smaller cook pot and placed the rice in it to cook. We had to wait about 20 minutes for the rice to cook, so we talked.

Her name was Lisa. I told her my name was David. I told her about my Mom and Dad and my two older brothers. She told me about her Mom and Dad and her married sister. And then we ate supper. I have never enjoyed a meal so much in my entire life.

It had gotten too dark for me to travel, so I asked her if it was okay if I slept on the opposite side of her campfire for the night. She said that would be fine.

I then made another decision. I told her I had to return to my base camp in the morning and that I had plenty of food at my base camp. I then removed my one week's supply of emergency food from my waist pack and I put it all on top of her belongings on her side of the fire. I told her there were no strings attached and that I was just trying to practice some silly rule I had heard when I was a child about doing to others what you would like to have them do to you. She smiled but didn't respond.

I curled up beside the fire and I tossed and turned until almost dawn before I finally drifted off to sleep. I woke up several hours later. I was alone. But I found two silver dollars on top of my belongings near the fire. Lisa had left the money to pay for the one week's supply of food I had given her. I put the two silver dollars in my pocket.

I gathered my belongings and made my way back to the cave and the small group of people who had become my friends. I missed Lisa. I really didn't know her but I still missed her. Maybe our paths would cross again. And maybe they wouldn't. Only time would tell.

David's War Diary - Chapter Seven

Day Twenty-Six

While we were all eating lunch today it occurred to me that I had never been served any wild food since I had joined up with these "cave" people. I asked them about it. One of the men reminded me that they were all farmers. Each year they would grow one or two cash crops to sell, but they also had a vegetable garden that produced everything they needed for an entire year. During the summer and early fall, they ate mostly fresh vegetables. And during the winter and early spring, they ate what they had canned from the previous season. They had always been very fortunate and food had not been a problem for them.

I said that none of us knew how long the war was going to last and if they were interested I would tell them which wild foods I had been surviving on for the past few months. That got everyone's attention. Every the small children stopped talking and started listening to me.

I walked over to the nearest evergreen tree and picked a small handful of thin green needles. I returned to the group and I asked everyone to take one. When everyone had a fresh green pine needle, I took mine and put it in my mouth and chewed it up and swallowed it. Everyone followed my example. I was fortunate in my selection because these particular pine needles had a neutral taste. Depending on the time of year and the type of evergreen tree, the needles sometimes taste a little bitter. I explained that the needles were extremely low in calories but they were the best source of fresh vitamin C in nature. The needles could be eaten raw as we had just done, or diced and added to a stew, or diced and boiled in some water to make a herbal tea. Any type of thin evergreen needle is edible.

Then I walked a short ways into the woods and returned with a pine cone. I asked everyone to get close enough so they could see better. They all crowded around me. Then I started breaking the scales off the

pine cone and I showed them the two small winged seeds that were at the base of each scale. I explained that the seeds could be eaten raw or they could be roasted. I stressed the fact that this was a very important food source because of its availability and extremely high nutritional value.

Then I walked a short distance to an oak tree and picked a green acorn off the ground. They had just started to fall from the tree and they hadn't turned brown yet. I returned to the camp and told everyone we were very lucky. White oak trees produce acorns every year and a heavy crop every three years. All acorns contain tannic acid and they will make you sick if you try to eat them raw. To determine what type of acorn you have, crack the outer shell of one acorn, and then split the inner nutmeat in half. If the inner nutmeat is white, then you probably have a white oak acorn which is the most common oak tree in the United States. White oak acorns also have a very low tannic acid level and a sweet nutlike taste.



You begin by removing and discarding the cap of the acorn. Then dry the acorns for two or three days in direct sunlight. Then store the acorns in their shell until you are ready to eat them. If you crack the outer shell of the acorn, the inner nutmeat kernel will begin to dry out very fast.

When you are ready to eat your acorns, crack the thin outer shell and remove the inner nutmeat kernel. Start two pots of water boiling. When the water in the first pot begins to boil, drop your acorn nutmeats into the pot and immediately remove the pot from the heat. Wait 30 minutes. Pour out the dark water and then transfer the wet nutmeats to the second pot of fresh boiling water. Immediately remove the second pot from the heat. Put fresh water in the first pot and start the first pot boiling again. Wait 30 minutes. Pour the dark water out of the second pot. Taste one of the nutmeats. If there is no bitter taste, you may stop boiling. However, if the nutmeats still contain some bitterness, then boil them a third time in some fresh water. If necessary, boil them a fourth time. When you are finished boiling, spread your damp nutmeats onto a tray or board and allow them to dry in the sun. While they are drying you will need to put some screen wire over them or the squirrels will steal them. After they are dry you can eat them the same way you do nuts, or you can grind them into meal and use them in stews, or in bread recipes in place of 1/4 the flour. One handful of dried acorns has the nutritional value of approximately one pound of hamburger. Before the war began I learned everything I know about acorns from one of my visits to Grandpappy's Information Web Site at:

<http://www.grandpappy.info/racorns.htm>

I paused and thought for a minute. Several days ago I had seen a dandelion plant not too far from where we were camped. When I saw it I had been surprised that no one in the group had harvested it. When I am traveling I always stay on the alert for these small plants but, like most things, when you are searching for them you rarely see them. But when you aren't looking for them, they appear to be everywhere.

I went and dug up the entire dandelion plant and brought it back to the camp. I picked off each of the small yellow flowers with its stem. I explained that the flowers and stems could be eaten raw or they could be cooked. Next I removed the leaves. I remarked that, in my opinion, they were too bitter to be eaten raw so I always removed the tough center vein from each leaf and then boiled them. The only thing left was the roots. After they have been washed you can prepare them in one of two ways. You can boil them and eat them. They have a pleasant taste that way. Or you can dry them in the sun like meat jerky. After they are dry you can crush them and use them as a coffee substitute.

Finally, all four of the major parts of the dandelion plant contain vitamins and they help to improve the blood circulation throughout your entire body. One of the ladies interrupted me at this point and said she

was thrilled to be learning everything I was sharing with them but she was having trouble keeping it all straight in her head. Then she asked if I would be kind enough to write everything down for them when I finished. I agreed.

I hadn't seen any clover when I had gone hunting in the vicinity of their camp so I couldn't do a proper show and tell. All I could do was tell. The leaves of the clover plant can be eaten raw or boiled. The tiny white flowers can be boiled to make a herbal tea. Finally, the roots can be scraped, washed, and then boiled and eaten.

When you first begin to add wild plants to your meals, you need to start small and give your digestive system a chance to become acquainted with the new foods. You can then gradually increase the amount of wild plants you consume each day. But if you overdo it at first, you will probably get sick and not be able to digest that particular food for a long time. It is also better to eat a variety of wild foods instead of too much of one single plant.

Then I looked right at the three small children and I asked them if they had seen the Disney cartoon "The Lion King?" They all giggled and said yes and one of the boys said he had it on video tape at home. Then I asked them if they remembered how Timon and Pumbaa had taught the young lion cub their "philosophy" on how to survive on delectable forest bugs? They all giggled again and said yes. Well, it is also possible for people to eat bugs but you will probably have the same initial reaction the lion cub did. Yuck!

Then I told the group that ants, earthworms, grubs, and slugs were all edible. After you killed them you could eat them raw but they were much easier to swallow if you diced them up and added them to a stew. The one insect that requires special attention is the grasshopper. After you kill it, remove all its legs. The legs have tiny barbs that can catch in your throat if you try to swallow them. And you should never eat a grasshopper raw. They frequently contain tiny parasites. Boil the grasshoppers in water and then they will be safe to eat. Finally, never, never, never eat ticks, flies, mosquitoes, spiders, or centipedes.

And that was the end of my "show and tell" for the day. One of the ladies handed me a note pad and a pencil and I wrote down everything I had just told them so they could keep it for future reference.

Day Twenty-Eight

During supper I told the group I felt it was time for me to be moving on. I still had several hundred miles to cover before I reached home. And if I stayed any longer, I might not make it home before the really bad winter weather arrived. I told them I would be saying good-bye shortly after sunrise in the morning.

Day Twenty-Nine

When I woke up this morning I packed my stuff in my backpack, I put on my equipment belt and pistol, and I stopped outside the cave because everyone was waiting to say good-bye to me. The teenage boy and the three men shook my hand and the two ladies gave me a hug. The three small children each gave me a kiss.

Then one of the ladies said the group had a small parting gift for me. One of the men handed me my old duffel bag. But it was no longer empty. He said it contained enough food for a few weeks on the road. I objected but they assured me they still had enough food to last them through the winter. And with the deer jerky they had been making, they would even have meat to eat. I asked them how that was possible. And

they reminded me that they were just simple farmers. They always had at least eighteen months of food stored up for hard times. When the war disrupted their lives, they had just transferred all their food to several different "stashes" in the woods nearby.

The mother of the teenage boy then gave me an eight-ounce bottle of Colloidal Silver. She said they had about three gallons made and stored in the dark inside the cave. She had considered giving me a larger bottle, but she knew how much water weighed and she thought eight-ounces wouldn't be too much to carry on an extended hike. She was right and I sincerely thanked her.

And then one of the men handed me a winter coat. He said it was his extra coat. And he showed me his "best" coat so I would believe him and accept the gift. When the weather started getting really cold in a few weeks, that coat could save my life. I accepted the coat and offered to leave my Beck unit in return. He said no, the coat wasn't for sell. It was a gift. Just a little something for me to remember them by.

I said good-bye to everyone and continued my journey towards the southeast. As I was walking I thought about all the nice parting gifts those people had given me. And I realized that once again I had visible evidence that "What goes around comes around."

David's War Diary - Chapter Eight

Day Thirty-One

I was traveling southeast along a dirt road through a heavily wooded area. I was alert and carefully scanning the road ahead for any potential dangers. I was carrying my hunting rifle in my hand for protection.



Without any advance warning, I heard a harsh masculine voice say, "Freeze." I did.

Then a masculine voice from the woods on the other side of the road said, "Drop your rifle or die." I instantly dropped my rifle to the road.

Then the first voice said, "Drop your duffel bag, too." I let it go.

Then the second voice said, "Remove your pistol with your left hand and drop it on the road." I obeyed.

Then the first voice said, "Take six steps straight ahead and then knell down on your knees." I did as I was told.

I heard movement behind me and I felt sick to my stomach. I wanted to throw up but I forced myself not to. All my instincts told me I was going to die. I didn't want to die. Lord, I didn't want to die. I tried to think of some plan of escape but nothing occurred to me. I was terrified and I couldn't think clearly. The only thought that kept running through my mind was that I didn't want to die.

One of the men told me to remove my backpack and put it on the road. I obeyed. Then I was told to remove my equipment belt and I did. Then one of the men told me to put my hands on my head. I did.

Then one of the men started laughing. The other man began laughing too. Tears were beginning to form in my eyes. I knew I was going to die. I didn't want to die.

Then I heard a shot. It sounded as if it came from a long ways off. I heard a heavy "thud" on the ground behind me about the same time that I heard a second shot. Another heavy "thud." Instinct took over and I rolled as quickly as I could to the side of the road and then I made a quick dash for the safety of the woods. I ran a short ways and hid so I could see what would happen back on the road so I could plan my next move accordingly. I could see both men lying face down in the road. Neither man was moving but I didn't know if they were dead or only faking it.

I waited about 15 minutes but no one appeared on the road and the two men didn't move. I wanted my possessions back. My chances of surviving without them were extremely slim. I looked around and found a short, thick branch on the ground. It wasn't much of a weapon but it was better than my fists. Then I crept as quietly as I could back to the side of the road but a little ahead of where the two men were lying face down in the dirt. I peeked down the road in the direction I had heard the shots come from but I saw no movement of any kind. I waited another 10 minutes and then I made a decision. If the unknown person or persons had wanted me dead, they could have waited for those two thugs to shoot me and then they could have shot the two men. But they didn't do that. For some reason, they had spared my life.

I was desperate to get my stuff back so I made a rash decision. I decided a quick death was better than a slow painful death without my stuff. I stepped boldly into the road and made my way towards the two bodies. I held my stick over my head so I could strike either man if he moved. Neither did. I knew my weapons were loaded and in good condition so I bent down and picked up my 45 pistol. I loaded a bullet into the chamber of my 45 and then I carefully approached the nearest body. A small hole was in the upper part of his back behind his heart. The amount of blood in the dirt surrounding his body told me this man had almost no chance of being alive. I then focused on the second body. The bullet had hit him in the center of his back. The small size of the entry hole was nothing in comparison to the amount of blood on the ground. He wasn't breathing as far as I could tell. I took a chance and kicked him in the ribs. He didn't move. I kicked him again just to be sure. He still didn't move. I didn't want to make any unnecessary noise so I resisted my very strong desire to shoot each man. Instead I transferred my pistol to my left hand and I hit each man in the head as hard as I could with my stick. Neither man moved. I then rolled each man over onto his back. The size of the bullet exit wound on the front of each man finally convinced me they were dead.

I went through their pockets but found nothing of value. One of the men was carrying a semi-automatic 22 rifle. The other man was carrying a fully-automatic military rifle in 7.62 caliber. He had a full clip of 20 bullets. But that was all the bullets he had. They probably had more stuff back at their camp but I wasn't going to hang around and search for it. I decided to take the military rifle. I dragged the two bodies about 50-feet into the woods and covered them with some branches and leaves. Then I kicked some dirt over the blood stains in the road. I figured these two men probably operated alone, but I didn't know for sure. If these men had been part of a larger gang then I didn't want to make it too easy for their friends to find them.



I picked up my stuff and moved off into the woods. I'd had enough road travel for one day. I traveled about two miles into the woods and then I made camp. It was around mid-day but I was physically and

mentally exhausted and I couldn't go any further. I ate lunch and promptly fell asleep. I woke up but it was dark, so I went back to sleep again.

Day Thirty-Two

I woke up starving. I rarely eat breakfast but today I made an exception. Then I continued my journey towards the southeast.

David's War Diary - Chapter Nine

Day Thirty-Three

I was traveling southeast when I heard a woman scream in the distance behind me. I quickly turned around and I saw some motion in the woods about 200 yards in the direction I had just come from.

Curiosity got the better of me and I decided to investigate. I carefully circled around so I could approach from the west. I chose that direction because there was a nice hill to the west. I wanted to approach by coming down that hill so I could have the best possible field of view and use whatever tactical advantage the higher ground might give me.

When I got close enough I saw a woman lying on the ground. I couldn't see her face but I recognized her clothes. It was Lisa.

I threw caution to the wind and I ran to where she was. I fell to my knees beside her and she looked up at me. I think she recognized me but I wasn't sure. All she said was, "Bitten by a spider. Can't stay awake." She lifted her left hand and said, "It hurts so bad." And then her hand fell to the ground and she passed out.

I don't know how it is possible but I could feel her pain. I gently picked up her left hand and examined it. There was a red swollen area on the back of her hand. It was puffy and ugly looking. I wasn't sure what I should do and I was afraid if I did the wrong thing it would make matters worse. So I yanked off my backpack and quickly removed my first aid book. It contained emergency first aid instructions and I read what it said about spider bites. As I was reading, Lisa started having trouble breathing and she began sweating heavily.

I examined the bite again. I didn't see any kind of stinger in the bite. I didn't have an ice pack to put on the bite so I treated her for shock. I removed her backpack so she could lie flat on the ground. I removed her equipment belt and put it with her backpack. I then removed my blanket from my backpack and folded it in half and put it beside her. I then rolled her onto my blanket so she wouldn't be in direct contact with the earth.

I needed another blanket to cover her with. I opened her backpack and found one on top of all her stuff. I covered her with her blanket.



And then I remembered that research report I had read. In one of the appendixes it had listed some research done by other people and it had mentioned something about neutralizing snake venom. I knew snake venom and spider bites weren't the same thing but in my little first aid book they were listed together so I decided they might be similar in some way. I couldn't remember if the reference in the appendix of that research report was referring to the Beck unit or the Colloidal Silver. So I decided to experiment with both of them.

I got my Beck unit from my pack. I had trouble finding her pulse. It was very weak. But I was finally able to locate both her wrist arteries and I marked them with my black pen. Then I poured a little water into my cup, added a little salt, stirred it up, and dipped the cloth covered electrodes into the solution. Then I put the electrodes on my own wrist and experimented with the dial. Ouch. I tried again more slowly. I could turn it almost all the way before it became painful. I didn't know how it would feel to her but I put it on her wrist anyway. Then I very slowly rotated the dial. As the dial came close to its end I saw her thumb quiver and I knew I had gone too far. I backed the dial up a little and left it there. Then I got my eight-ounce bottle of Colloidal Silver and poured a little into my spoon. I opened her mouth and let a little trickle onto her tongue. I wanted the C.S. to be absorbed into her blood stream through her mouth. Therefore I was careful not to put very much into her mouth so she wouldn't feel the need to swallow right away. It took me about 15 minutes but I eventually got about two tablespoons of C.S. into her. I waited another 15 minutes and then I removed the Beck unit from her wrist.

She didn't wake up. And she was still having trouble breathing. And her hand still looked really bad. I felt like a failure.

And the sky was starting to get dark with rain clouds. Just what I needed at a time like this.

I looked around and saw a level spot between several pine trees that were only a few feet apart. I got my tarp and my rope and I made a lean-to shelter between the trees. I fixed it so it would slope to the rear and a little to one side. Later when it started raining I would wait a few minutes for the rain to clear the air and then I would put my six-quart pot where most of the rain was running off the tarp so I could catch the rain water. Then I moved Lisa under the tarp shelter. I quickly gathered some dead branches that had fallen out of the trees but had been caught in the shrubbery. I knew they would be extremely dry and would burn well. I put everything in place to build a fire but I didn't light it yet.



I waited. Lisa's face began to look paler to me. I didn't know if it was the gradual darkening of the sky, or my imagination, or if she was really getting sicker. I know I felt sicker just looking at her. I felt so helpless.

Then she vomited. I turned her onto her side as quickly as I could but it was too late. Her blanket was covered with it. Why does everything always have to go wrong at the same time?

I made sure her mouth was clean and I rinsed it out the best I could with some water from her canteen. Then I wiped off her face. And I wiped off the small amount of vomit that was on her clothes. Fortunately, most of it was on her blanket. And then the rain started.

Oh well, I thought. At least I can use the rain to rinse this mess off her blanket. I used the edge of my knife blade to scrape as much of the stuff off her blanket as I could. Then I secured her blanket between the trees so the rain would wash it down good.

Lisa was shivering when I got back under the tarp shelter. You remember what I said about my not objecting to a cuss word every now and then when the circumstances are just right. Well, in my opinion, the circumstances were just right.

I untied my winter coat from the side of my backpack and covered her with it.

Every three hours I very slowly gave her two more tablespoons of C.S. And every six hours I strapped the Beck machine to her wrist for 30 minutes. The rest of the time I held her head in my lap and kept a damp cloth on her forehead to help reduce her fever. The rain stopped sometime during the night.

Day Thirty-Four

Lisa is still asleep. I got a little sleep during the night but not very much. I'm still not sure what I should do.

I made a decision. She might have something among her belongings that could save her life. I felt like a jerk for going through her stuff without her permission, but I kept telling myself that it was for a good cause. I went through her waist pack first and found nothing unusual.

Then I examined her backpack. She had a nice selection of camping gear inside her pack. And she had a few things I didn't have. She had a small makeup case that contained a little makeup and a small mirror. She had a tube of lipstick. They didn't weigh much but I couldn't understand why you would carry something like that for hundreds of miles on your back. At that instant it dawned on me that I would never truly understand women.

She also had a wallet with a few family pictures. In one picture she was standing between an older couple. Her Mom and Dad. And in one picture she was beside a slightly taller lady and a man. Her married older sister and her husband. A tear began rolling down my cheek. I envied her. She had pictures of her family. When I lived at home before the war began I had access to hundreds of family pictures that I could have picked from. All I had to do was ask. But I never asked for any family pictures. Now I deeply regret not having pictures of my parents and my two older brothers. Pictures are so small and they don't weigh anything. And they can remind you of who you really are and that there are people in the world who truly love you. My face was covered with tears. This would never do. I put her wallet away and continued looking through her stuff.

My future wife was rich. I can call her that now because I found her stash of silver coins. She still had five old silver dollars, twenty silver half-dollars, and sixteen silver quarters. I would like to know how she had the foresight to accumulate real money before the war began. No one will accept paper money anymore. It's just paper. Everyone realizes that nowadays. And our coins have been made out of scrap metal since 1964. Shortly after the war began, the only money people would accept had to contain either silver or gold.

I continued my search. I found a nice tarp in the bottom of her pack and I used it to make a floor in our shelter. The tarp was long enough so I could also use its two ends to close up two of the sides of our

shelter so the wind wouldn't blow directly on her. Now only the front of our shelter was open to the great outdoors.

I also found a small Gideon's Bible. Not a complete Bible. Just the New Testament. And I found a sheet of paper that contained a few Christian Hymns and another page with scripture verses printed on it. I put those items back into the ziplock bag in which I had found them.

I then put everything back into her pack but I left her extra clothing on top of her pack, just in case. The only thing I couldn't identify was a small bottle of pills. It was just an ordinary bottle without any label. And there was nothing printed on the pills except the letter "J" and that didn't tell me anything. So I left the bottle of pills on top of her things just in case they were some type of medication she had to have to stay alive. There was no way for me to know unless she woke up so I could ask her.

Then it occurred to me that she might be wearing some type of "medication" bracelet or necklace. So I looked carefully at her neck but she had no jewelry around her neck. Then I looked at both her wrists but all she wore was a wrist watch. I also looked at her ankles but she wasn't wearing any type of bracelet there either. Then it occurred to me to go through her pockets. All I found was a butane lighter and a Swiss army knife. The Swiss army knife was very compact and it was much nicer than the multi-tool I had inherited in the backpack I had found. I put both items inside her waist pack so she would be more comfortable as she slept.

I was afraid she would start to dehydrate so I slowly poured a cup of water into her mouth one teaspoon at a time. About two hours later, I gave her some more water. And then I smelled that smell. You know what I mean. Lisa had wet her pants.

My next decision took me about 30 minutes to make. I knew I would feel very uncomfortable if I changed her jeans and underwear while she was asleep. And yet I was really very excited about the prospect. I trying to be honest about how I felt. My greatest fear was that she would wake up while I was pulling her pants off. I can't explain to you why, but that was not the first thing I wanted her to see when she woke up. And I was scared she would wake up at precisely that moment. Just my luck.

I finally realized I had no choice but to remove her wet clothing. She might get too cold down there and end up a lot sicker than she already was.

The first thing I did was put her extra pair of jeans and a clean pair of her underwear where I could reach them quickly so she would be undressed for the shortest amount of time.

Then I began by unlacing her boots. I pulled them off her feet. She was wearing gray socks. They might have been white when they were new but they were gray now. They looked clean. They were just gray.

Then I removed her waist belt. And then I unzipped the front of her jeans. If you are a man then you know what was happening to me at that moment and there was nothing I could do about it.

I had planned to remove her jeans and then her underwear. But it didn't work out that way. Everything was wet and it all stuck together and everything came off at the same time. I reached for her dry underwear and then I realized she smelled like urine. Why didn't I think of that ahead of time? I removed the damp cloth from her forehead and I wiped her down as best as I could.

Then I put her underwear on. I reached for her jeans but then it occurred to me that she might not wake up right away. If she continued to sleep she would probably have another accident at least once or twice a day. She didn't have enough clean jeans for that. She had six pair of clean underwear and I could rinse those out and hang them in the sun to dry so she would always have clean underwear. So I put her clean jeans back on top of her backpack.

Then I retrieved her blanket from the trees. The rain had rinsed most of the foul smell out of it and the sun had dried it very nicely. I covered her with her blanket. I made sure the unpleasant end of the blanket was at her feet. When she eventually woke up I would have to explain why she wasn't wearing her jeans and I prayed she would believe me.

The day passed. I crushed one of my aspirin tablets and dissolved it in a cup of water. Each time I gave her a cup of drinking water it contained one of my aspirins. I administered C.S. and I attached the Beck unit to her wrists at regular intervals. I alternated wrists just like it said to do in the instructions. I also kept a damp cloth on her forehead to help reduce her fever. Her breathing became more regular but nothing else changed. The swelling on her hand was going down just a little bit. At least I think it was. It may just be wishful thinking on my part.

David's War Diary - Chapter Ten

Day Thirty-Five

Another hard night for both of us. Lisa tossed and turned most of the night. I held her head in my lap and kept a damp cloth on her forehead hoping it would bring her fever down. I dozed off several times during the night but I really couldn't sleep. I was too worried about Lisa. I felt like I was losing her but I didn't know what else to do.

Then I thought about that small Gideon Bible in her backpack. Maybe if I got that out and read a little I might discover some way to pray more effectively so God would heal her. I had always believed in God. I just didn't have much confidence in organized religions.

I found her Bible and the page of hymns and the page of scripture verses. I really didn't want to invest the time it would take to read that little Bible, so I decided to read the single page of scripture verses. Each scripture verse was followed by a short comment that explained what the verse meant and I hoped that would help me figure it out a lot quicker. Maybe there would be something on that page that would tell me how to be more successful at getting God's attention.



I read the page. And then I read it again. And I read it a third time. And then I prayed. Lisa's condition didn't change one bit. She was still asleep, she still had a fever, and the place on the back of her hand was still red and swollen.

But something inside me had changed. I knew in my heart that Lisa was going to get well. I still didn't know when she was going to wake up. I just knew beyond any doubt that she was going to live.

No, God didn't speak to me. And I didn't hear voices of any kind. All I know is that I was praying as hard as I could and I was extremely worried about whether Lisa was going to live or die. And suddenly I wasn't

the least bit worried anymore. I somehow knew she was going to live. I had no idea prayer was like that. I am copying that page of scripture verses here into my diary so you will have access to them in the event you ever feel the need to get God's attention.

***** Begin Copy *****

Let's take a look at few special verses from the New King James Version of the Bible.

THE SECRET MYSTERY

"To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God;" Mark 4:11

Comment: The answer to a great mystery will soon be revealed to you.

SPIRITUAL TRUTH or FOOLISHNESS

"These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Corinthians 2:13-14

Comment: The things you are about to learn are common knowledge among Christians. Once they have been explained to you, you will understand the most important truth about life and death. And you will probably want to share your new knowledge with others. But the Bible tells us that some people do not have the ability to understand these truths, because they are spiritual truths. To some people these spiritual truths will appear as foolishness.

Let's look now at the first of these spiritual truths.

THE ONE AND ONLY TRUE GOD

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1

Comment: God was alive in the beginning. He is alive now. And the Bible also tells us that God will live forever.

THE SON OF GOD

"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us," John 1:14

"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11

Comment: One day, about 2000 years ago, God visited this earth in human form. He was born as the baby Jesus in the town of Bethlehem (the city of David).

THE FATHER AND THE SON

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me." John 14:1

"I and My Father are one." John 10:30

Comment: In the above two verses, Jesus tells us that He and God are the same. God (the Father) stayed in heaven, while Jesus (the Son) visited the earth to tell us about the Father.

THE PROMISE OF ETERNAL LIFE

"Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed - in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised" 1 Corinthians 15:51-52

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26

Comment: In the first verse above, sleep refers to death. And the change refers to the gift of a new heavenly body that will never die. In the second verse above, Jesus said that anyone who believes in Him will not die but will live forever. And then Jesus asked this question, "Do you believe this?"

THE PENALTY OF SIN

"if you do not believe that I am He, you shall die in your sins." John 8:24

"For there is not a just man on earth who does good And does not sin." Ecclesiastes 7:20

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," Romans 3:23

"For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10

"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell." Matthew 10:28

"For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matthew 16:26

Comment: The Bible clearly tells us that no one can live their entire life without committing some type of sin. (If the truth were known, all of us commit many different sins over the course of our lives.) However, it only takes one sin to make us a sinner. And the penalty for sin is the condemnation of our eternal soul. The Bible mentions Hell more often than it does Heaven. Hell is a real place where condemned souls spend eternity in agony. The Bible also asks this question: "What can you offer God to redeem your soul from an eternity in hell?"

THE GIFT OF GOD

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

Comment: God has provided a way for us to avoid Hell so we can spend eternity in Heaven. That way is through faith in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

FORGIVENESS OF SIN

"There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.'" Luke 23:32-34

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once," 1 Corinthians 15:3-6

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." Romans 5:8-9

"for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul." Leviticus 17:11

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16

Comment: Christ was crucified and shed His life's blood on the cross at Calvary. God accepted the death of His only Son as full payment for your sins and mine. Three days later, Jesus returned from the dead and took possession of His dead body. The grave could not hold Him. The grave won't be able to hold us either, if we believe that Jesus Christ is God's only Son, and that He died that we might have eternal life in Heaven.

ACCEPTING JESUS CHRIST INTO YOUR LIFE

"if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Romans 10:9-10

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." Acts 16:31

Comment: How do you become a Christian? It's easy. Just believe that Jesus is the Son of God. And then tell someone, anyone, that you believe that Jesus Christ is God's only Son, that He died on the cross in payment for your sins, and that He rose from the dead and is in Heaven right now waiting on you. Can you do that? If you can, then you will spend eternity in Heaven instead of Hell.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand,. Repent, and believe in the gospel." Mark 1:15

"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Corinthians 6:2

Comment: When should you become a Christian? Today. Right now. Don't put it off another minute. Unlock the doors to heaven with the only key that will fit: faith in Jesus Christ, the one and only Son of the Living God.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

God only grants forgiveness to sinners. It doesn't matter what you have done in the past, God will forgive you (unless you have accepted the mark of the beast on your right hand during the end times). You don't

have to clean up your life to become a Christian. I am a Christian and I still make mistakes, and I still occasionally yield to sin. But God forgives me and He will forgive you too. But you must take the next step. God has already taken a giant step toward you. He allowed His only Son to die on the Cross to pay for all of your sins: your past sins, your current sins, and all the sins you will commit after you become a Christian. But you have to accept God's forgiveness by believing in His Son. Please do it now. We don't know the day of our death and tomorrow may be one day too late.

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Lisa's condition was not improving. I spent all my time thinking about it and it finally occurred to me that she hadn't eaten since she had been bitten by that spider. But how could I get some food down her? My biggest fear was that she would strangle on it in her sleep. My only option was to boil some deer jerky in some water and gradually put the weak soup into her mouth.

Night fell. And Lisa was still sleeping. Sometime during the night I fell asleep with her head in my lap and my back against one of the pine trees.

David's War Diary - Chapter Eleven

Day Thirty-Six

I woke up. Lisa was staring up at me. She wasn't moving. She was just looking at me. I tried to speak but my words choked in my throat. I coughed and then I asked, "How long have you been awake?"

"I don't know," she said. "A few minutes. I have to use the bathroom really bad but I didn't want to wake you. You look awful. Do you feel okay?"

I laughed. I said I felt magnificent. Then I told her I would face the tree while she used the bathroom and put her jeans on. She didn't reply. She just waited for me to face the tree and then she got up and moved a short distance into the woods. A few minutes later she came back and told me I could turn around. She was wearing her jeans.

She said, "I remember reaching out to move a branch out of my path. I was looking at the ground to see where I should put my feet when I felt something on my hand. I looked up and that's when I saw a huge ugly spider on my hand. It bit me. I remember screaming. And I remember getting sick very quickly. I really don't know what happened after that. Please tell me."

I told her everything. I explained why I went through her stuff and why she didn't have her jeans on when she woke up. Then I asked her about the little pills with the "J" on them.

"Those are prescription antibiotics. I had a prescription refilled so I would have some medicine in case of an emergency. I put them into that unmarked bottle so no one would know what they were. In light of what just transpired, I don't suppose that was very intelligent, was it?"

I didn't answer.

Then she said, "You saved my life. Thank you. I think I owe you a complete explanation. The first time I saw you was the day before I bought some food from you at gun point. I was resting a short distance from the dirt road I had been following when I saw you coming down the road. I hid myself and waited. You were traveling southeast and that was the same direction I was headed, so I waited until you passed and then I quietly fell in behind you on the road. You were always completely focused on the area directly in front of you and to each side of you and you never looked behind you. You were relatively easy to follow. I was completely out of food so I was more or less forced to make contact with you to see if you had any extra food to sell."

"I see," was all I said.

Lisa continued, "Immediately after I bought that food from you, I only retreated about 200 yards into the woods and I waited for you to count to 5000. You didn't try to follow me so I decided to follow you. You were heading roughly southeast and that was exactly the direction I wanted to go. I always stayed a reasonable distance behind you but I rarely lost sight of you. You became so predictable that following you was really easy. You always stopped about the same time each day and set snares. And you always set your first snare about 100 yards ahead of you in the direction you had been traveling. I thought that was smart because I realized you were scouting ahead a short distance before you made your final decision to camp where you had stopped. You always returned to camp after you set each snare. And you would always collect your snares about the same time each morning and then resume your trip. Each night it was easy for me to find a camp site and get some sleep and I was still able to return to your camp the following morning at least an hour before you departed. I admit I was using you the same way some people travel a reasonable distant behind another motorist who is speeding so the motorist in front will trip the radar first and get the speeding ticket. I sincerely apologize.

"My biggest decision was whether or not to wait for you to continue your journey when you stopped to visit with those people who were living in the cave. I spent a couple of days watching all of you from a safe distance in the woods. I followed you several times and watched you set snares. I learned a lot from you. I tried setting snares the way you did but I rarely caught anything. I became envious of you because I realized you must have some special wood lore instinct that guided you to the best spots to put your snares.

"I had just returned from checking my snares the day you found me in my camp and told me to freeze. I couldn't ask you about the people you were with because then you would have known I had been spying on you. But when you told me you were returning to your base camp the following morning, I decided you were probably going to stay with them, at least through the winter. So the next morning I started off on my own again.

"I traveled for a day or two. But the further I traveled the more depressed I became. I don't know why, but I also began to get scared. Therefore I decided to return to the cave where you were staying and see if I could join your group. I was trying to get up enough courage to enter your camp the morning you said good-bye to everyone. I watched the way they said good-bye to you. It was obvious you were someone they trusted. That made me want to be your friend even more. But I wasn't exactly sure how to approach you. The major problem, as I saw it, was how to be friends with a really great guy and travel several hundred miles with him and never make love. It's not that I'm cold natured or anything, it's just that I really don't want to be carrying a child at this particular time in my life. So I kept following you and I stopped to make camp each time you did.

"I was behind you that day when those two ruffians ambushed you. I saw them make you drop everything you had. I wasn't sure what their intentions were until I heard them laugh. Then I saw one of the men lift his rifle so he could shoot you in the back. I already had him dead in my scope so I simply squeezed the trigger. And then as quickly as I could I lined up on the second man and I drilled him too. I saw you make your escape into the woods so I pulled back a short distance and kept my rifle trained on the two men lying in the road. I didn't know if I had killed them or not, but if either one of them had moved I was going to put another round into him. They never moved and then I saw you come out of the woods with that stick in your hand. The rest you know. That's my story." Lisa had finished talking and she was waiting for me to respond.

I didn't say anything for a moment or two. Then I asked, "Do you think it would be okay if we traveled together from now on?"

Lisa laughed and threw her arms around me and gave me a hug.

David's War Diary - Chapter Twelve

Day Thirty-Seven

We spent the day in our little shelter. Lisa was feeling much better but she was still too weak to travel. But there was nothing wrong with her appetite. I knew she hadn't eaten in several days so I didn't say anything when she consumed an entire day of rations in one meal.

Mostly we just talked. We learned a lot about one another. I was two years older than she was and her parents' home was about 100 miles south of where my parents lived. We had both accepted jobs in the mid-west because that was where we could earn the most money. And we both had an adventurous spirit so we weren't afraid to move to a new city a long ways from our home towns. We both survived the first onslaught of war when it destroyed the cities where we were living and we had both decided our best alternative was to hike back to our home towns. We had both left in the early spring and it was now early fall. My hometown was the closest but it was still about 300 miles away. We agreed to go there first and try to find my family. Then we would continue together to the south and try to find her family.

Day Forty-Two

We spent the last few days hiking southeast. Each evening we would listen to my radio and find out how the war was going. This evening we turned the radio on and we heard the good news. The war was over. We had won. We listened to several shortwave stations in different parts of the world just to verify this news. The same story was being repeated in every nation. The war was over and they had won. We laughed together. Every nation was victorious. Lisa said she didn't think that was possible and then she asked me what my opinion was.

I reminded her that very few people have access to a shortwave radio and therefore the only information they receive is what they hear through their local news media. Most people believe almost everything they read or hear in the news. They don't realize they are being fed carefully worded press releases.

Then I told her the war probably ended because a very small but select group of people had achieved whatever objective or objectives they had originally desired. We would probably never know who those people were. They enjoyed remaining anonymous and directing the events of the world.

This small group of people probably initiated the peace settlement from behind the scenes. Every nation had probably experienced as much destruction as they could tolerate and they had also probably lost a significant percentage of their population. Therefore they would be very receptive to any peace solution that allowed them to save face. All the negotiators had to do was make one or two small concessions to each nation. This would provide each nation with something they could brag about and thereby convince their people they had won the war.

Lisa complimented me on my analysis of the situation. I thanked her but I told her I couldn't take the credit for it because I was just extrapolating from a book I had read prior to the war.

Day Forty-Four

We entered a small town today. There were a number of people moving about. Since the war was over they were no longer afraid to reveal themselves in public.

We were shocked to find that the bus service had been restored. The military had released a large supply of their gasoline (and diesel fuel) and it was being issued exclusively to the bus companies and the truck lines. We were able to buy two bus tickets to my home town for four silver dollars. It was the best deal I have ever negotiated. It saved us almost 300 miles of walking.



Day Forty-Five

We arrived in my hometown today. It was almost completely destroyed. My parents' home was burned to the ground. My oldest brother's home was still standing but it had been looted. My oldest brother was at home. He told me the bad news. Both my parents died in the fire that had destroyed their neighborhood. And my other brother had died of malnutrition and dysentery about six weeks ago. I looked at my brother and I could see the bones in his face so I asked him how he felt. He said he felt fine. He had been eating well for the past few days. I asked him how that was possible. He said he had traded his gold necklace for three week's supply of food.

I told him about our plans to continue south to Lisa's hometown. He said we could borrow his car. I looked at him sideways and he explained that it had almost a full tank of gas. He had filled his gas tank the day before the bombs and the fire destroyed our town. And there was no place he wanted to go so he had spent the entire war barricaded inside his home. He left occasionally in search of food and on one of those occasions his home had been looted while he was absent. He said that was lucky for him. He was glad he wasn't home when the looters arrived. There was nothing he owned that was worth defending with his life.

Day Forty-Seven

We said good-bye to my brother this morning and I drove his car south to Lisa's hometown. We were pleasantly surprised to see that the war had not destroyed her town. Many of the buildings had been shot

up and most of the glass windows had been destroyed, but almost every building was still standing and they could be repaired in a short period of time at a reasonable cost.

Lisa's parents were at home when we pulled into their driveway. Her married sister was also there with her husband. It made me feel really good to see the welcome Lisa received from her family. Everyone was crying and hugging each other.

Lisa introduced me but I already knew everyone's name. Lisa had talked about them a lot during the time we were together.

We all sat down to lunch together. I was surprised to see the variety of food that was being served. However, I kept my curiosity in check and I didn't ask any questions. Later that afternoon I discovered how Lisa's family had survived the war and why they all appeared to be in such excellent health.

Lisa's parents had heard the war rumors just like everyone else. The main difference was that they took them seriously. They explained their action this way, "It is better to be prepared for an event that doesn't happen than to be totally unprepared for an event that does happen."

They had purchased a used 26-foot bunkhouse camper for about \$6000. Lisa's Dad told me that used campers fall into two categories. Ones that have been taken care of and are therefore in really good condition and ones that are completely worn out. And you can't get that information from a seller over the phone because everyone believes their camper is in good condition. You have to go and look at the camper to see what kind of condition it is in. Generally, you have to look at a minimum of five or six used campers before you find one that is in "almost new" condition.

The camper they bought had one bedroom with a queen-size bed at the front end of the camper. It had twin bunk beds next to a small bathroom at the other end of the camper. In the middle of the camper there was a small kitchen and a cafe table that seated four people and a sofa that seated three people. I looked inside their camper and I asked them how four people could live for almost six months in such cramped conditions. They all laughed and reminded me they were family. And then Lisa's Mom told me it all depended on how you viewed things. I saw it as crowded. They saw it as cozy.

Then Lisa's Dad gave me a tour of the outside of the camper. He had bolted two strips of heavy angle iron to the front tongue of the camper. On this he had strapped down four plastic battery cases with a deep-cycle marine battery in each one. The positive terminal of each battery was connected to the positive terminal of the batteries on each side of it. And the negative terminals were connected in the same manner. At one end of the chain of batteries a wire was attached to the positive terminal of the end battery and the other end of the wire was connected to the positive terminal of a small Solar Controller where it said "Battery." At the opposite end of the chain of batteries a wire was attached to the negative terminal of the end battery and the other end of the wire was connected to the negative terminal of the Solar Controller at the "Battery" connection. The two wires coming out of the camper (which were originally connected to the battery) were now connected to the Solar Controller at the point where it said "Loads." The Solar Controller also had a positive and negative terminal that said "Panels" and a long coil of wire was attached to it. Lisa's Dad showed me two 100-watt solar panels he connected to that wire when he was ready to activate the system. He said he hadn't mounted the solar panels on the roof of the camper because he liked to park his camper in the shade. He could then place the two solar panels in the direct sunlight and run the wire to them from the Solar Controller. I asked him how much the entire solar system had cost and he said about \$1400 and that included the four marine batteries.

He also told me he couldn't plug the camper into a standard 120-volt outlet the way it was currently wired or he would destroy his Solar Controller. To use 120-volt power he had to disconnect four wires. First he had to disconnect the two wires between the two end batteries and the Solar Controller "Battery" connection. Then he would have to disconnect the two "Load" wires from the Solar Controller and reconnect them to the end batteries. Then he could plug into a 120-volt outlet. The option was his. He could use either 120-volt power or solar power, but not both at the same time.

There were two 30-pound propane tanks mounted on the tongue of the camper directly in front of the row of batteries. Lisa's Dad showed me two additional 100-pound propane tanks he used as emergency backups. He said that after he had his camper parked, he would place them on the ground next to the 30-pound tanks. When the two 30-pound tanks were both empty he could easily switch over to one of the 100-pound tanks.

Their last investment was about \$2500 in emergency food supplies. Mostly white rice, wheat berries, beans, noodles and other such stuff. They made their investment based on the cost per calorie of food and the shelf life of the food. White rice, wheat berries, beans, and noodles were the best investment from a nutrition standpoint. And since they were dry foods they didn't weigh very much. They had also bought a decent variety of canned goods, such as vegetables, fruits, chili beans, beef stew, Spam, and tuna canned in oil. Plus some extra-virgin olive oil, sugar, pickling salt, pepper, powdered milk, dry yeast, dry gravy mix, and hard candies. Except for the yeast, all the food they bought had a minimum shelf life of 4 or 5 years if they stored it in a dry, cool place where the temperature could be kept above 40 degrees and below 70 degrees year round. The white rice had a shelf life of at least 10 years and the wheat berries had a shelf life of at least 50 years. The salt and sugar would last indefinitely. They refrigerated their yeast to triple its shelf life.

Immediately after the war irrupted overseas, Lisa's parents invited their oldest daughter and her husband to move in with them just-in-case. They tried to get Lisa to come home but she wouldn't quit her job in the mid-west.

Lisa's Dad visited the closest national forest and he identified several potential camping spots which they could get into with a camper but which were also a short distance off the primary forest road. They loaded their camper and they stacked their emergency food and the other emergency supplies they would need in a closet near their garage door so they could load their three vehicles without any unnecessary delay in the event of an emergency.

Lisa's Dad also bought four five-gallon gasoline cans. He filled them with gas and stored them in the corner of his garage. He also asked everyone to refill their car's gas tanks whenever they got down to one-half full.

During the day Lisa's Mom listened to the news channel continuously while everyone else was at work. At night each person took a two-hour shift listening to the news channel while everyone else slept. It was a smart decision. The bombs started exploding on United States soil around 2 o'clock in the wee morning hours and the person on "news duty" quickly woke everyone up. They loaded their vehicles and were on their way towards the national forest within 30 minutes of when the news was first reported. They were inside the national forest before daybreak and they continued to listen to the news on the radio throughout the day.

Some folks might say they were lucky. I don't see it that way. They were just prepared.

After they parked their camper in the national forest, they let down their awning at an angle so it would direct rain water to one spot where they placed a large, clean 40 gallon plastic water barrel. They didn't need their refrigerator because Lisa's Mom always prepared just enough food for each meal and they never had any leftovers.

Their camper was originally built to run off either 120-volt power or 12-volt batteries. Only the air-conditioner and the microwave wouldn't operate off the batteries. Lisa's Dad said that was the reason he hadn't installed a solar inverter. An inverter changes 12-volt DC power into 120-volt AC power. They didn't mind doing without the air-conditioner. And even if he had installed an inverter, the A/C would have drained his batteries in less than an hour of operation. And they really didn't need the microwave because the camper had a propane stove.

The 12-volt water pump had a manual wall switch. When they wanted water at a faucet, they would flip the switch on, run the water they needed, and then flip the switch off. The hot water heater was a fast-response propane unit. However, it remained off during almost the entire war. They had four camping shower bags. Each bag held 5-gallons of water. On the days they wanted to shower they would hang those bags in the sun and in the evening the water inside them would be very hot. And they would heat a little water on their propane stove at the end of each day to do dishes.

The camper had three water tanks: a fresh water tank, a black water tank, and a gray water tank. The fresh water tank was connected to the water pump which supplied all the faucets. They refilled the fresh water tank each time it rained.

The toilet stool emptied into the black water tank. The toilet was very neat. It had a two-position flush. The first position used a few tablespoons of water to rinse out liquid waste. The second position used about a cup of water to flush solid waste. Lisa's Dad dug a pit about twelve feet away from the camper and he connected a large drain hose to the black water tank and about once every two weeks he would dump the contents of that tank into the hole. He would wait for the water to drain into the earth and then he would shovel a few inches of dirt on top of the residue in the hole. This controlled the smell and the flies.

The gray water tank contained the sink and shower drain water. Immediately after a goodrain and after their fresh water tank had been refilled, they would drain the gray water tank into another hole and let it disappear into the earth. Lisa's Dad told me that on one occasion during a three-week drought he had been forced to recycle his gray water. First he dug a conical hole about four-feet in diameter and about two-feet deep in the center. It sloped gradually from the sides of the hole to the center. He dug six small holes about half-way down the cone and about equal distances apart. Then he dug out the center of the big hole and placed a large, clean, empty stainless steel cook pot in the bottom of the hole. Then he barely opened the gray water tank drain valve and gradually filled six one-gallon ziplock bags about three-quarters full. He did this directly at the valve. He didn't let the water run through his black water drain hose. And he didn't seal the ziplock bags but left them open at the top. He put one ziplock bag of gray water into each of the six small holes around his stainless steel pot. Then he put a clean, clear plastic tarp over the entire setup and weighted down the edges of the tarp with rocks. He carefully put a medium size rock on top of the tarp directly over the large stainless steel pot in the bottom of the hole. This caused the tarp to form a cone in the same shape as the original four-foot diameter hole. But the tarp didn't touch the sides of the hole anywhere. The only place the tarp touched the ground was at the very top of the hole where it was weighed down with rocks. During the day, the sun did its job. The gray water in the six ziplock bags gradually evaporated and formed tiny water droplets on the underside of the tarp. The tiny water droplets flowed down the tarp as a result of gravity and collected directly under the rock in the center of the tarp. When the water drops got too heavy, they fell directly into the stainless steel pot in the center of the pit.

At the end of each day, they had a full pot of fresh water to drink. And the ziplock bags still contained the soap and dirt that was originally in the gray water.

After they explained everything to me, I realized Lisa had inherited her brains from her parents.

Day Forty-Nine

Lisa's parents followed us in their car when I returned my brother's car to him. Lisa's parents had filled the trunk of his car with food and I also gave him the four silver dollars I had left. My brother and I shook hands and I said I would keep in touch. Then Lisa and I returned with her parents to their home.

Day Sixty-Two

Lisa and I were married today in her home church. We both have jobs and we found a small apartment that we could afford to rent. The future has never looked better to us.

This will be my last entry in this diary because I hope the rest of my life will be too peaceful to be of any interest to anyone other than Lisa and myself.



David's War Diary

THE END