

My Friend Pat

A Story of Colorado and the Emerald Isle

By WILLARD BLAKEMAN

When I was prospecting in the gold fields of Colorado and had made what I believed to be a strike I put some gold dust in one pocket for expenses and specimens for assay in the other, and started on foot down the mountain for Denver. On the way I fell in with a young Irishman, very ragged, with a bundle tied up in a red bandanna handkerchief and a short pipe in his mouth, at which he was pulling lustily.

"Good mornin' to you," he said cheerily.

"Good morning, Pat," I replied.

"How did you know my name was Pat?" he asked.

"By your brogue."

"Is it very broad?"

"No; but broad enough to give you away as a resident of the Emerald Isle."

"Northern Irish, is it?"

"I suppose so. What are you doing out in this country?"

"Oh, I came to dig for a fortune."

"And having made it you're going back home to enjoy it?"

"What made you think I've made my fortune?"

"Oh, by your eminently respectable appearance."

"Well, now, that's lucky!"

"Why so?"

"Because I'm sadly in need of a loan, and since I've made a fortune it'll be safe for you to favor me."

I laughed at the Irish wit, and the way the young man had caught me in a trap. I was feeling somewhat set up, for I believed I had struck a fortune myself. Besides we gold seekers in those days were prone to help one another.

"How much do you want?"

"Enough to take me to Ireland—a matter of \$100."

"I can't do that much for you, but I might spare \$50 to get you to New York. Couldn't you make up the rest in some other way?"

"Half a loaf is better than none."

We went on to Denver together, and I was greatly amused by his humor and an original way he had of viewing things. I sold my mine for enough to make me independent for life and got a few hundred dollars for a first payment. By this time I had become so friendly with my traveling companion that I advanced him the whole sum needed to take him to Ireland. I believed he had made the failure nearly all gold hunters make, and since I had been one of the few fortunate ones I was ready to give him a tiny bit from my bonanza.

"Where'll I send it?" he asked.

"You needn't send it at all. As soon as I get that deal closed out I'm going to Europe, and I'll see you there."

"Well, you'll find me on the estate of the Earl of Ballygarach. At any rate, inquire there for me."

"A tenant of his?"

"No."

"What's your place there?"

He hesitated, and it seemed to me he was trying to invent a reply, so I gave him a shake of the hand and said goodbye. I felt sure I was making a loan that would never be repaid, but I'd had to invent stories myself about my hole in the ground in order to obtain means to keep on digging, and I wouldn't have thanked any one to question me too closely. As I turned away from him I saw a peculiar look in his eye.

"Why do you look at me in that way, Pat?" I asked. I had always called him Pat, though his name was John Curran.

"I can't make out why you're lending me this money. Unless you give me your address, that I may return it, or your promise to see me in Ireland I refuse to take it."

"All right; you have my promise to see you in Ireland."

"Don't you go back on me by not coming," he added, and we parted.

The sale of my hole in the ground was conditional, and some months elapsed before the purchasers had satisfied themselves that the property was what I claimed for it. Then, after all, I was obliged to take a good deal of the stock in the company that was formed in part payment, but this didn't trouble me, for I had great confidence in the value of the mine. Indeed, my stock eventually became many times more valuable than the cash payment. It was a year after the sale before I found myself independent to do what I liked, and I set off on a tour around the world. My course was eastward and took in England as my first landing place. I had always a desire to visit Ireland and, after seeing England to my heart's content, crossed the Irish channel. But I regretted feeling obliged to hunt up my debtor. I didn't need the money I had loaned him, and I didn't believe he would be in condition to pay it. To tell the truth, I had no idea I would find him on the estate of the Earl of Ballygarach or that I would find him at all. This opinion was not based on the belief that he was dishonest, for he had an expression that invited confidence, but on the fact that necessity knows no law, and his necessities had probably forced him to invent all he had told me.

After visiting the principal cities in southern Ireland I worked my way northward and one day brought up at

a little town near the estate of the Earl of Ballygarach. I rode out to the place in an Irish two wheeled cart and, stopping at the manor house, asked the butler if he could tell me of a man on the estate of the name of John Curran, who about a year before had returned to Ireland from America. The servant gave me a blank stare, then led me into a reception room, invited me to be seated and went away.

Presently he returned and said that the earl was not at home and he was the only one who could give me the information. Milady desired that I should make myself at home—in the library if I liked—till his lordship's return. Since I was not averse to nosing among books I assented.

An hour passed in this way, when the butler entered and said that luncheon would soon be ready and asked if I would like to go to my room. Though I didn't like such trespassing, I was not averse to being entertained by an earl and his lady, so I followed the man upstairs. What was my astonishment on entering the room assigned me to see my baggage there.

"How did this come here?" I asked.

"Milady sent to the inn for it, sir."

I brushed up a bit and went downstairs again. The butler announced luncheon and led me into the dining room. I was received there by a very pretty young woman, who said to me:

"My husband will not return for an hour or two, and, since he does not like to have any one who calls during his absence turned away, I have taken it upon myself to make you at home. He is very fond of Americans and would never forgive me if I let one of them go away without some entertainment."

I protested that I had only called to learn of the whereabouts of one John Curran, whom I had met in Colorado, and the lady replied that the earl would give me any information in his possession on his return. She entertained me delightfully at luncheon, doing everything in her power to make me feel that I was welcome. Her voice was sweet and sounded still sweeter from the rich brogue of an Irish lady. She expressed great interest in America and kept me telling her of the country, the people and our customs. Just as we were about to rise from the table there was a sound of wheels without, the front door was thrown open, and a man stalked into the dining room.

Great heavens, he was Pat!

The moment he saw me he advanced and, grasping my hand, gave it a vigorous shake, saying:

"You've come at last, have you? I vowed that if you didn't come soon I'd go back to America to find you." Then, turning to the lady, he added:

"This is the gentleman I've been looking for."

"I supposed he was when he asked for John Curran, who had come from America a year ago."

"Well, I'm John Curran myself," added the host, "and I was Earl of Ballygarach when we were trudging together in Colorado, though I didn't know it. When I went out there were three lives between me and the title, but two of them had died, and I had heard that the third, my uncle, was very ill. I was trying to get home, but I didn't know what I should find here. I might find an estate waiting for me, and I might not be able to repay your loan; but, by Jove, old man, that was a queer thing for you to do—letting me have that money to get home with."

I said something about his honest countenance, but my conscience was not clear, and I didn't help the matter much. So I made light of the whole matter, mentioning the spirit that animated men who lived in new countries, their disposition to help one another, their respect for the softer sex and their harshness with anything unmanly. Lady Ballygarach was much interested in this account of a people she had never mingled with, though I fancied that it was because her husband had been one of them.

The earl then asked where I had put up, saying that he must send at once for my luggage, but his wife informed him that she had sent for it, whereupon he commended her highly and declared she was a trump.

The earl kept me a guest several weeks, during which he entertained me royally. He told me that he was a younger son in another branch of the family; that his father wished him to enter the army, but, having no fortune and being in love with the girl who was now his wife, he had preferred to go to America to seek his fortune. While away his father and his older brother had died, and his uncle, the earl, a bachelor, had fallen ill. The death of his father and brother had left him with no one to call upon for funds, and, as he had before told me, his uncle would not have helped him if he had asked for help.

I confess the change in him was so great from when I had known him in the gold diggings that it seemed strange to address him by his title. I was struggling to get it out and had advanced as far as Lord Ballygarach when he broke in upon me:

"Never mind that. Call me Pat. I became so far Americanized while in your country that these flourishes on a man's name sound ridiculous."

"Do you object to your title, Lady Ballygarach?" I asked.

"Not a bit of it," her husband replied for her. "What woman would?"

During the rest of my visit I called the earl Pat.

I became so fond of Pat that I found it difficult to tear myself away from him. He had had just the experience to make a man of him.

When I left him it was with the promise that he would return my visit in the land where we had both been poor. He did so, and my success as a miner enabled me to return his hospitality in kind in my own home.

NEW TALES THAT ARE TOLD

Sheridan's Best Throw.

Ever hear of the time when "Marty" Sheridan broke the lightweight throwing record? Mr. Sheridan is the pleasant and very broad shouldered doorman at Police Commissioner Waldo's office in New York city. He is also the holder of an all around world's championship medal, which he won at Athens several years ago. Sheridan told the story himself.

"I competed in an athletic affair over in Jersey once," said he. "Among the prizes was a very handsome gold watch. It looked as though it were worth a pot of money. I determined to win that watch if I had to throw my arm out, and I did. All the way into town I kept taking that watch out of my pocket and patting it. I thought I'd have my name and the



"SURE I DID," SAYS I. "HOW MUCH IS IT WORTH?"

Sheridan coat of arms engraved on it in two or three places. When I got back to town it occurred to me that I should get a line on its value. So I went to a pawnbroker on Park row.

"How much can I borrow on that?" I asked.

"My friend," said the pawnbroker, looking at me, "you did not get that honestly."

"Sure I did!" says I. "What's it worth?"

"My friend," said the pawnbroker, "if you give me a quarter I shall tell you how much less that watch worth."

"So I gave him a quarter. Then he shoved the watch back to me. 'You had just got me this quarter,' said he. 'My friend, I wouldn't give your own quarter to you for that watch.'"

"So then I walked out on Park row and threw that watch over Brooklyn bridge. I guess that'll stand as a world's record for awhile, hey?"—New York Cor. Cincinnati Times-Star.

A TURKEY THIEF'S EASY CONSCIENCE.

How Uncle Cal Clay Excused His Dereliction.

The Rev. Algernon S. Crapsey in an interview during the Little Falls strike said of a very religious and very notorious child labor millionaire:

"This man reminds me of Uncle Calhoun Clay.

"Uncle Cal was accused of stealing a turkey, and the Sunday after the accusation being communion Sunday, the old fellow was one of the first communicants at the little white church.

"His pastor, the Rev. Washington White, said to him reproachfully after the service:

"Calhoun Clay, I'm ashamed of you. The idea of your coming to communion after stealing a turkey!"

"Lands a massy, pahson," said old Uncle Cal, 'do you think I'd let a skiny old turkey hardly worth 10 cents a pound stand betwixt me and the Lord's table?'"

No Claimants Likely.

Despite the view that players are extravagant and don't save their money, Ada Lewis is a frugal actress, and she has been putting her money away for years. She owns an apartment building in New Rochelle, N. Y. When she went down there to make arrangements for building the apartment, she was waited upon by members of the chamber of commerce, who congratulated her upon her enterprise.

"Will dogs be allowed in the building?" was asked.

"No."

"Will children be barred?"

"No, indeed!" was the quick reply.

"And I will go you one better. I will give a month's rent free to the parents of every baby born in the apartment."

This pleased the committee immensely, and as they bowed out she smiled a little and remarked:

"But I forgot to say this is to be a bachelor apartment."

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