

GLOSSARY OF MOUNTAINEER TERMS I

Apishanore: saddle pad or saddle blanket, often made of a piece of bison skin or several pieces sewn together. "This was a severe cold night but I was comfortably situated with one Blanket and two Epishemores and plenty of dry wood to make a fire." (Osborne Russell)

Appolas: sticks sharpened at both ends, stuck in the ground around a fire, on which chunks of meat are roasted slowly. "A party of hunters, at their night camp, were seated around a large fire, at whose side were fixed several pieces of meat, [on] appolas, for the purpose of roasting." (Rufus Sage)

Bar: bear. "You may be sure," says Joe, "that I kept very quiet, while that bar helped himself to some of my buffalo meat, and went a little way off to eat it." (Joseph Meek)

Beeve: Beeves: buffalo or buffalo meat; beef. "A few beeves were killed during the chase." (Rufus Sage)

Big 50: fifty-caliber rifle

Boudins: buffalo intestines; these were eaten by mountain men. "The company had joined the butcher, and, while some were greedily feeding upon liver and gall, others helped themselves to marrow-bones, [and] "boudins..." (Rufus Sage)

Brave as a buffler in spring: phrase used to describe a courageous person

Buck: one dollar; a buck (male deer) skin roughly equaled one dollar

Buffler: buffalo or bison; a favorite food and a great source for apishemores, blankets, groundcloths/mattresses, tipi covers, and winter robes

Buffler wood: dried buffalo dung; used as fuel for fire when wood was not available

Bushway: supervisor or boss with a fur trapping company; from the French word *bougeois*. "When the large camp is on the march, it has a leader, generally one of the Booshways, who rides in advance, or at the head of the column." (Joseph Meek)

Cache (verb): to hide or store. "Our leaders intended to cache their goods at that place, and wished to meet the Indians, for the purpose of trading with them." (Warren Angus Ferris)

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Nimrod: an experienced hunter "Finding him very expert as a hunter [...] Captain Bonneville fitted him out handsomely as the *Nimrod of the party...*" (*Washington Irving*)

Naybobbin: chattering or talking

Pack: a bundle of animal skins bound together "... We unfortunately sunk one of our boats, on board of which were thirty packs of beaver-skins, and away they went, floating down the current as rapidly as though they had been live beavers." (*James Beckwourth*)

Pantaloons: tight trousers extending from waist to ankle with straps passing under the foot "We had not even leather to make snow shoes, but as good fortune would have it, some of the men had the front part of their pantaloons lined with deer skin, and others had great coats of different kinds of skin, which we collected together to make snow shoes of." (*Zenas Leonard*)

Parfleche: rawhide for making containers, moccasin soles, shields, and a type of bag; usually decorated with painted designs

Pemmican: Native American food of pounded dried meat combined with dried berries, nuts and melted fat "Ammunition was laid in abundance--a good stock of dried buffalo tongues-a dozen or two of beavers' tails-and a good supply of pemican." (*George Catlin*)

Pirogue: canoe made by hollowing out a log

Plew: beaver pelt; from the French word for "plus," when trappers traded their beaver pelts, they would receive a plus mark (+) in the company accounting book

Pluck: courage "... For nothing more delights a mountaineer than a show of pluck." (*Joseph Meek*)

Possibles bag: small bag that carried important items such as flint, balls, and other necessary equipment and supplies

Punch the fire: stoke up the fire

Pups: children

Real beaver: the real thing; the best

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Cache (noun): place where items are hidden or stored "[We] descended the river about 2 miles where we made a cache and deposited the greater part of my goods." (William Ashley)

Capote: long wool coat with a hood often worn by mountaineers "... The teeth of the bear closed on his blanket capote which was belted around the waist, the suddenness and force of the seizure turning him around, as the skirt of his capote yielded to the strain and tore off at the belt." (Joseph Meek)

Carcajou: wolverine "I have good reason to believe that the Carcajou's appetite is easily satisfied upon meat freshly killed, but after it becomes putrid it may become more voracious." (Osborne Russell)

Cold doin's: very cold weather

Diggins: home

Dupont: gunpowder; from the name of the company who manufactured it

Ephraim; Old Ephraim: term for a grizzly bear "He heaved a sigh [...] and remarked that I would have been as thin as he if I had lived on old Ephraim for two weeks [...]" I found, in truth, that the whole camp had been subsisting[...] on little else than two or three grizzly bears [...]" (John Townsend)

Fall to the kettle: to be made into meat for eating "This adds to the general gloom prevailing in camp, with all in a starving condition [...]. Should we not find animals, our horses will fall to the kettle." (Peter Skene Ogden)

Elallander: person who is new to the mountains, and inexperienced

Foofuraw: trinkets; small decorations or doodads for trading

Foolscap: a sheet of writing or printing paper

Galena; galena pill: lead bullet made from galena, a soft lead

GLOSSARY OF MOUNTAINEER TERMS 3

Gone under, went under: dead or killed "Pierre 'went under' some years since, from an attack of his old enemies—the Buffaloes." (Alfred Jacob Miller)

Grainin' a skin: scraping an animal skin clean of flesh and fat "...the [buffalo] bones are used for saddle trees -- for war clubs, and scrapers for graining the robes...." (George Catlin)

Great leg: a great traveler; one with great endurance and strength "There was in our party an old and experienced mountaineer, named Moses Harris ... [who] was reputed to be, a man of 'great leg.'" (James Beckwourth)

Greenhorn: person who is new to the mountains, and inexperienced "In the course of an hour he returned laden with buffalo meat, to the great mortification of the two regular hunters, who were annoyed at being eclipsed by a greenhorn." (Washington Irving)

Griz: grizzly bear

Ha'r o' th' b'ar: ("hair of the bear"); a term of praise for another person

Hawk: tomahawk

Hole: a sheltered location, such as a mountain valley where trappers would stay for the winter; a hole was usually named after some person associated with the location "It was just five days after the battle of the swamp that these seven companions were making their way through Jackson's Hole, a valley not far from the three Tetons, when, as they were descending a hill, a party of Blackfeet that lay in ambush started up with terrific yells." (Washington Irving)

Meatbag: stomach of an animal or human being

Medicine dog: Many western Native American tribes referred to horses as "medicine dogs"

Mountaineer: mountain man; what mountain men would usually call themselves "Immediately reloading (for old mountaineers never suffer their guns to remain empty for one moment), [...] crack went his rifle again, and down came a second turkey." (James Beckwourth)