

**THERE WERN'T MANY LIMITS TO PERK PERKIN'S
ESCAPADES
8/22/95**

I personally had the privilege of knowing Donald Perkins Sr. There is no question in my mind that there never was a more interesting character to emanate from the Adirondacks!

He was known as "Perk" to all but his wife and possibly his best friend, Reg Villiere. He was "Donald" To Reg and you sensed a mutual bond that was not to be invaded by outsiders using Perkin's given name.

Some of their escapades became known to me directly from one or both, and others from their many friends and acquaintances. Many of the disclosures came in later years after they had mellowed. I sometimes felt they were disclosed as an offer of repentance.

They were poachers par excellence and like Willie Sutton, operated where the loot was plentiful. In their case, this was the Adirondack League Club. The Club bore the brunt of many of their indiscretions. They had access through their guiding and caretaking work and you could say it was like "giving the rats the keys to the cheese factory."

The Club was very different in its security, which I am sure presented a challenge that spurred them on. A 24-hour watch was maintained on both entrances to the Club throughout the deer season. This proved to be a minor inconvenience to them and others.

The deer were stored in some unsuspecting owner's icehouse until the season ended and the Little Moose gate was unmanned again.

There was always a ready market for venison. George Elthorpe related one episode: Late in the winter Perk had a customer for a hind quarter of venison. He had none available, but remembered a hind quarter of bear George had hanging.

Bill Lawrence, a Club member they were guiding, had killed an old boar bear during the season and George had saved the quarter for just such an occasion.

To make a long story short, the quarter ended up in the trunk of the customer's car in the Knotty Pine parking lot and Perk chalked up another of his famous stings. I would really have enjoyed being there when they tried to eat that quarter of "venison".

This was mild for Perk who once fed a nasty little neighborhood dog to his poker buddies.

They all enjoyed the meal, which was not complete without Perk informing them of what it consisted. The owner, a man named Pete White, soon learned of the dog's fate and never spoke to Perk again.

Jake Berkowitz was a loyal friend of Perk's, but it did not stop Perk from making him one of his victims.

Jake told me that Perk supplied him with some lake trout for which he paid Perk in cash. At the end of the month, Jake received a bill for the same fish from Marks and Wilcox's Market. Jake had a good laugh and always felt it was worth every penny he paid.

Perk did not always emerge unscathed from his escapades and he was known to run afoul of the law on more than one occasion.

More about that next week.