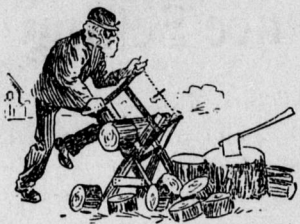


WEDDED EIGHTY-EIGHT YEARS.

Oldest Married Couple in the World--Husband is 108, Wife 106.

Four miles south of Elkton, Mich., there lives perhaps the oldest married couple in the world.

There have been several well authenticated cases of men reaching a



MR. HILLER SAWING WOOD.

greater age than the 108 years which Jacob Hiller has seen completed. There have been many women who have lived longer than Mrs. Jacob Hiller, who is nearly 106. But probably it has never happened to any other youth and maiden, marrying when the former was twenty and the latter eighteen, to pass together eighty-eight years of wedded life; to celebrate their golden wedding and live on; to celebrate their diamond wedding and still have thirteen years of wedded life together after that.

Mr. and Mrs. Hiller were married twenty years before the railroad came, and fourteen years before "Witt Clinton's Ditch" (the Erie Canal, across New York State, was opened. The United States, when they were married, was a puny little nation, on the point of going to war one moment with England, the next with France and insulted and browbeaten by both. Napoleon was at the height of his power, yet unsapped by the disasters in Spain or the retreat from Moscow, the grisly horrors of Waterloo, six years away, and all unforeseen.

Yes, it's a long term of years for man and wife to spend together, but the old couple seem never to have tired of it or of each other. And, sitting in their little house like a veritable Darby and Joan, they received a New York World reporter together as they have lived.

"I'm 108 years old," said Mr. Hiller from the depths of his capacious arm chair. "My birthday was the 20th of last October; so you see I'm pretty well started going on 109. She"—here he nodded toward Mrs. Hiller in her easy chair opposite—"will be 106 next March. I was about twenty-two or twenty-three when the War of 1812 broke out. But we were on the other side, you know. We were born at Jamestown, back of Kingston, in Canada, and lived there till we were old."

"Your children are scattered?"

"We have had eleven children," replied Mr. Hiller, "and seven of them are still alive. The oldest is eighty-five and the youngest is fifty-eight years old. One of our daughters lives about half a mile from here, and once in a while I walk over to call on her."

"You do not seem like so old a man," said the writer. And indeed Mr. Hiller's eye is bright, and though his face is wrinkled, he has the appearance of energy such as one does not attribute to age.

"Me?" said he with a shrill laugh. "Why, I was eighty-eight years old before I lost my first tooth, and I've ever worn glasses in my life, and I've a thread a needle as well as you, and, if you are a woman, I don't sleep as well as I used to, though."

"And you, Mrs. Hiller?"

"I've kept house eighty-eight years," piped up the old lady, "but I don't do such work now. I'm pretty feeble, pretty feeble. I can't walk and I'm most blind and can't read; but I dearly love to have people read to me. get lonesome sitting here so long. Sometimes my grandchildren come and read to me. And things are sent on me for them to read, and I always keep them."

"What kind of reading do you like best?"

"Poetry. Jacob, show them to the old man promptly fished out of

and only waiting for the words. It's a long time. Twenty years ago I had my burial clothes made ready, and once a year I have them put in order. Would you like to see them?"

The writer turned the question hastily.

"When did you come to this country, Mr. Hiller?"

"About the time the war began we moved here to Michigan?"

Before the poems were put away some one spoke of hymns, and the couple with shrill, quavering voices sang to the old tune of "China," with its quaint trills and runs, the words:

"Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove,
With all thy quickening powers;
Come shed abroad a Saviour's love
And that shall quicken ours."



A YUKON VILLAGE IN THE DEPTH OF WINTER.

Then the old man put away the clippings, moving easily about the room with a firm and fairly quick step. He is small and slight now, though he may have been in his prime a man of average stature.

Mrs. Hiller moves about but little and with difficulty, feeling her way around the room with thin, tremulous fingers. Of their very simple housework she does almost none. Generally one of the grandchildren drops in during the day to help with some



MR. HILLER SHOVELS SNOW.

of their work. The rest, Mr. Hiller himself does.

There is a little garden about the house, and here, in the season, Mr. Hiller raises a few vegetables and weeds and waters an old-fashioned potter bed, in which grow all the favorite flowers of his wife's youth, and a nosegay of these is generally upon her table. Sometimes he carries her chair out into the garden, and she sits there while he works.

At present, however, the dry and withered stalks of the garden favorites peep melancholy through the snow, as if bidding one to wonder whether Mrs. Hiller will ever see them bloom again. There seems to be no good reason why her more sprightly husband may not live to see them once and again.

The son-in-law plows the garden and arranges for the rougher work about the place. The wood the old couple burn is sawed by horse-power into short lengths, but Mr. Hiller splits it up for firewood, battering away at it with short, pecking strokes

is quickly chilled, and after a few minutes' work in the cold he goes into the house to rest for a few minutes before the kitchen stove.

In this way the old man putters about for half a day over a light fall of snow, but one who has lived 108 years has plenty of time.

So they sit, the old man and woman, in their little house, singing the old hymns and waiting for the messenger who has spared them so long.

THE BIGGEST KITE EVER RAISED.

Soared Aloft Like a School Boy's Toy and Lifted Its Owner Into the Air.

A kite that would have served as a toy for the youthful residents of Galilee's Broodingnag has just been constructed by a resident of South Bethlehem, Penn. The kite is a monster. If the world has its equal, no one has ever made the fact known. Imagine a kite as big as a two-story house, capable of raising high in the air an able-bodied man, who tried to hold on to the soaring flyer. William H. Markie, the man who built the great kite and raised it heavenward, says:

To begin with the dimensions of the kite: It is 25 feet high and 25 feet

wide, and is of the ordinary triangle pattern. The sticks are made of white pine, 5x2 inches, and are tapered from the cross to 1 1/2 inches at the ends. At each corner of the cross there are two-inch screw-eyes. On these screw-eyes are tied the four corners of the canvas sail, which is made of sail drilling.

The sail is sewed on the bias, and along the edge of the canvas is sewed a rope three-eighths of an inch thick, with loops at the corners. These loops are tied with separate rope in the screw-eyes on the frame, the frame being bolted at the cross with an eye-bolt, making it easy to take the kite to pieces, a very necessary thing, by the way, with a kite as big as a house.

The centre bands are made of rope three-eighths of an inch thick, with heavy harness snaps, which are also hooked in the eye-bolts, in the cross and screw-eyes in the corners.

I used, when I made the first trial of the kite, 2500 feet of silver lake sash cord, but found the strain too great, and had to procure the highest grade of Manila rope three-eighths of an inch thick. This rope stood the strain of a high wind without signs of breaking.



WORLD'S BIGGEST KITE.

In a strong breeze the pull, according to careful estimates, was from 400 to 600 pounds. I have at different times attached a bar a few hundred feet from the hitching point, and allowed myself to be pulled into the air to a height of a hundred feet. The kite floats at an angle of from fifty to eighty degrees, and my weight is 165 pounds. The weight of the kite, rigged, is seventy pounds.

It is a very easy matter to raise the kite. With the assistance of a few men the sticks and canvas are put together, and the flying rope securely hitched about a tree, the slack in the rope being nearly all taken in. The kite is laid flat on the ground with the top toward the hitching point, and in a fair breeze the monster is lifted up a little so as to catch the breeze. It does this very quickly, straightening up like a thing of life and rising with the wind as though anxious to be as obliging as possible. In order to counteract any tendency that the kite may have for tilting sideways, guide ropes are hung at the wings, and if necessary they can be used to keep the kite straight while it is rising from earth to the clouds.

Sixty Russian Languages.

Sixty languages are spoken in the empire governed by the Czar of Russia.

Indian Bicyclist.

Hole-in-the-Day, a wild Sioux Indian chief, is one of the most expert bicycle riders in Montana.

MINERAL WEALTH OF THE YUKON.

A Correspondent Tells of Possibilities in the Klondike Gold Region.

Owing to the peculiar climate and other conditions, nearly all placer mining in the Yukon country must be conducted by new methods or modifications of old methods. So far nothing but the crudest of mining, with the simplest of tools, has been done, and there are splendid opportunities for capital and engineering skill, writes John D. McGillivray in a Dawson City letter to the New York Herald.

This is not so much of a "poor man's country" as is generally reported, for no one can come here and accomplish anything without the expenditure of considerable money before expecting any return. Even prospecting cannot be done with any degree of satisfaction except at considerable expense.

The introduction of capital properly directed, with appropriate machinery and tools, will mean not only the rapid opening up of new districts, but the working at large profits of hundreds of miles or even thousands of miles of creeks which have been located and are now abandoned.

Children's Column



A Tidy Housekeeper.
Friday is our sweeping day;
Mother flies around
Till no tiny speck of dust
Can anywhere be found.

Course I have to help her
When she works so hard;
But she says I help her best
If I sweep the yard.

Just before the big barn door
There's a great broom stone;
With my mother's second broom
I sweep that—alone.

Papa laughs to see me sweep
Till I have to say:
"Cleaning house is women's work;
Don't get in my way!"
—Tudor Jenks, in The Outlook.

A Beaver Dam-Builder.

A man who had his doubts about beavers being able to build dams was presented with a baby beaver by a hunter. It became a great pet, but showed no signs of wanting to build a dam until one day a leaky pailful of water was put on the floor of the outfit-kitchen. The beaver was there, and though little more than a baby, when he saw the water oozing across the floor he scampered into the yard, brought a chip and began his work. His owner kept the pail filled and left building material at hand, and the little fellow kept at his work until he had built a solid dam around the pail. —Chicago Record.

City Soon to Be Famous.

Open your atlas at the map of Asia and look for the city with the long name of Vladivostok, on the eastern coast, north of Japan. A few years ago it was only a little, barren, straggling town of a few thousand inhabitants, most of whom were Chinese fishermen who lived in the deepest poverty. Now it is a rapidly growing city of more than 20,000 inhabitants and it will soon become one of the great ports and naval stations of the world. Last week the cornerstone of the new Russian public works was laid with great ceremony.

The importance of Vladivostok lies in the fact that it is at the terminus of the trans-Siberian railroad, which will run from Russia, a distance of over 5000 miles, across the barren stretches of Siberia. When completed it will have cost over \$175,000,000, making it one of the greatest business enterprises of modern times. This railroad will give Russia a great port on the Pacific ocean and enable her to develop the rich coal and iron mines of her vast territory, all of which will add to the importance of the new city. Vladivostok is also well located for a fortress, and it is expected that Russia will arm it and make it a base of supplies for her ships. Two months every year its harbor is frozen over, but the Russian government keeps a channel plowed through the ice with a great ice-crusher of American invention.

A Juvenile Marco Polo.

A boy, about fifteen years old, who calls himself "Richard James Vincent, the boy globe trotter," is in Hoboken, seeking free transportation to Buffalo. In the summer of 1893, he says, he left New York, and has visited almost every country on the earth, during all that time never handling a cent of money.

He said that letters of recommendation and autographs which he collected as he traveled made it easy to get first class transportation without any money whatever.

"It was only in such places as the interior of China," he said, "where I did not understand the language that I met with trouble. In China I went without a square meal for five months. On one occasion I called upon a mandarin and was invited to a meat breakfast."

"When I had finished a hearty meal I gathered up the bones on the dining table to feed my dog, which I always brought with me. To my surprise the servants informed me that I had feasted on my companion. They thought that I had brought the dog as a present, and they killed and cooked him so that I could partake of the feast."

"While going through India I had the best time of all. You ought to see how I was treated. Nothing was too good for me. Maharajahs or kings who govern the different sections of the country thought that I was the son of some big ruler of the whites. They could not understand where I came from or my object in traveling, so I let them think what they might."

"I got letters of introduction from one maharajah to another, and was given all the coolies I wished to aid me in my travels. The maharajahs called the coolies dogs. When I reached the foot of Mount Everest Sourdromahan Tajor, the maharajah of Darjeeling, gave me the services of eighty-five coolies to climb to the top of the mountain, a feat which I thought I could accomplish, although it is said no one ever got up further than 1600 feet."

"The mount is 20,000 feet above sea level. When I was up 15,000 feet all my coolies deserted me. I continued on until the blood oozed from my ears, nose and under my fingernails, when I was obliged to return

I was up 20,000 feet, which is higher than any living being was ever known to reach.

"Qumarramassar-Malish, the maharajah of Zanzibar-Bengal, supplied me with eight hundred coolies to go from Couch Bohare through the wilds of Tirehoot to the jungles of Ulvar, a distance of 825 miles. I am through traveling now, and intend to settle down to a quiet life."

The precocious youngster spent most of the day yesterday trying to get a pass over the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western railroad to Buffalo, where he says his friends live. —New York Herald.

An Ant's Heroism.

The sun was just setting when I returned, slightly fatigued, from my several miles' ride on my wheel. As is my custom on returning home, I took the garden hose and turned water into a small trench that had been dug around a maple tree for the purpose of holding water a sufficient time to permit the dirt adjacent to the roots to become thoroughly soaked.

Sitting down near by to rest, my attention was attracted to a group of small ants rushing hither and thither in an endeavor to escape. The bottom of the circular ditch being covered, about twenty of the ants sought safety on a large clod of earth. At first they were scattered about over the highest part of the little mound, and to all appearances were indifferent as to their surroundings. After a little one of the number proceeded leisurely around the little island, and after finishing the circuit hurried back to his companions. It appeared that they then for the first time realized that they were surrounded by water. The survey was repeated several times in quick succession. The group of ants gathered more closely together and seemed to be in a state of restless anxiety. As the water rose the circuit grew less, the vigil more earnest and the excitement greater with each return of the sentinel. They rushed about over each other in a terrible state of excitement, for the water was rapidly approaching. There was now hardly room for them to stand on; just a little while and that would be under water. They ceased struggling and settled down into motionless inactivity, and seemed entirely resigned to their fate.

I picked up a little stick and laid it across the water to the point where the ants were. They seemed dazed, and did not instantly take advantage of the means of escape offered them. One then crawled hurriedly up on the stick, went its full length out and over the blades of grass to the dry land. Without a second's hesitation he turned and retraced his steps to his companions. Now the smallest one of the group returned with him to dry land. They both retraced their steps and the work of rescue began. The rest seemed entirely subservient to the will of these two. Each, with a companion, hurried out to a place of safety.

The small one was much more active, he rescuing about two to the large one's one. Time was precious as the water was rapidly rising; it would soon be running around the outer end of the stick, and the island was melting away. One by one they were taken out, the guide accompanying the rescued one to a place of safety each time. Why they did not all follow the first one puzzled me, but they did not. The smaller ant now hurried forth with the last one. Still he was not content, and rushed back in search of others. The little hillock was now melted away, and he turned to seek safety for himself. He did not seem as much concerned as before. He did not hasten as when conscious of rescuing others. The water was running around the stick. The last avenue of escape was closed to him forever. He went to the highest point and settled down perfectly still. His previous conduct convinced me that he now fully realized that the case was hopeless so far as he was concerned.

Must the bravest of them all thus die when he could easily have escaped long ago? He willingly risked his own life that he might save others. Could a more genuine example of heroism be found in human annals? Could a more striking example of brotherly love and unselfish devotion be shown? Could a more earnest solicitude for the life of others be instanced? I think not. Within his own power this little insect had no possible means of escape. He did not fear death, neither did he die, but he was last to escape. I lifted the stick from the water and laid it on the ground. He crawled hurriedly away to his companions, whom he had recently rescued from the grasp of death. Whatever I may have done for them, I can but feel that, in his example, the little hero ant did much more for me. —St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Her Power of Speech Restored.

By patiently teaching the use of the lips for utterances, Dr. Willis D. Storer, a staff physician at Augustana hospital, Chicago, has restored the power of speech to Maggie E. Lauf.

Three years ago Miss Lauf's nervous system was shattered by a stroke of lightning. Since that time and up to about six weeks ago, the young woman had been unable to utter a sound. Dr. Storer trained Miss Lauf to use her lips as he would a child, and, after about two weeks of lessons, she suddenly partially regained her voice, and with constant practice has now entirely recovered the use of it.



MR. HILLER, 108 YEARS OLD.



MRS. HILLER, 106 YEARS OLD.

table drawer a lot of newspaper clippings, most of them yellow with age and creased with many foldings. One of them was Eugene Field's "Little Boy Blue," cut from a Chicago paper. The visitor read it through slowly, old Mrs. Hiller nodding to the rhythm of the words.

"My children are gone, too," she said; "four of them, and I'm ready

with a dull axe. All Canadians know how to chop wood, but Mr. Hiller no longer has strength for that.

In winter, when the deep snows come, he gets out of doors with a snow shovel and makes neat paths about the house and from the front door to the gate. The labor of shoveling does not seem too much for his muscular strength, but his thin blood



by Mr. Sleight, of Peshtigo, Wis. The chicken was one of a family of nine, all of which had rabbit feet.