The Call of the **Cumberlands**

By Charles Neville Buck

With Illustrations from Photographs of Scenes in the Play

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SYNOPSIS.

On Misery creek Sally Miller finds George Lescott, a landscape painter, unconscious. Spicer South, head of the family, tells Samson South and Sally that Jesse Purvy has been shot and that Samson is suspected of the crime. Samson denies it. The shooting of Jesse Purvy breaks the truce in the Hollman-South feud. Samson reproves Tamarack Spicer for telling Sally that Jim Hollman is hunting with bloodhounds the man who shot Purvy. The bloodhounds lose the trail at Spicer South's door. Lescott discovers artistic ability in Samson. While sketching with Lescott on the mountain, Tamarack discovers Samson to a jeering crowd of mountaineers. Samson thrashes crowd of mountaineers. Samson to a jeering crowd of mountaineers. Samson thrashes him and denounces him as the "truce-buster" who shot Purvy. Lescott tries to persuade Samson to go to New York with him and develop his talent. Sally, loyal but heartbroken, furthers Lescott's effect. forts. At Wile McCager's dance Samson tells the South clan that he is going to leave the mountains.

CHAPTER VII-Continued.

Lescott stayed on a week after that simply in deference to Samson's insistence. To leave at once might savor of flight under fire, but when the week was but the painter turned his horse's head toward town, and his train swept him back to the Bluegrass and the

A quiet of unbroken and deadly routine settled down on Misery. The conduct of the Souths in keeping hands off, and acknowledging the justice of Tamarack Spicer's jail sentence, had been their answer to the declaration of the Hollmans in letting Samson ride into and out of Hixon. The truce was established. When, a short time later, Tamarack left the country to become a railroad brakeman, Jesse Purvy passed the word that his men must, until further orders, desist from violence. The word had crept about that Samson, too, was going away, and, if this were true, Jesse felt that his future would be more secure than his past. Purvy believed Samson guilty, despite the exoneration of the hounds. Lescott had sent a box of books, and

Samson had taken a team over to Hixon, and brought them back. He devoured them all from title page to finis line, and many of them

he went back to, and digested again. He wrestled long and gently with his uncle, struggling to win the old man's consent to his departure. But Spicer South's brain was no longer plastic. What had been good enough for the past was good enough for the future. Nevertheless, he arranged affairs so that his nephew should be able to meet financal needs, and to go where he chose in a fashion befittinga South.

November came in bleakly, with a raw and devastating breath of fatality. The smile died from horizon to horizon, and for days cold rains beat and lashed the forests. And, toward the end of the month, came the day which Samson had set for his departure.

At the threshold, with the saddlebags over his left forearm and the rifle in his hand, he paused. His uncle stood at his elbow and the boy put out his

"Good-by, Unc' Spicer," was all he said. The old man, who had been his second father, shook hands. His face, too, was expressionless, but he feit that he was saying farewell to a soldier of genius who was abandoning the field. And he loved the boy with all the centered power of an isolated heart.

A half-mile along the road, Samson halted and dismounted. There, in a small cove, surrounded by a tangle of triers and blackberry bushes, stood a small and dilapidated "meeting house" and churchyard, which he must visit. He made his way through the rough undergrowth to the unkempt half-acre, and halted before the leaning headstones which marked two graves. With a sudden emotion, he swept the back of his hand across his eyes. He did silence, and then he said:

"Pap, I hain't fergot. I don't want

ye ter think thet I've fergot." Before he arrived at the Widow Miller's, the rain had stopped and the clouds had broken.

Sally opened the door, and smiled. She had spent the day nerving herself for this farewell, and at least until the moment of leave-taking she would be safe from tears. The Widow Miland the boy and girl sat before the blazing logs.

between them. At last, the boy rose, through the tearless pupils, in the fire- grinned responsively. and went over to the corner where he light, the boy could read her soul, and had placed his gun. He took it up and her soul was sobbing. laid it on the hearth between them.

"Sally," he said, "I wants ter tell ye her very tight. some things that I hain't never said

ye, Samson?" "He shook his head.

"I hain't a-goin' ter need hit down below. Nobody don't use 'em down the door, "that there's the most pre- the boy to his home, it was because nounced my intention of marrying you

thet will be enough."

"I'll take good keer of hit," she promised. The boy took out of his pockets a

box of cartridges and a small package tied in a greasy rag. "Hit's loaded, Sally, an' hit's cleaned

Again, nodded in silent assent, gun's a-goin' ter keep hit fer me." and the boy began speaking in a slow, ed into tense emotion.

'Sally, thet thar gun was my pap's. with him to the road. When he lay a-dyin', he gave hit ter to corroborate.

"Thar hain't none, Samson." "There hain't nothin' in the world, Sally, thet I prizes like I does thet gun. Hit's got a job ter do. . . Thar hain't but one person in the world I'd trust hit with. Thet's you. . . . I

keen hit ready. barrel

nobody ter know. . . . But, when the absence of frank warning. thet gun!"

set and fanatical.

"Samson," said the girl, reaching out hit. I promise ye. An'," she added. an' keep hit loaded, an' when ye calls, was time in plenty. I'll fotch hit out thar to ye."

The youth nodded. "I mout come any time, but likely as not I'll hev ter livery stable to the railroad station, the dining room. He turned and went come a-fightin' when I comes.'

Next, he produced an envelope. out the sheet, and read:

Mr. Lescott. . .



"When I Whistles Like a Whippoorwill, Fetch Me That Gun.'

wants yer ter mail thet ter me quick. not remove his hat, but he stood in the He says as how he won't never call hain't a-goin' ter write no letters home. be thinkin' about ye day an' night."

She gulped and nodded. "Yes, Samson," was all she said.

The boy rose. "I reckon I'd better be gettin' along,"

he announced. The girl suddenly reached out both hands, and seized his coat. She held

"Sally," he said, in a voice which

thar. I've got my pistol, an' I reckon clous thing I've got. I loves hit better he understood that a life which must when you were twelve. That intention then anything-take keer of hit."

Again, she caught at his shoulders. Samson?" she demanded.

He hesitated. an hit's greased. Hit's ready fer use." I've done made a promise, an' thet

They went together out to the stile. loath to let it go, and she crossed

As he untied his reins, she threw me, an' he gave me a job ter do with her arms about his neck, and for a ter set up 'most all day, polishin' thet | clouds and stars, as he held her close. go out in the woods, an' practice shoot- ing, no professions of undying love, as you will." in' hit at things, tell I learned how ter for these two hearts were inarticulate down.

CHAPTER VIII.

The boy from Misery rode slowly to ward Hixon. At times the moon strugwants ye ter keep hit fer me, an' ter gled out and made the shadows black ried out and they were alone, "you are . . They thinks along the way. At other times it was round hyar I'm quittin', but I hain't. like riding in a huge caldron of pitch. painting; second, to educate and equip those men whose fortunes are listed I'm comin' back, an', when I comes, I'll When he passed into that stretch of yourself for coming conditions. It's in the top schedule—the swollen forneed this hyar thing-an' I'll need hit country at whose heart Jesse Purvy going to take work, more work, and tunes. Socialists would put you in the bad." He took up the rifle, and ran his dwelt he raised his voice in song. His then some more work." hand caressingly along its lock and singing was very bad, and the ballad lacked tune, but it served its purpose I'm shore a-goin' ter need hit quick. I house was black, behind its heavy shut- curb.' wants hit ter be ready fer me, day er | ters he knew that his coming might-be |

I whistles out thar like a whippoorwill, The correctness of his inference modification. wants ye ter slip out-an' fotch me brought a brief smile to his lips when he crossed the creek that skirted the He stopped, and bent forward. His orchard and heard a stable door creak face was tense, and his eyes were glint- softly behind him. He was to be foling with purpose. His lips were tight lowed again-and watched, but he did not look back or pause to listen for the koofbeats of his unsolicited escort. and taking the weapon from his hands, On the soft mud of the road he would "ef I'm alive when ye comes, I'll do hardly have heard them had he bent "ef I hain't alive, hit'll be standin' walk, for his train would not leave un- while awake, with many disquieting uninterrupted run before the wind, thar in thet corner. I'll grease hit, til five o'clock in the morning. There reflections.

It was cold and depressing as he "This here is a letter I've done writ blazing headlight, and a minute later himself a highball, they bombarded ter myself," he explained. He drew he had pushed his way into the smok- him with questions. ing car and dropped his saddlebags "Samson, come back." Then he on the seat beside him. Then, for the barian with you?" demanded a darkhanded the missive to the girl. "Thet first time, he saw and recognized his eyed girl, who looked very much as there is addressed ter me, in care of watchers. Purvy meant to have Sam- Lescott himself might have looked had . Ef anything hap son shadowed as far as Lexington, and he been a girl-and very young and pens-ef Unc' Spicer needs me-I his movements from that point defi- lovely. Now she flashed on him an afnitely reported. Jim Asberry and Aaron | fectionate smile, and added: not speak to the two enemies who took | we go to bed disappointed?" seats across the car, but his face George stood looking down on them, hardened, and his brows came together and tinkled the ice in his glass. in a black scowl.

don't git ye fust. Ye b'longs ter me." might have laughed." The sleeping car to which he was assigned after leaving Lexington was almost empty, but he felt upon him the interested gaze of those few eyes that engaged every pair with a pair very clear and steady and undropping, until somehow each lip that had started to twist in amusement straightened. and the twinkle that rose at first all his specious seeming of unconcern, in the dining car, where he was kept busy beating down inquisitive eyes with his defiant gaze. He resolved after some thought upon a definite policy. It was a very old policy, but to him new-and a discovery. He would change nothing in himself that involved a surrender of code or conviction. But, wherever it could be done with honor, he would concede to cus-

It was late in the second afternoon when he stepped from the train at Jersey City, to be engulfed in an unimagined roar and congestion. Here it was impossible to hold his own against the unconcealed laughter of the many, and he stood for an instant glaring about like a caged tiger, while three currents of humanity separated and flowed toward the three ferry exits. Then he saw the smiling face of Lescott, and Lescott's extended hand, colorful from the bay. At the tiller made." drizzle of cold rain for a moment of me back, but, Sally, I wants thet you Even Lescott, immaculately garbed and sat the white-clad figure of Adrienne shall send fer me, ef they needs me. I fur-coated, seemed almost a stranger. and the boy's feeling of intimacy froze Unc' Spicer can't read, an' you can't to inward constraint and diffidence. read much either. But I'll plumb shore But Lescott knew nothing of that. The stoic in Samson held true, mask-

ing his emotions. "So you came," said the New Yorker, heartily, grasping the boy's hand. "Where's your luggage? We'll just pick that up and make a dash for the her.

ferry." "Hyar hit is," replied Samson, who fer and her son soon left them alone, him tight, and rose, facing him. Her still carried his saddlebags. The upturned face grew very pallid, and painter's eyes twinkled, but the mirth her eyes widened. They were dry, and was so frank and friendly that the For a time, an awkward silence fell her lips were tightly closed, but, boy, instead of glaring in deflance,

"Right, oh!" laughed Lescott. "I thought maybe you'd bring a trunk, He drew her toward him, and held but it's the wise man who travels light."

He followed Lescott out to the foot ter nobody else. In the fust place, I threatened to choke, "I wants ye ter of Twenty-third street, and stepped wants ye ter keep this hyar gun fer take keer of yeself. Ye hain't like with him into the tonneau of the I'm a sheer imbecile to reveal the fact whipped out her words with something these other gals round here. Ye bain't painter's waiting car. Lescott lived that you've made me mad. It pleases very close to scorn. The girl's eyes widened with sur- got big hands an' feet. Ye kain't stand with his family uptown, for it hapes much es they kin. Don't stay out pened that, had his canvases pos- pier than is good for you, but-" "Hain't ye a-goin' ter take hit with in the night air too much-an', Sally- sessed no value whatever, he would fer God's sake take keer of yeself!" still have been in a position to drive happy, isn't it?" she inquired, sweetly. there I put on overalls and go to He broke off, and picked up his hat. his motor and follow his impulses "An' that gun, Sally," he repeated at about the world. If he did not take we were children. I believe I first an something to show."

be not only full of early embarrass- remains unaltered. More: It is unalment, but positively revolutionary, terable and inevitable. My reasons "Does ye love hit better'n ye do me, should be approached by easy stages. for wanting to needn't be rehearsed. Consequently the car turned down It would take too long. I regard you Fifth avenue, passed under the arch as possessed of an alert and remark-"I reckon ye knows how much I and drew up before a door just off able mind-one worthy of companionloves ye, Sally," he said, slowly, "but Washington square, where the land ship with my own." Despite the frivscape painter had a studio suit. There olous badinage of his words and the were sleeping rooms and such acces- humorous smile of his lips, his eyes sories as seemed to the boy unheard-of hinted at an underlying intensity. careful voice, which gradually mount- he still carrying his rifle, as though luxury, though Lescott regarded the "With no desire to flatter or spoil you, home establishment.

lecting permanent quarters," was his am in love with you." He moved over hit. When I was a little feller, I used long while they stood there under the careless fashion of explaining to Sam- to a place in the sternsheets, and his son. "It's just as well not to hurry. face became intensely earnest. He gun an' gittin' hit ready. I used ter There was no eloquence of leave-tak- You are to stay here with me, as long dropped his hand over hers as it lay

handle hit. I reckon that hain't many and dizzy clinging to a wilderness boy, to whose training in open-doored Her eyes, after holding his for a mofellers round here that kin beat me code of self-repression-and they had hospitality the invitation seemed only ment, fell to the hand which still imnow." He paused, and the girl hastened reached a point where speech would natural. The evening meal was prisoned her own. She shook her have swept them both away to a break- brought in from a neighboring hotel, head, not in anger, but with a manand the two men dined before an open | ner of gentle denial, until he released fire. Samson eating in mountain si- her fingers and stepped back. lence, while his host chatted and

asked questions. "Samson," suggested the painter, when the dinner things had been car- riageable-at least, not yet." here for two purposes: First, to study

"I hain't skeered of work." "I don't know when I'm a-comin'," he of saving him from the suspicion of keep out of trouble. You've got to ride me. If you are serious, I'm willing said, slowly, "but, when I calls fer this, furtiveness. Though the front of the your fighting instinct with a strong to become poor as Job's turkey. Show

"I don't 'low to let nobody run over stand shortly before you begging night. Maybe, nobody won't know I'm noted, and night-riding at this par- me." The statement was not argu- alm." hyar. . . . Maybe, I won't want ticular spot might be misconstrued in mentative; only an announcement of a principle which was not subject to "Poverty would be quite inconvenient.

> ropes let me advise you." The boy gazed into the fire for a few

noments of silence. "I gives ye my hand on thet," he occasionally to be seen in the lists?"

shown his guest over the premises, thing, a coward?" his ear and drawn rein. He rode at a his own house. Samson lay a long him, but she straightened out for an

Meanwhile Lescott, letting himself which moments of great seriousness into a house overlooking the park, trudged the empty streets from the was hailed by a chorus of voices from carrying his saddlebags over his arm. in to join a gay group just back from At last he heard the whistle and saw the the opera. As he thoughtfully mixed

"Why didn't you bring your bar-Hollis were the chosen sples. He did have been waiting to see him. Must

"He wasn't brought on for purposes

"When I gits back," he promised of exhibition, Drennie," he smiled. "I himself, "you'll be one of the fust was afraid if he came in here in the folks I'll look fer, Jim Asberry, damn fashion of his arrival-carrying his ye! All I hopes is thet nobody else saddlebags-you ultracivilized folk

A roar of laughter at the picture vindicated Lescott's assumption.

bags?" echoed a young fellow with a velled truth, were turned toward his entrance. He likable face which was for the mo-You do make some rare discoveries, don't you?" George. We celebrate you."

"Thanks, Horton," commented the glance sobered at second. Yet, for painter, dryly. "When you New York- sary papers when the lawyers call me ers have learned what these barbari-Samson was waking to the fact that ans already know, the control of your he was a scarecrow, and his sensitive oversensitized risibles and a courtesy pride made him cut his meals short deeper than your shirt-fronts-maybe I'll let you have a look. Meantime I'm much too fond of all of you to risk letting you laugh at my barbarian."

Several months were spent laboring trol of the Morning Intelligence, with charcoal and paper over plaster | couldn't you?" casts in Lescott's studio, and Lescott himself played instructor. When the skylight darkened with the coming of evening, the boy whose mountain na newspaper?" ture cried out for exercise went for long tramps that carried him over tive and newsy. I read it every mornmany miles of city pavements, and ing when I'm in town. It fits in very after that, when the gas was lit, he nicely between the grapefruit and the turned, still insatiably hungry, to volumes of history, and algebra, and facts.

A sloop-rigged boat with a crew of two was dancing before a brisk breeze You are rich yourself, you know." through blue Bermuda water. Off to the right Hamilton rose sheer and concerns various charges have been Lescott. Puffs of wind that whipped dark hair about her face. Her lips, to see you want to do." vividly red like poppy petals, were just now curved into an amused smile, with." which made them even more than or-

nice to you.' assured her, and proceeded to show around the edge of the scrimmage." what superlatives of saturnine expres-Drennie, I know perfectly well that you too perfectly. It makes you hap-

place as a makeshift annex to his I find your personal aspect pleasing enough to satisfy me. And then, while "You'd better take your time in se- a man should avoid emotionalism, I on the tiller shaft. "God knows, dear, "I'm obleeged ter ye," replied the he exclaimed, "how much I love you!"

"You are a dear. Wilfred." she com-

forted, "and I couldn't manage to get on without you, but you aren't mar-"Why not?" he asked.

"In the first place you are one of predatory class."

"Drennie," he groaned, "it's not my "I believe that. Also, you must fault that I'm rich. It was wished on me the way to strip myself, and I'll

"To what end?" she questioned. I shouldn't care for it. But hasn't it "All right, but until you learn the ever occurred to you that the man who wears the strongest and brightest mail, and who by his own confession is possessed of an alert brain, ought

"In short, your charge is that I am At eleven o'clock the painter, having a shirker-and, since it's the same said good-night and went uptown to Adrienne did not at once answer

and by the tiny moss-green flecks,



"You Are a Dear, Wilfred?" brought to the depths of her eyes, he "No! Now, actually with saddle- knew that she meant to speak the up-

Besides your own holdings in a lot ment incredulously amused. "That of railways and things, you handle goes Dick Whittington one better. your mother's and sisters' property,

He nodded. "In a fashion, I do. I sign the neces-

up and ask me to come downtown." You are a director in the Metropole Trust company?" "Guilty."

"In the Consolidated Seacoast?"

"I believe so." "With your friends, who are also shareholders, you could assume con-

"I guess I could assume control, but what would I do with it?"

"Do you know the reputation of that "I guess it's all right. It's conserva-

bacon and eggs." "It is, also, powerful," she added. "and is said to be absolutely servile to corporate interests."

"Drennie, you talk like an anarchist. "And against each of those other

"Well, what do want me to do?" "It's not what I want you to do," the tautly bellying sheets lashed her she informed me; "it's what I'd like

"Name it! I'll want to do it forth-

"I think when you are one of a handdinarily kissable and tantalizing. Her ful of the richest men in New York; companion was neglecting his nominal when, for instance, you could dictate duty of tending the sheet to watch the policy of a great newspaper, yet know it only as the course that follows 'Wilfred," she teased, "your con- your grapefruit, you are a shirker and trast is quite startling-and, in a way, a drone, and are not playing the effective. From head to foot you are game." Her hand tightened on the spotless white-but your scowl is ab- tiller. "I think if I were a man riding solutely 'the blackest black that our on to the polo field I'd either try like eyes endure.' And," she added, in an the devil to drive the ball down beinjured voice, "I'm sure I've been very tween the posts, or I'd come inside and take off my boots and colors. I "I have not yet begun to scowl," he wouldn't hover in a ladylike futility

She knew that to Horton, who sion he held in reserve. "See here, played polo like a fiend incarnate, the figure would be effective, and she

"There's my hand on it, Drennie," he said. "We start back to New York "It's a terrible thing to make me tomorrow, don't we? Well, when ! get "Drennie, you have held me off since work. When I propose next I'll have

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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