

In the Days of Poor Richard

CHAPTER XIV—Continued.
—14—

Their mission finished, that evening Jack and Solomon called at General Washington's headquarters.

"General, Doctor Franklin told us to turn over the horses and wagons to you," said Solomon. "He didn't tell us what to do with ourselves 'cause 'twasn't necessary an' he knew it. We want to enlist."

"For what term?"
"Till the British are licked."
"You are the kind of men I need," said Washington. "I shall put you on scout duty. Mr. Irons will go into my regiment of sharpshooters with the rank of captain. You have told me of his training in Philadelphia."

So the two friends were enlisted and began service in the army of Washington.

A letter from Jack to his mother dated July 25, 1775, is full of the camp color:

"General Charles Lee is in command of my regiment," he writes. "He is a rough, slovenly old dog of a man who seems to bark at us on the training ground. He has two or three hunting dogs that live with him in his tent and also a rare gift of profanity which is with him everywhere—save at headquarters."

"Today I saw these notices posted in camp:

"Punctual attendance on divine service is required of all not on actual duty."

"No burning of the pope allowed."

"Fifteen stripes for denying duty."

"Ten for getting drunk."

"Thirty-nine for stealing and desertion."

"Rogues are put in terror, lazy men are energized. The quarters are kept clean, the food is well cooked and in plentiful supply, but the British over in town are said to be getting hungry."

Early in August a London letter was forwarded to Jack from Philadelphia. He was filled with new hope as he read these lines:

"Dearest Jack: I am sailing for Boston on one of the next troop ships to join my father. So when the war ends—God grant it may be soon—you will not have far to go to find me. Perhaps by Christmas time we may be together. Let us both pray for that. Meanwhile, I shall be happier for being nearer you and for doing what I can to heal the wounds made by this wretched war. I am going to be a nurse in a hospital. You see the truth is that since I met you, I like all men better, and I shall love to be trying to relieve their sufferings. . . ."

It was a long letter but above is as much of it as can claim admission to these pages.

"Who but she could write such a letter?" Jack asked himself, and then he held it to his lips a moment. It thrilled him to think that even then she was probably in Boston. In the tent where he and Solomon lived when they were both in camp, he found the scout. The night before Solomon had slept out. Now he had built a small fire in front of the tent and lain down on a blanket, having delivered his report at headquarters.

"Margaret is in Boston," said Jack as soon as he entered, and then standing in the firelight read the letter to his friend.

"That is a real, genuine, likely gal," said the scout.

"I wish there were some way of getting to her," the young man remarked.

"Might as well think o' goin' to h—l an' back ag'in," said Solomon. "Since Bunker Hill the British are like a lot o' hornets. I run onto one o' 'em to-day. He fired at me an' didn't hit a thing but the air an' an' like a scared rabbit. Could 'a' killed him easy but I kind o' enjoyed seein' him run. He were like chain lightning on a greased pole—you hear to me."

"If the general will let me, I'm going to try spy duty and see if I can get into town and out again," he proposed.

"You keep out o' that business," said Solomon. "They're too many that know ye over in town. The two Clarkes an' their friends an' Colonel Hare an' his friends, an' Cap. Preston, an' a hull passle. They know all 'bout ye. If you got snapped, they'd stan' ye ag'in a wall an' put ye out o' the way quick. It would be pie for the Clarkes, an' the ol' man Hare wouldn't spill no tears over it. Cap. Preston couldn't save ye, that's sartin. No, sir, I won't 'low it. They's plenty o' old cusses fer such work."

For a time Jack abandoned the idea, but later, when Solomon failed to return from a scouting tour and a report reached camp that he was captured, the young man began to think of that rather romantic plan again. He had grown a full beard; his skin was tanned; his clothes were worn and torn and faded. His father, who had visited the camp bringing a supply of clothes for his son, had failed, at first, to recognize him.

December had arrived. The general was having his first great trial in keeping an army about him. Terms of enlistment were expiring. Cold weather had come. The camp was uncomfortable. Regiments of the home-sick lads of New England were leaving or preparing to leave. Jack and a number of young ministers in the service organized a campaign of persuasion and many were prevailed upon to re-enlist. But hundreds of boys were hurrying homeward on the frozen roads.

One day Jack was sent for. He and

By IRVING BACHELLER
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his company had captured a number of men in a skirmish.

"Captain, you have done well," said the general. "I want to make a scout of you. In our present circumstances it's about the most important, dangerous and difficult work there is to be done here, especially the work which Solomon Binkus undertook to do. There is no other in whom I should have so much confidence. Major Bartlett knows the part of the line which Colonel Binkus traversed. He will be going out that way tomorrow. I should like you, sir, to go with him. After one trip I shall be greatly pleased if you are capable of doing the work alone."

Orders were delivered and Jack reported to Bartlett, an agreeable, middle-aged farmer-soldier, who had been on scout duty since July. They left camp together next morning an hour before reveille. They had an uneventful day, mostly in wooded flats and ridges, and from the latter looking across with a spy-glass into Bruteiland, as they called the country held by the British, and seeing only, now and then, an enemy picket or distant camp. About midday they sat down in a thicket together for a bite to eat and a whispered conference.

"Binkus, as you know, had his own way of scouting," said the major. "He was an Indian fighter. He liked to get inside the enemy lines and lie close an' watch 'em an' mebbe hear what they were talking about. Now an' then he would surprise a British sentinel and disarm him an' bring him into camp."

Jack wondered that his friend had never spoken of the capture of prisoners.

"He was a modest man," said the young scout.

"He didn't want the British to know where Solomon Binkus was at work, and I guess he was wise," said the major. "I advise against taking the chances that he took. It ain't necessary. You would be caught much sooner than he was."

That day Bartlett took Jack over Solomon's trail and gave him the lay of the land and much good advice. A young man of Jack's spirit, however, is apt to have a degree of enterprise and self-confidence not easily controlled by advice. He had been travel-



ing alone for three days when he felt the need of more exciting action. That night he crossed the Charles river on the ice in a snowstorm and captured a sentinel and brought him back to camp.

Soon after that the daring spirit of the youth led him into a great adventure. It was on the night of January fifth that Jack penetrated the British lines in a snowstorm and got close to an outpost in a strip of forest. There a camp fire was burning. He came close. His garments had been whitened by the storm. The air was thick with snow, his feet were muffled in a foot of it. He sat by a stump scarcely twenty feet from the fire, seeing those in its light, but quite invisible. There he could distinctly hear the talk of the Britishers. It related to a proposed evacuation of the city by Howe.

"I'm weary of starving to death in this God-forsaken place," said one of them. "You can't keep an army without meat or vegetables. I've eaten fish till I'm getting scales on me."

"Colonel Riffington says that the army will leave here within a fortnight," another observed.

It was important information which had come to the ear of the young scout. The talk was that of well-bred Englishmen who were probably officers.

"We ought not to speak of those matters aloud," one of them remarked. "Some d—d Yankee may be listening like the one we captured."

"He was Amherst's old scout," said another. "He swore a blue streak when we shoved him into jail. They don't like to be treated like rebels. They want to be prisoners of war."

A young man came along with his rifle on his shoulder.

"Hello, Bill!" said one of the men.

"Going out on post?"

"I am, God help me," the youth answered. "It's what I'd call a h—l of a night."

The sentinel passed close by Jack on his way to his post. The latter crept

away and followed, gradually closing in upon his quarry. When they were well away from the fire, Jack came close and called, "Bill!"

The sentinel stopped and faced about.

"You've forgotten something," said Jack, in a genial tone.

"What is it?"

"Your caution," Jack answered, with his pistol against the breast of his enemy. "I shall have to kill you if you call or fall to obey me. Give me the rifle and go on ahead. When I say go to the right, haw to the left."

So the capture was made, and on the way out Jack picked up the sentinel who stood waiting to be relieved and took both men into camp.

From documents on the person of one of these young Britishers it appeared that General Clarke was in command of a brigade behind the lines which Jack had been watching and robbing.

When Jack delivered his report the chief called him a brave lad and said: "It is valuable information you have brought to me. Do not speak of it. Let me warn you, captain, that from now on they will try to trap you. Perhaps, even, you may look for daring enterprises on that part of their line."

The general was right. The young scout ran into a most daring and successful British enterprise on the twentieth of January. The snow had been swept away in a warm rain and the ground had frozen bare, or it would not have been possible. Jack had got to a strip of woods in a lonely bit of country near the British lines and was climbing a tall tree to take observations when he saw a movement on the ground beneath him. He stopped and quickly discovered that the tree was surrounded by British soldiers. One of them, who stood with a raised rifle, called to him:

"Irons, I will trouble you to drop your pistols and come down at once."

Jack saw that he had run into an ambush. He dropped his pistols and came down. He had disregarded the warning of the general. He should have been looking out for an ambush. A squad of five men stood about him with rifles in hand. Among them was Lionel Clarke, his right sleeve empty.

"We've got you at last—you d—d rebel!" said Clarke.

"I suppose you need some one to swear at," Jack answered.

"And to shoot at," Clarke suggested.

"I thought that you would not care for another match with me," the young scout remarked as they began to move away.

"Hereafter you will be treated like a rebel and not like a gentleman," Clarke answered.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that you will be standing, blindfolded against a wall."

"That kind of a threat doesn't scare me," Jack answered. "We have too many of your men in our hands."

CHAPTER XV

In Boston Jail.

Jack was marched under guard into the streets of Boston. Church bells were ringing. It was Sunday morning. Young Clarke came with the guard beyond the city limits. They had seemed to be very careless in the control of their prisoner. They gave him every chance to make a break for liberty. Jack was not fooled.

"I see that you want to get rid of me," said Jack to the young officer. "You'd like to have me run a race with your bullets. That is base ingratitude. I was careful of you when we met and you do not seem to know it."

"I know how well you can shoot," Clarke answered. "But you do not know how well I can shoot."

"And when I learn, I want to have a fair chance for my life."

Beyond the city limits young Clarke, who was then a captain, left them, and Jack proceeded with the others.

The streets were quiet—indeed almost deserted. There were no children playing on the common. A crowd was coming out of one of the churches. In the midst of it the prisoner saw Preston and Lady Hare. They were so near that he could have touched them with his hand as he passed. They did not see him. He noted the name of the church and its minister. In a few minutes he was delivered at the jail—a noisome, ill-smelling, badly ventilated place.

The yard was an opening walled in by the main structure and its two wings and a wooden fence some fifteen feet high. There was a ragged, dirty rabble of "rebel" prisoners, among whom was Solomon Binkus, all out for an airing. The old scout had lost flesh and color. He held Jack's hand and stood for a moment without speaking.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

His Lesson Went Wrong

The teacher was trying to impress on the children how important had been the discovery of the law of gravitation.

"Sir Isaac Newton was sitting on the ground looking at the tree. An apple fell on his head, and from that he discovered gravitation. Just think, children," she added, "Isn't that wonderful?"

The inevitable small boy replied: "Yes, miss, an' if he had been sittin' in school lookin' at his books he wouldn't never have discovered nothin'."

THE PRICE OF HATE

By LEROY WALLINGFORD

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The price of a drop of water is sometimes high, though not because of nervousness over crop conditions in the Southwest or the fact that there are only a few million quarts of corn derivative left in the ice chest. The war has nothing to do with this case.

CHALMERS moved hurriedly out of the path of a wave that swept proudly over the damp mark made by its predecessor.

and the waves gurgled pleasantly as if amused at the beachcomber's haste. The movement aroused Delcroix, and he followed the example of his partner by rolling over the hot sand as the tide crept stealthily in.

The silence was intense. It seemed to rise out of the panting ocean, a smothering influence that choked the weird notes of the wood pigeons and hushed the cicadas that sent shrill, needle-like noises from the green masses over which the lawyer vines crept like a living net.

"Go on," murmured Delcroix; "your pauses would lead anyone to think you were making up the yarn as you went along." He spoke irritably, as if the silence that flung itself upon them each time that Chalmers stopped talking had upset his nerves.

The sun-tanned features of his companion wrinkled into a cynical sneer.

"Perhaps I am making it up," he said, quietly. "Sometimes—sometimes when I tell it to anyone like I am telling it to you, I wonder if I didn't read it in a book years ago, and just fooled myself into the belief that it happened to me."

He paused for an instant and moistened his dry lips.

"That's a lie!" he cried sharply, turning suddenly upon his companion as if he would destroy the doubt occasioned by his last remark. "This is the truth! I never think that I read it, not this yarn, Delcroix! I know that—that this thing—where did I stop? Oh, I remember! Well, our three Kling divers muzzled the silt near the Horse Shoe Shoal for weeks, and we piled black-lip shell into the hold by the ton. God, it was rich! We'd sit of a night on the deck of that old lugger while the smell of half the world's nations drifted over the tropic seas, and we'd dream of what we'd do with our profits. He'd do the picturing—that's why I hated him so much afterwards."

"I remember those nights. The darkness just sneaked down from Asia like a drifting blanket, and the yell of Javanese from the prahu fleet would sting the silence like a whip. Ever listen to the cities calling in the night, Delcroix? Clink of glasses, kid's prattle, sound of shoes on the pavement, and the laugh of women—it just gets into your breast like an iron hand and twists your heart strings till you choke for breath."

A big wave slipped forward quietly and sloped over the bare feet of the two beachcombers, and Delcroix cursed as they rolled out of its path.

"It was on one blazing hot day in September that he cut loose," continued Chalmers. "I pulled across to a whaleboat on the other side of the reef, and coming back I was just dreaming of wheat fields and orange groves two thousand miles away as I stuck the oars into that sea of melted glass. Then I sort of woke up and looked around. The old lugger was squealing down the seas, and that swine was rushing round helping the Klings to spread more cloth."

"Do you know how those little puffs of air race round in the tropics? God's breaths the Orang Lauts call 'em. They hit a boat every five minutes and leave a stillness after them that gives you a cold shiver. Well, the lugger was getting those little whiffs now and then, so I put after her. I can feel that pull now. Every ray of the yellow sun went through my back like a poisoned arrow, and the reflection on the oily waters blinded me. He could have potted me with a gun at times when I gained on the boat, but he didn't. He just raced round spreading more cloth, and just when I thought there was a chance of getting aboard, one of those little puffs would get tangled up in the sails, and the old lugger would roll away like a drunken thing."

"I don't know how far I followed him. After a time I couldn't see, but I kept on pulling. I was blinded with the glare from that red-painted ocean, and every time I dipped the oars I screamed in agony. Once I was quite near. I could hear him yelling at the crew, then he seemed to understand from my actions that I couldn't see, and he stopped talking, and all I could hear was the creaking of the ropes as the old tub got the wind again."

"I was picked up by a trepang-laden prau bound for Macassar, and that kept me three months off his trail. It was three months of hell for me. Then I started out to beat the coast from Thursday Island to Cape Otway in search of him, and every day made me more eager."

"I thought I saw him a score of times. The swine's face sprang from my brain onto the heads of people that didn't resemble him in the slightest. Ever have that happen to you? At Keppel Bay I clutched a pearling skipper who had a beard like his, and I got a knife in the ribs for my foolishness. I met him a thousand times a

day—it's true, Delcroix. In the night I'd spring up thinking he was in the room, and then I would go blind like I did on the day he sailed away and left me at the Horse Shoe Shoal.

"Something seemed to have pulled me to Bluemud Bay. It was the last spot I expected to find him, and when the old lugger caught my eye I couldn't believe that he was still on her. When McKay of the coal hulk told me that he still ran her, I nearly went crazy, and the hours between then and sunset were years of misery."

"I pulled over after sundown, and it was dark when I came under the bows. Things seemed to be coming my way at last. When I started to climb the chains every smell that drifted over Horse Shoe Shoal came to me again, and my brain started to dig out all the pretty little pictures that he used to paint about the times we would have in Lonsdale street. I felt good, Delcroix."

"I got a shock when I touched the deck. A woman rose out of the shadow and caught me by the arm. 'Doctor?' she asked, and before I could answer she was leading me down the stairs to the cabin, the stairs that I had been up and down ten thousand times before. I knew then that it was he. She took me up to the bunk, and there he was tossing in a fever and cursing in all the dialects of Polynesia."

"The doctor stunk when I saw the condition he was in. The woman hadn't slept for three nights, so I sent her away, and sat down to watch him. Somebody has said that the world is only a kraal, and it seemed like it to me just then. Sometimes as I watched him I forgot all about the hunt of the previous ten months and thought we were back piling that black-lip shell into the lugger at the reef."

"About midnight he became conscious, and then he made a motion for water. It was in a bottle on the table, and it was as warm as Torres Straits on a midsummer day. Would you have given him water, Delcroix? You wouldn't! Well, I didn't like to give it to him, so I offered to sell it to him. He didn't recognize me till I told him the price. 'Ten drops of water in exchange for a pearl,' I said, and then he began to understand that Fate had run him up against something."

Delcroix laughed grimly. "A stiff price," he murmured. "Was it stiff? You have no imagination. Why it was a bargain sale price after what I had suffered!"

"He refused to buy for two hours, and then his thirst got the better of him. I didn't think he had the grit that he showed then. His lips were black, and his curses just ran into a long gurgle because his tongue couldn't hack them into word lengths. Then I put up the price. 'Five drops for a pearl,' I said, and he nodded his head toward a black box in the corner of the cabin, and let me see that the key was under his pillow."

"There were 57 beauties in the little bag, and I laid them out near the water bottle so that he could see that I was acting honest. I measured out five drops of the warm liquid and gave it to him, then I put one of the pearls back into the bag and put the bag into my pocket. He bought again in five minutes, then he bought ten drops in one lot, and then fifteen, and then twenty. Ever hear of water going at that price? But I was honest. I only took the price I had fixed, and when there was an extra large pearl I gave him good measure to make up for it."

"I cautioned him against extravagance when he bought a spoonful of the stuff in one lot, and I thought he would expire in an apoplectic fit. He spluttered that much that he lost half of his purchase, and he had to repeat the order. No goldfield shanty ever did a trade like mine that night in Bluemud Bay. D'ye think I was getting a good return for that pull after the lugger?"

"He swilled the lot away inside three hours, and when he saw the last pearl go he lost consciousness again and started to babble about the profits that he made on the trip when I had the half share. I left him then. I tip-toed quietly up the stairs and slipped down the chains into the boat. Half-way across the bay I ran into a dingy carrying the doctor from the mission schooner, and I was so darned pleased over the night's business that I directed him to the lugger which his two Kanaka boys had been trying to find for the previous three hours. Then people tell you there is no such thing as luck."

Delcroix buried his legs in the warm sand and sat looking out to sea. "What did you do with the loot?" he asked, after a long pause.

"The loot?" cried Chalmers. "I went down to Peterson's—Oh, what's the use of telling now. The loot? D—n it, it was mine! I couldn't hold it, though. What did I do with it? You're an idiot, Delcroix. You're an infernal idiot!" He stood up and brushed the sand from his tattered trousers, then turned and swung down the trail towards the cluster of huts near which the beche-de-mer fleet lay at anchor.

Wrong Ideas About Dogs

Many people pamper their dogs against colds. If a dog has not had distemper care in this respect is advisable, but ordinarily dogs are not affected by the germs of colds. Another curious belief is that a dog's ailments can be contracted by human beings. This is true only in the case of certain skin troubles. Even more curious is the belief that in what are known as the "dog days"—the first fortnight in August—a dog is liable to go mad. There is no cause for such a superstition. I met him a thousand times a

WASHINGTON

By DOUGLAS MALLOCH

THIS was his greatness; he combined

Vision and judgment, fact and dream; His was the truly balanced mind,

Not skeptical, nor yet extreme.

No thinker quicker caught the gleam Of new-born stars in human skies,

And yet he tested star and stream, On earth and heaven kept his eyes.

This was his greatness; he could be Leader and comrade, master, man;

He wore the robe of dignity,

With human brotherhood his plan. He was the first American,

A pattern for a nation now, His soul as large as heaven's span,

His heart as tender as its dew.

This was his greatness; Washington Met strength with strength, yet could be kind

Without the look of weakness—one Who firmness, gentleness, combined.

His was the truly balanced mind That none could flatter nor defame;

To glory and ambition blind, He won, unsought, a deathless name,

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Your Last Name

IS IT KISSAM?

THERE seems to be much difference of opinion and uncertainty concerning the surname Kissam. However, there is no uncertainty concerning the fact that the family was founded in this country by one John Kissam,

born in 1644, who made his home in Flushing, L. I. It is not known where he was born. That is, some authorities say that he was born in England, while others say he was a native of Amsterdam, Holland, and others have it that he was a Huguenot from Montpellier, France. It would be interesting for some member of the Kissam family to trace to its source each one of these traditions.

The fact that the Kissams were always strong supporters of the English or Episcopal church certainly suggests that they were English rather than Hollanders, though there are some instances of families of Dutch name having become devoted Episcopalians. Sometimes the fact that the head of the family married women of that church led to the future alliance of the family with that church.

It is also recalled that the Kissams were strong Tories in the Revolution, a fact that has been cited in proof of the English origin of the family. But this might be explained in another way. The Kissams were from the first persons of prominence in Queens county, Long Island, and intermarried with the Whitehead, Rutgers, Hewlett, Treadwell, Combs, Van Brunt, Vanderbilt and other prominent families in and about New York city.

Simple—There is no doubt that this is derived from an earlier form of surname, St. Paul. This sort of contraction of a saint's name was quite usual.

Holland—At first sight you might suppose that the first to bear this name was a native of the Netherlands, but it is an English name derived from a small place in Lancashire called Holland.

Maud—This is clearly a matronymic. That is to say, it is a surname derived from the mother rather than from the father.

Low—This is usually a German-Jewish name and, of course, is from the word meaning lion in German. About a hundred years ago, when German Jews were required by law to adopt a definite surname, many took names of animals and birds, as Adler, Eagle, Hirsch, Hart and Wolf.

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The Young Lady Across the Way



The young lady across the way says she supposes the shipping interests will get on their feet before long now, since it's definitely settled that they don't have to pay any subsidy. (© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)