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Continued

"What can that be?" cried Linda. As if in answer came the sudden far-off sound three times repeated, and then, after an interval, a fourth.

"Shooting!" cried Linda again, very white, her blue eyes wide with terror. "And it's from the direction of Senlis lake!"

"Ben! Ben Puttick!" roared Petersham.

But loud as was his voice, Linda's call rose higher.

"Here I am!" We heard Puttick's voice from inside the house, and he ran out a minute later.

"We heard five shots from Senlis lake," I said. "We must start at once, you and I. Mr. Petersham will stay with Miss Linda."

Puttick looked me in the eyes. "Are you tired of your life?" he asked grimly.

"We have no time to think of that. Get ready!"

"There was five shots," Puttick said deliberately. "I heard 'em myself. That means Joe's dead, if it was him they shot at. If we go we'll soon be dead too."

"Oh, you coward!" cried Linda. Puttick turned a dull red. "I'm no coward, Miss Linda, but I'm no fool. I'm a woodsman. I know."

"There is a good deal of sense in what Ben says," I put in. "I think his best place is here with you. He shall stay to help you in case of need. I'll go and find Joe. After all, it's as likely as not that he was firing or perhaps some one else was firing at a bear."

I hastened forward at the best pace I could attain until from a rising knoll I caught a glimpse of Senlis lake. The forest path here rose and fell in a series of short steep inclines. I labored up these little hills and ran down the slopes. Suddenly I came to a turn and was about to rush down a sharp dip when a voice, seemingly at my side, said:

"That you, Mr. Quaritch?"

"Joe! Where are you?"

"Here!"

I followed the voice and, parting some branches, saw Joe lying on the



Joe Leaned Against the Maple Tree and Looked Down on Him.

ground. His face was gray under its tan, and a smear of blood had dried upon his forehead and cheek.

"You're wounded!" I cried.

"His second passed through the top of my shoulder."

"His? Whose?"

"Him that shot at me."

"Did you shoot back?"

"He lies about ten paces west o' that small maple."

"You saw him?"

"Hardly. He had a black hat. I saw it move after he fired his fourth, and I shot back. If you'll give me your arm, Mr. Quaritch, we'll go up and take a look at him."

With difficulty and with many noises we reached the top of the little ridge. The dead man lay as Joe had said quite near the small maple. The bullet had entered his throat. He was a long haired, black bearded man of medium size.

Joe leaned against the maple tree and looked down at him.

"I seem to know the fellow's face," I said.

"Yes; you seen him the day we come, cutting wood by the shack."

"Now, Joe, lean on me, and we'll try to make for home," for I saw he was

very weak.

"Must just look around, Mr. Quaritch. See here! He was smoking his pipe. Look at the ashes—a regular handful of them. He must 'a' lain for me all of a hour before I come along. Here's his rifle—a 20-30. Wonder who he is?" Joe lay back, panting.

"You're not able to walk," said I.

"I'll go back to Kalmacks and get a rig to bring you home."

"No, Mr. Quaritch. It would never be right to do that. It would give the other fellas warning."

"The others?"

"This dead fella's partners."

"You know he has some, then?"

"One anyway. But let's be moving. Cut me a pole so as I can use it as a crutch."

I did as he asked, and we commenced our long and, for him, painful walk back.

CHAPTER XVI. The Capture.

As we walked Joe gave me in little jerks the story of his adventures.

"I started out, Mr. Quaritch," he began, "and crossed the lake to the camp where Bill Worke was fired at—you mind Miss Linda dropped a brooch there? I had a search for it, but I didn't find it, though I come across what I'd hoped to find—a lot of tracks—men's tracks."

"Who had been there since Saturday?"

"Huh! Yes; only about two days old. After awhile I built a bit of a fire and cooked a pinch of tea in a tin I'd fetched along. Then after lunch—Joe always called lunch 'lunk'—I started back. I was coming along easy, not on the path, but in the wood about twenty yards to the south of it, and afore I'd gone above three or four acres a shot was fired at me from above. The bullet didn't strike me, but as I was in a wonderful poor place for cover—just three or four spruces and half a dozen sticks of wild raspberry—I went down, pretending I'd got the bullet, pitched over the way a man does that's got it high up, and I took care to get the biggest spruce trunk between me and where I think the shots come from."

"Sometimes, if you go down like that, a man'll get rattled-like and come out, but not this one. Guess I'm not the first he's put a bit of lead into. He lay still and fired again—got me in the shoulder that time, and I gave a kick and shoved in among the raspberry canes in good earnest, had some of them whitey buds in my mouth and was chewing of them, when the fella shoots twice more—both misses. Then he kind o' paused, and I guesses he's going to move to where he can let me have it again."

"I see the black hat on him for a moment and then I lets drive. I tried to get up to have a look at him."

"Surely that was risky. How could you know he was dead?"

"Heard the bullet strike and saw the hat go backward. A man don't never fall over backward when he's shamming. I couldn't get to him—fainted, I guess. Then you come along."

Evening had fallen before we ultimately arrived at Kalmacks. We approached the house with care and entered by a window at the back, as Joe thought it possible the front entrances might be commanded from the wood on that side.

We went at once to the room where Worke was lying and Joe gave him a rapid description of the man he had shot.

"That's Tomlinson," said Worke at once. "Them two brothers lives, together. What have they been doing?"

"You'll know afore night," replied Joe. "What are their names?"

"Dandy is the one with the black beard, while him they calls Muppy is a foxy colored man."

"Thank you," said Joe. "Now, Bill, if you keep them names to yourself I'll come back in half an hour and tell you who it was shot you."

On Joe's appearance Linda started up and ran to him.

"You're wounded!" she cried.

"It's nothin' much, Miss Linda."

But as we laid him down on the couch he seemed to lose consciousness. Petersham brought brandy, and Linda, holding Joe's head upon her arm, put it to his lips. He swallowed some of it and then insisted upon sitting up.

"I must bind up your shoulder. We must stop the bleeding." Linda's distress and anxiety were very evident.

And Joe had to give way. With her capable and gentle hands Linda soon dressed the wound and afterward insisted on sending for Puttick to help him to his bunk.

"So you've got it?" Puttick said. "I warned you. Lucky you're not dead."

"Yes, ain't it?" returned Joe.

"Well I knew that soft drawl, which November's voice never took except in moments of fiercest tension."

"You'd best join your hands above

your head, Ben Puttick. Lock the thumbs. That's right!"

Joe had picked my revolver from the table and held it pointed at Puttick's breast.

"He's mad!" screamed Puttick.

"Tie his hands, Mr. Quaritch. Miss Linda, will you please to go away?"

"No, Joe. Do you think I'm frightened?"

"Huh! I know you're brave, but a man acts freer without the women looking on."

Without a word she turned and walked out of the room.

"Puttick's going to confess, Mr. Petersham," went on November.

"I've nothing to confess, you fool!"

"Not even that story you invented about the man with the red hanker across his face—the man who wasn't never there?"

"What's he ravin' about?" cried Puttick.

"Have you forgot them long haired Tomlinson brothers that?"

The effect of this speech on Puttick was instantaneous. Evidently he leaped to the conclusion that he had been betrayed, for he turned and dashed for the door. We flung ourselves upon him and by sheer weight bore him to the ground, where we quickly overpowered him, snarling and writhing.

Some hours later we sat round November Joe who was stretched upon the couch. Puttick had been tied up and imprisoned in the strongest room.

"No, Mr. Petersham," Joe was saying. "I don't think you'll have much more trouble. There was only three men in it. One's dead; one's locked up, and I dare say we'll find a way of dealing with No. 3."

"What I don't understand," said Linda, "is how you found out that Puttick was in it. When did you begin to suspect him?"

"Last night, when Mr. Petersham didn't go to Butler's cabin. The fellas who promised to meet him never put in there either. That was queer, wasn't it? Of course it could mean one thing—that some one had told 'em that Mr. Petersham weren't coming. There was only us three, and Puttick knew. So Puttick must 'a' been the one to tell."

"But, November," I said, "Puttick never left the house, for you remember you found no tracks on the sand. How, then, could he let them know?"

"I guess he waved a lantern or made some other sign they'd agreed on."

"But why didn't you tell me all this at once?" exclaimed Petersham.

"Because I weren't sure. Their not going to Butler's cabin might 'a' been chance. But this morning, when Puttick comes in with his yarn about the man with the red hanker across his face that made him hold up his hands and threatened him when he was mending the canoe, I begun to think we shouldn't be so much longer in the dark. And when I went down and

had a look around by the river, I knew at once his story was a lie, and that he'd got an interest in scaring Mr. Petersham away."



You'd best join your hands above your head, Ben Puttick.

To Be Continued.

DYING AMID WEED FIRES

Well-Known Farmer Collapses and Is Rescued Alive

Reading, Pa., Nov. 27.—Overcome with vertigo while burning off weeds in a field on his big farm, Philip K. Schultz, 60, of Chapel, this county, one of the most widely-known farmers of lower Berks, fell over unconscious Wednesday night in the midst of the blazing field, and was so terribly burned that he is in a serious condition. He cannot live.

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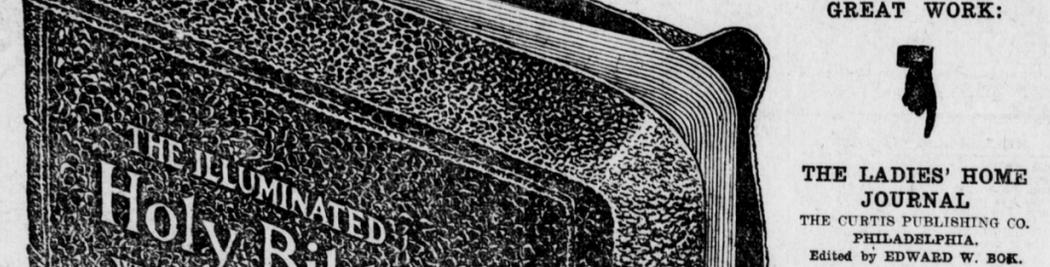
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RETELLING WAR STORIES

Veterans From Six Committees in Thanksgiving Remembrance

Robesonia, Pa., Nov. 27.—The seventeenth annual reunion of the One Hundred and Fifty-first Regimental Association, Pennsylvania Volunteers, was held here yesterday in the Lutheran chapel, and reminiscences of the Civil war were told by the few survivors in Pennsylvania of this regiment.

There were veterans present from Berks, Lebanon, Schuylkill, Lancaster, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties, and the welcome address was delivered by George D. Fahrenbach, former Sheriff of Berks county, one of the oldest members. H. H. Brownmiller, of Orwigsburg, also delivered an address, and there were a dozen impromptu speeches.

Drought Stops Colliery

Shenandoah, Pa., Nov. 27.—The Girard Mammoth colliery, employing nearly 1,000 men and boys, was compelled to suspend operations Wednesday on account of the drought. Other collieries and industries are working in danger of boilers blowing up owing to the scant supply of water. Unless rain come soon to relieve the serious situation a complete suspension of work will have to be ordered which will throw thousands out of employment.