

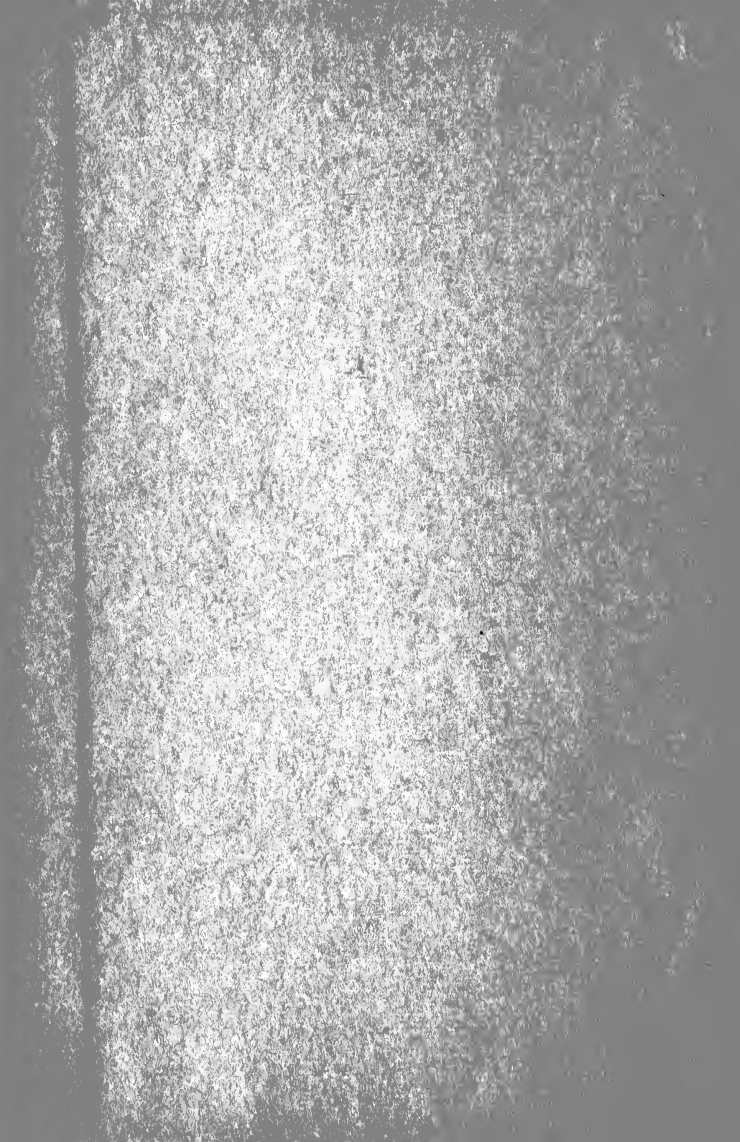
REFERENCE ROOM

973 Blaisdell 7078

The American history story
book

NY PUBLIC LIBRARY THE BRANCH LIBRARIES
3 3333 05824 4167

THE CENTRAL CHILDREN'S ROOM
DONNELL LIBRARY CENTER
20 WEST 53 STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation



**THE AMERICAN HISTORY
STORY-BOOK**





YOUNG CAPTAIN GRANDPRÉ, SWORD IN HAND, FACED
THE DRAGOON

FRONTISPIECE. See Page 117.

The American History Story-Book

By

ALBERT F. BLAISDELL

AND

FRANCIS K. BALL

Authors of "Hero Stories from American History," etc.

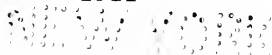
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY

FRANK T. MERRILL

Boston

Little, Brown, and Company

1911



P R E F A C E

THIS little book is designed to be used as a supplementary historical reader for the fourth and fifth grades of our public schools, or for other young persons from ten to fifteen years of age. It is also intended for collateral reading in connection with the study of the numerous elementary text-books on American history.

The authors have attempted to describe in some detail the perils, the arduous struggles, the stern lessons of self-denial, and the staunch patriotism of the early settlers of this country. Personal anecdotes and incidents which thrill us because of their human element and which smack of the picturesque life of our forefathers have been freely used. Such historical material, instinct with human life, serves a most useful purpose in teach-

PREFACE

ing elementary history. Experienced teachers know that such material attracts and holds the attention of boys and girls and tends to stimulate them to learn more about the history of their country.

These stories rest upon a substantial historical basis. They have been diligently culled from many trustworthy sources. This book would indeed prove of little worth to young people if it could be read at a glance and then thrown aside like the ordinary story-book. It is suggested that teachers and parents supplement and enrich the text of this book with such other historical material as may be readily obtained from school, home, or public libraries.

ALBERT F. BLAISDELL.

FRANCIS K. BALL.

May, 1911.



CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. ELIZABETH TILLEY, THE YOUNG PILGRIM GIRL	1
II. SQUANTO HELPS THE PILGRIMS	9
III. THE BRAVERY OF HANNAH DUSTIN	19
IV. A FAMOUS WRITING - DESK	28
V. BESSIE FISHER OUTWITS THE TORIES	37
VI. TEMPY WICKS HIDES HER HORSE	44
VII. PEGGY MILLER GOES MARKETING	50
VIII. PAUL RUSSELL'S BACON IS SAVED	59
IX. FIGHTING THE BRITISH WITH BEES	67
X. A TIMELY JACK - O' - LANTERN	73
XI. MERCY TYLER TRAPS A PANTHER	80
XII. BESSIE BRANDON'S UNEXPECTED GUEST	86
XIII. DAVID MILLER KILLS A RATTLESNAKE	92
XIV. LITTLE JARVIS, THE MIDSHIPMAN	98
XV. HELEN PATTERSON'S ESCAPE	106
XVI. A LAST BLOW FOR SPAIN	112
XVII. THE CHARGE OF THE HOUNDS	121
XVIII. THE DEFENSE OF FORT STEPHENSON	126

ILLUSTRATIONS

Young Captain Grandpré, sword in hand, faced the dragoon	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Squanto now taught them how to get the old Indian cornfield ready for a new crop	<i>Page 15</i>
Mr. Dustin stopped his horse and faced the savages	“ 23
“That will make King George gnash his teeth,” said the genial old gentleman	“ 33
It was a mad race for an hour	“ 57
“Do you please sit down with me, and I shall enjoy this good breakfast with you”	“ 90

THE AMERICAN HISTORY STORY-BOOK

I

ELIZABETH TILLEY, THE YOUNG PILGRIM GIRL

JOHN TILLEY was a blacksmith. He lived in London, where with plenty of work he made a home for himself and his family.

Now there were some people in England who did not like the English church and believed they had a right to worship God in their own way. John Tilley was one of them. The King of England told them they must go to his church or be sent to prison. Some of these people were really put into prison; others were driven from their homes and native land; some were even put to death.

“Let us go away,” they said to one another. “Let us find a country where we can worship God as we please.”

And so it came to pass that they hired a vessel, and with their women and children crossed the sea to Holland. Here they were allowed to worship as they saw fit.

John Tilley's daughter Elizabeth thought Holland was an odd country. Indeed it is. It is almost as flat as a floor. It is so low and so little above the level of the sea that the tide could flow over the land. The people of Holland built great walls, called dykes, which kept the ocean out. But there were canals which ran everywhere like great spiderwebs, even through the main streets of the cities.

As the years passed by, other good people came across the sea from England, to make homes for themselves in Holland. At the end of twelve years there were about a thousand of them. They were a thrifty and hard-working people. They liked their new friends,

and were liked by them. Still, it was not England; and at last they began to feel that it was not best for them to live any longer in a strange land. Their children were already learning the ways of the country and could speak Dutch as well as English.

“We are pilgrims in a strange land,” murmured the good Elder Brewster.

“This will never do in the world,” said Goodman Tilley to his wife one day. “Look at Elizabeth and the children she is playing with in the garden. They are talking Dutch so fast I don’t know a word they are saying. It is high time for us to cross the great ocean and make a new home for ourselves in America.”

“In truth, John,” answered Goodwife Tilley, “we could indeed live there under the rule of King James of England and yet be free to worship as we pleased. Let us talk it over with our good pastor, Elder Robinson, and get his advice.”

Thus it came about that in the summer of

1620 a little company of these people bade good-by to Holland, and sailed away to England in an old vessel called the Speedwell.

Another vessel, named the Mayflower, was waiting for them. The Speedwell, however, was found to be too old and leaky to make the voyage across the Atlantic. She was said to be as open and leaky as a sieve. After many delays a hundred people were crowded into the Mayflower and set sail from Plymouth in September, 1620, on the long voyage across the sea.

At first Elizabeth Tilley and several other young girls of her age liked to watch the waves and the strange sights about the vessel. But after a time it came on stormy, and the women and children were often sent below, where it was cold and dreary, with scarcely room enough to move about. It was a long voyage of sixty-three days. The Mayflower was a frail and leaky craft to cross the Atlantic even in midsummer. Storm after storm arose, and

it often seemed as if the vessel would go to the bottom with all on board.

In the midst of the ocean a baby was born to Master Stephen Hopkins and his wife Elizabeth. We are told that the tiny baby was a great comfort to all on board.

“ What shall we name him? ” asked Elizabeth Tilley of her mother one day, when the boy was a week old.

“ The poor thing was born on the ocean; and why not call him Oceanus? ”

The name pleased the mother, and the baby was named Oceanus Hopkins.

“ Land! land! ” shouted a sailor, early one morning.

Yes, there was land; but it was not Virginia or New Jersey, as the Pilgrims expected. The last storm had driven the Mayflower out of her course. They had come to what is now known as the coast of New England. The low, sandy beach before them was the tip of Cape Cod. In spite of the perilous shoals and head winds the Mayflower

rounded the Cape, and soon dropped anchor in what is now the harbor of Provincetown.

This was late in November, in the year 1620. How cold and bleak the icy coast of Cape Cod looked on that November day! There was not a living thing to be seen anywhere, except the gulls, as they flew with shrill cries across the harbor.

Before anybody went ashore, a writing was drawn up, and forty-one of the men signed it. They used Governor Bradford's chest for a table. In this writing they said they would defend one another and obey such laws as should be made. They also chose John Carver as governor of the colony.

Bright and early the first morning on shore the women went to washing the clothes, for they had not been able to do washing on board the Mayflower. This was on a Monday; and Monday, as we know, has ever since been used in New England as wash-day.

Meanwhile the men made three trips along

the shore of Cape Cod Bay, to find a place to build their homes. The third trip was made in their frail sailboat. It was bitter cold, and the sea was rough. A snowstorm set in, and they were soon in great peril. The rudder broke, and the mast came crashing down on their heads. The men rowed toward a little cove and brought their boat ashore. This proved to be on an island well out from the mainland. It is now known as Clarke's Island. On the next day but one they rowed over to the mainland.

At last they had found a good place. This was Plymouth. They called it "a beautiful spot, with cornfields and little running brooks." They quickly sailed back to Cape Cod to carry the good news.

The Mayflower had been at anchor in Provincetown Harbor for a month. The frozen sails were now unfurled, the anchor raised, and the good ship was headed for the mainland across the great bay of Cape Cod. On Saturday, December 20, 1620, the May-

flower dropped anchor in Plymouth Harbor, about a mile from the shore.

At last the long voyage was at an end. The Pilgrims had found a home on the bleak shore of New England.

And what about Elizabeth Tilley? John Tilley and his wife did not endure the cold and hunger of the first winter. They died early the next spring. Elizabeth married a man by the name of John Howland. This was the young man that fell overboard in mid-ocean, but was quick enough to catch hold of a trailing rope, and was pulled on board the Mayflower more dead than alive. As the records tell us, this worthy couple were still living thirty years after the landing, with a family of ten children. Elizabeth lived for sixty-seven years after reaching the Plymouth shore.

II

SQUANTO HELPS THE PILGRIMS

WHEN the Pilgrims reached New England, their hardships had only begun. The Mayflower had to anchor more than a mile from the shore, the water was so shallow. Except at high tide they could not land, even in their boat, without wading in the icy water. Some of the men made a trip ashore to spy out the land. The weather was cold and stormy and the whole country looked bleak and dreary; for winter had set in early that year.

The place where the Pilgrims landed had once been an Indian village. They thought they should find Indians lurking in the woods; but all the people had died of the plague,

and not a living creature was to be seen. The cornfields were left for the newcomers to plant. There were several running brooks and a large spring close by, from which they could get plenty of fresh water.

The first thing to do was to stake out the land and build some kind of house. That first Christmas on the Plymouth shore must indeed have been hard. Governor Bradford wrote in his journal, "No man rested on that day; we had a sore storm of wind and rain." It was on that dreary Christmas morning that they began to build their first log house, a cabin about twenty feet square, for storing their goods.

The women and children stayed on board the Mayflower. They had to breathe the bad air of the cabin, and suffered from cold and hunger. The men came ashore in good weather and worked all day in building log cabins and moving their household goods. It was slow and hard work. The winter days were short and often stormy. It took a long

time to go to and from the vessel, and their food was poor and scanty.

So slow was the work that at the end of the first year there were only four log storehouses and seven log cabins in the whole settlement.

Sickness and death came too. During the first winter nearly one half of the colony died. At one time there were only seven persons well enough to wait on the sick and bury the dead.

Governor Bradford wrote in his journal: "On the third day of March it was warm and fair; the birds sang in the woods most pleasantly. In the afternoon there was a thunderstorm, and it rained very sadly until midnight." And two days later, we are told, one of the children sowed some garden seeds.

One Friday afternoon in March, when the Pilgrims were busy about their log cabins, a tall, half-naked Indian came out of the woods at the top of the hill. He walked boldly toward the little village of log houses and cried out, "Welcome, Englishmen, welcome!"

It seems that the Indian's name was Samoset and that he had lived on the coast of Maine, where he picked up a few English words from the fishermen. It was believed that he mistook the Mayflower for a fishing vessel and felt free to enter the little village.

The Pilgrims treated their savage guest kindly. They gave him a coat to cover his bare shoulders; and they fed him on "biscuit, butter, cheese, pudding, and roast duck." They would gladly have got rid of their guest for the night, but he was not willing to go; and so they let him stay in one of the log houses, where they watched him to keep him from doing harm. In the morning they sent him away, "after giving him a knife, a bracelet, and a ring."

Samoset was so well pleased with his new friends that he came back on a visit the next day, which was Sunday. This time he brought five other Indians with him. They were tall, sturdy men, dressed in deerskins. Some had their faces painted black. They brought their

own food with them. It was Indian corn. They pounded it into meal, put it into a little water, and then ate it. Governor Bradford says: "They would eat liberally of our English victuals; although it was Sunday, the redskins sang and danced, after their manner, like antics."

The Pilgrims sent the Indians away before night. Samoset pretended to be sick; he would not go until the next Wednesday. He went home a well-pleased and proud Indian, for the Pilgrims gave him "a hat, a pair of shoes and stockings, a shirt, and a piece of cloth to tie about his waist."

On Thursday Samoset came again, bringing still another Indian with him. The name of this Indian was Squanto, a sort of nickname for Squantum or Tisquantum.

It seems that Squanto had once lived in this region, but had been kidnapped by the captain of an English vessel and carried to England. He lived in London and learned to speak English pretty well. Then some kind-

hearted sea-captain brought him back and put him ashore on the coast of Maine. Thence he wandered back to his native place, only to find most of his people dead. Squanto said that many Indians once lived in this region and had large fields of corn; but some dreadful disease broke out, from which nearly all of them died.

Squanto proved a useful friend to the Pilgrims from the very first. He took them out to a little river close by, and showed them how to fish for eels. He trod the eels out of the mud and caught them with his hands. Governor Bradford says in his journal, "The eels were fat and sweet, and our people were glad of them."

Shortly afterwards Squanto came to live with the Pilgrims. It would be a long story to tell you all this Indian did for his half-starved friends.

When the Pilgrims made their first trip along the shore of Cape Cod they found several basketfuls of corn, which the Indians



SQUANTO NOW TAUGHT THEM HOW TO GET THE OLD INDIAN CORNFIELD READY FOR A NEW CROP.

had buried in the sand. They saved enough of this to plant in the spring. Squanto now taught them how to get the old Indian cornfield ready for a new crop. He showed them how to catch the little fish called alewives, and put two or three into every hill of corn to make the corn grow better. He also showed his friends how to watch the cornfields to prevent the wolves from digging up the fish. .

It has been said that without the seed corn and the help of Squanto the whole Plymouth settlement would have starved to death before the end of the first year. The Pilgrims had left their old home in England without hooks and lines for fishing. Here again Squanto was able to lend a hand, and taught his friends how to catch fish and lobsters after the Indian fashion.

Squanto now began to serve the settlers in another way. The chief of the Indians in the Plymouth region was Massasoit. He had been told wonderful things about the white-faced strangers, and wished to visit them.

One day he came with some of his warriors to the top of the hill to make a friendly visit, and Squanto was sent out to talk with him. Shortly afterward Massasoit and twenty redskins came tramping into the settlement, leaving their bows and arrows behind them. This Indian chief was a tall, strong young man. He wore a large chain of white bone beads about his neck; at the back of his neck hung a little bag of tobacco, which he smoked and gave to the Pilgrims to smoke. His face was painted a deep red; his head and face were so covered with oil that he "looked greasily." His warriors were tall and strong, and were painted, some black, some red, some yellow, and some white.

The chief and his warriors went marching slowly along the narrow street and into the large log cabin. A great noise was made with a trumpet, and some of the men fired their muskets. Governor Bradford did the honors. He kissed the chief's hand, and Massasoit kissed the governor, and then they sat down

for a talk. The Indian chief sat on a green mat, with some cushions placed round him.

Massasoit was greatly pleased with his reception. A copper chain and some beads were given to him. He said he would live in peace with his white-faced friends. The red-skin chief kept his word. The treaty was kept sacred for more than fifty years.

Squanto liked to tell his Indian friends about the white-faced settlers. He said the Pilgrims kept gunpowder in the cellars of the log cabins; in the same place, he said, where the plague was kept. If an Indian did any harm to the strangers, the plague would be let loose to destroy every redskin along the coast.

The Pilgrims owed a good deal of money to their friends in England; for they had been obliged to run into debt to fit out the Mayflower. After a while they coasted along the shore to trade with the Indians for furs and corn. On such trips Squanto was a great help as pilot. Late one fall, about two years

after Squanto came to live with the Pilgrims, he sailed with his friends outside of Cape Cod as far as the elbow. This place is now known as Chatham. Here the Indians were shy of the strangers, but Squanto at last induced them to sell eight hogsheads of corn and beans.

Poor Squanto! On this trip he was taken with a fever and died in a few days. Before he died he gave some of his things to his English friends as keepsakes. His last words were, "Pray that the Indian Squanto may go to the white man's heaven."

III

THE BRAVERY OF HANNAH DUSTIN

KING PHILIP, the famous Indian chief, was killed just a hundred years before the Declaration of Independence. His death put an end to the so-called King Philip's War. The settlers in New England now had a period of rest from the redskins.

Peace did not last long. Another war came. This was called King William's War. It began in the year 1690, and lasted seven years. At this time William was king of England, and Louis XIV was king of France. Louis declared war against William, and ordered his people in Canada to make war on the English people who had settled along the coast of New England.

Now we must keep in mind that in this war, as in the other French and Indian Wars, the Indians generally fought on the side of the French, against the English. The savages came down from Canada, sometimes on snowshoes in the dead of winter, and did all manner of cruel deeds. They killed the settlers, burned their log cabins, and carried off the women and children to Canada, where they traded them for strong drink, muskets, and gunpowder.

The last years of King William's War were dreadful. We are told that twelve hundred cabins were burned and that nearly six hundred persons were killed or carried away to Canada as prisoners. It was a life of constant terror.

There are many thrilling tales of those Indian attacks. Few other towns suffered so many hardships as Haverhill, Massachusetts, now a large and prosperous city, but in those early days a little village of thirty log cabins. The redskins used to come down the

Merrimac River in their canoes and lurk in the woods for weeks to burn some lonely house or scalp the men at work in the fields. They would then paddle up the river with their captives and steal out of sight in the deep forests of New Hampshire.

One morning in the middle of March, 1697, a settler named Thomas Dustin was busy cutting firewood half a mile or so from his cabin and about two miles from Haverhill. His wife, Hannah Dustin, was sick in bed.

All of a sudden, with wild yells, a party of twenty Indians rushed out of the woods and started across the clearing toward the cabin.

“Indians! Indians! Here they come!” shouted Hannah, the oldest daughter, bursting into the house.

“Now, Hannah, and you, Elizabeth, get the little ones out of the house as quick as you can and run down the road!” cried Mrs. Neff, who was nursing Mrs. Dustin. “See if you can reach the village before the Indians get you.”

There was not a moment to spare. Down the cart-road, through the woods, ran the seven Dustin children as fast as their legs could carry them. Thomas, a stout lad of fourteen, carried Timothy, only three years old, while little Jonathan and Abigail did their best to keep up with the older children.

Mr. Dustin, who was at work at the edge of the woods, had seen the Indians crossing the clearing. He seized his musket, jumped on his horse, and galloped home.

“ Keep to the cart-road, children! Run for your lives! ”

When he reached the cabin, the Indians were already inside. It seemed to him there was only one thing to do. He must leave his wife and try to save his children.

In another moment he was galloping down the road. He caught up with the children about a quarter of a mile from the house. For a moment he thought he would take up the little boy or the little girl; but he made up his mind to try to save them all.



MR. DUSTIN STOPPED HIS HORSE AND FACED THE SAVAGES. *Page 23.*

“ Run, children, run! I’ll keep the Indians back; run for the blockhouse on the hill! ”

Half a dozen Indians had left the cabin and were coming after them. Mr. Dustin stopped his horse and faced the savages. They fired at him. He fired back, and a savage fell. The Indians stopped for a moment, and Mr. Dustin turned and galloped after his children. The Indians came on again and fired at him. He returned the fire and again followed the children.

After a time the savages gave up the chase and ran back to the cabin. Mr. Dustin and the children soon reached the clearing in front of the blockhouse. The people rushed out to their help, and the next minute all were safe inside.

Poor Mrs. Dustin was having a hard time of it. The savages dragged the weak and trembling woman out of bed and gave her a few minutes to dress. They took from the cabin all they could carry with them, and then set it on fire. Mrs. Dustin, with Mrs.

Neff carrying the baby, together with about a dozen other captives, had to begin the long tramp to Canada. The party had gone only a little way when the baby began to cry. A savage took it and killed it.

It was a long and weary tramp through the deep forests of New Hampshire. Mrs. Dustin and Mrs. Neff fell to the lot of an Indian called Big Bear, who lived a few miles above Concord, on an island in the Merrimac River. This island has ever since been known as Dustin's Island. The Indian's family consisted of two warriors, three squaws, and seven children, besides a lad named Samuel Lenardson, captured two years before.

"Mary," said Mrs. Dustin one day to Mrs. Neff, "the Indians have told Sam that we are soon to start for Canada. I am not going to tramp there, to be sold like cattle or to be tortured. I have a plan by which we may escape and perhaps get home again."

Mrs. Dustin said she would kill Big Bear with a tomahawk. Mrs. Neff was to shoot the

other Indian, while Sam was to kill one of the squaws. After this all three were to kill the rest of the Indians as best they could.

Long before daybreak Mrs. Dustin silently waked Mrs. Neff and the boy. The Indians were sound asleep. Still as mice, these three people stole across the wigwam and stood over the victims.

“Now!” cried Mrs. Dustin, and all did their part.

All three Indians were killed. Short work was made of seven of the others. One Indian woman, although struck several times with a tomahawk, escaped into the woods. One Indian boy, in the words of the famous Cotton Mather, to whom Mrs. Dustin told her story five years after, “scuttled away from this desolation” into the forest.

Not a moment was to be lost. The two Indians who had escaped might carry the alarm to other redskins. With the tomahawks they made holes in all the canoes but one. They then took a few handfuls of dried corn

from the wigwam, threw some blankets into the canoe, and the next moment they were paddling down the river.

Mrs. Dustin suddenly stopped paddling.

“Why, Mary!” she cried; “our people will never believe we killed ten Indians. We must go back and scalp them, and carry the scalps home with us.”

So back to the wigwam the women paddled the canoe. Soon ten bloody scalps, wrapped in a piece of cloth, were laid in the bottom of the canoe. Once more the two women were paddling swiftly down the Merrimac. There was danger every moment from lurking Indians, or from the rapids, swollen by the spring floods.

In spite of perils and narrow escapes, the tired and weary party reached Haverhill in safety. Great was the surprise when they walked into the little village. Their friends had given them up for dead. Still greater was the wonder when the settlers saw the scalps. And we can well believe that the

Dustin children shed tears of joy when they saw their mother home again safe and well.

The story of Hannah Dustin's exploit went far and wide. The colony paid her fifty dollars apiece for the scalps. And even the governor of far-away Maryland sent her a present, with a letter praising her for her brave deed.

The famous tomahawk was lost, but the musket is still to be seen in Haverhill, while several pieces of the cloth in which the scalps were wrapped are kept as relics by the great-great-great-grandchildren of Hannah Dustin.

IV

A FAMOUS WRITING - DESK

THE War of the American Revolution began in 1775. Up to that time the colonies in this country were subject to England.

In 1760, George the Third, a young man of twenty-two, came to the English throne. He needed money and listened to the advice of unwise men.

“Tax the Americans,” they urged; “make them pay on everything they receive in our ships; they are rich and will not mind it.”

King George tried in another way also to force money out of the colonists. A law was made that every piece of paper on which notes, deeds, and such things were written,

should have a stamp on it. Even the almanacs and the newspapers had to have stamps on them. These stamps cost from one cent to fifty cents each.

This law was called the Stamp Act. It made the people very angry. In Virginia a great and bold patriot named Patrick Henry told the people to use any paper they pleased, and pay no heed to the new law. The people made up their minds not to submit to such taxation. They refused to buy the stamps and burned all they could get. On the day the law went into effect shops were closed, church bells tolled, and flags were placed at half-mast.

Not long after this the English king laid a tax on glass, paper, tea, and other things.

The trouble between the king and his American subjects grew more and more bitter.

“Pay the taxes,” King George insisted, “or I will send my soldiers and make you.”

Our people replied that it was not the

amount of the tax that they cared for. They claimed that King George had no right to tax them at all without their consent; and they declared over and over that they would not obey.

True to his word, King George sent soldiers to force the people to submit. Two regiments of redcoats were quartered in Boston.

This of course made our people very angry. They hated the soldiers and called them bad names. The soldiers paid back insult with insult.

One day a number of angry schoolboys complained to the British commander that the redcoats had destroyed their sledding on Boston Common.

"The very children here," remarked General Gage to one of his officers, "draw in a love of liberty with the air they breathe."

Then a quarrel arose one evening in Boston between the soldiers and the people. The soldiers fired into the crowd, and five people were killed and seven wounded.

The bells of the city were rung, and the roar of angry voices filled the narrow streets. Quiet was not restored until the troops were sent to a fort in the harbor.

Three years later King George took the tax off everything except tea. He said he kept this to show the Yankees he had a right to tax them.

Ship after ship filled with tea was sent to this country, but not a pound of it was allowed to be sold. Hundreds of chests were stored in damp cellars and left to spoil. Some of the ships carried their cargoes back to England.

One winter day in 1773 two ships came to Boston, but were not allowed to unload their tea. In the night a party of men dressed like Indians rushed on board the vessel, broke open the chests, three hundred and forty-two in all, and threw their contents into the sea.

Of course the king was very angry. More troops were sent over, and affairs went rapidly from bad to worse.

THE AMERICAN HISTORY STORY - BOOK

Wise men all over the land saw that war must come. Guns and gunpowder were made ready. Hundreds of men formed themselves in companies to fight at a minute's notice.

War broke out shortly afterwards. It began with the Battle of Lexington, April 19, 1775. A few weeks later a hard-fought battle took place on Bunker Hill.

We must not forget that during all this time our people called themselves loyal British subjects. They had fought as Englishmen for their rights, and not against England.

Slowly but surely, however, the idea of independence began to grow. Men saw that they were really fighting for freedom. Public meetings were called, and the question was talked over. Some of the best men in the colonies were sent to Philadelphia to attend a meeting there. On that occasion a staunch patriot from Virginia offered a resolution, saying, "These united colonies are, and of a right ought to be, a free and independent state."



"THAT WILL MAKE KING GEORGE GNASH HIS TEETH,"
SAID THE GENIAL OLD GENTLEMAN. *Page 33.*

Five of the ablest men of the country were selected to prepare a statement for publication. Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, chairman of this committee, was chosen to draw up the paper. He was not a strong public speaker, but he was known as a writer of plain and simple English.

Now Jefferson had rented rooms of a cabinet-maker named Ben Randall; and it seems that he planned a writing-desk, and had Mr. Randall make it for him. It was a plain little affair of mahogany, and stood only about three inches high from the table on which it was placed.

Well, this desk has come to be famous, for on it Jefferson wrote that wonderful document known as the Declaration of Independence.

When Jefferson had finished the writing, he invited Benjamin Franklin to call at his room to hear what he had written.

“ That’s good enough; I wish I had written it myself; that will make King George gnash

his teeth," said the genial old gentleman, when the different passages were read to him.

There was a lively debate when the Declaration was presented to the delegates at Philadelphia. With a few slight changes, however, it was finally adopted. It was signed on July 4, 1776.

We may be sure it was a time of deep interest to the hundreds gathered outside the Old State House on that hot July afternoon. The old bell-ringer had been in the belfry since morning, having placed a boy in the hall below to wait for the signal.

"They will never do it, they will never do it!" cried the old bell-ringer, impatiently shaking his head.

Suddenly a shout came from below. The boy, wild with excitement, came running up the belfry stairs, calling out, "Ring! ring!"

And the old man rang the bell as it had never been rung before.

Riders on the swiftest horses carried the glad news far and wide. Cannon were fired,

bells were rung, patriotic music was played, flags were flung to the breeze, and bonfires were lighted on hills and mountains.

Look at a copy of the Declaration of Independence and see the big bold signature of John Hancock of Massachusetts.

“There!” exclaimed this great patriot; “King George can read that without spectacles.”

Stephen Hopkins of Rhode Island was sick at this time; his name is written with a shaky hand.

“See how my hand trembles,” he said; “but my heart does not.”

“We must all hang together in this matter,” were the words of John Hancock, when they crowded round the table to sign their names to the document.

“Surely,” replied the witty Benjamin Franklin; “we must indeed, or we shall all hang separately.”

All honor to the fifty-six bold patriots who signed the Declaration of Independence. They

staked "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor." They were chosen men of high purpose and exalted character. They were fit to become the leaders of the young nation.

Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence is now in Washington. It has become worn and faded, but is preserved as a most sacred document.

As for the little mahogany writing-desk, it too has found its way to Washington, to rest with other precious relics of colonial days. Jefferson gave it, when an old man, to his granddaughter. It remained in her family until recently, when it was presented to Congress and became the property of the nation.

V

BESSIE FISHER OUTWITS THE TORIES

DURING the time of our Revolution the country north of New York City was wild and rugged. This region was often called the neutral ground; for it was not within either the British or the American lines. It extended for thirty miles along the Hudson River, and took in nearly all of Westchester County.

The reckless and lawless stragglers of both armies found it a convenient place to do about as they pleased. Houses and barns were burned, crops destroyed, and cattle and horses stolen to such an extent that the people were heartily sick and tired of war.

These stragglers were divided into two

parties. The cowboys, as they were called, belonged mostly to the British side, and spent their time in stealing cattle and driving them to New York. The second party was known as the Skinners. They lived chiefly within the patriot lines, but they were brutal and cruel, and plundered and stole everything they could lay their hands on.

This neutral ground, which was almost like a battlefield, was not a pleasant place for a young couple to begin housekeeping in, but just as the war broke out Andrew and Bessie Fisher moved into their neat little log cabin on one of the hillsides.

They lived in peace only a few weeks. Andrew enlisted in the patriot army, and soon became one of Washington's boldest and most trusted scouts. The young bride went to Washington's camp and nursed the sick and wounded soldiers. After a time, however, she went home; and she was living alone at the time our story begins. The young husband now and then made short trips to see his wife;

but such visits were full of risk. The British were always on the watch to capture him.

Late one afternoon Andrew came rushing into the house.

“ Save me! Save me, Bessie! The redcoats are after me, just round the bend of the road. Hide me, or they will catch me.”

Bessie quickly pulled up some of the rough boards of the kitchen floor. There was a hole beneath, deep enough to conceal a man.

“ Jump in here! Quick, Andrew! ”

The young man crawled in, and Bessie put the boards in place, just as the British soldiers began to pound on the door of the cabin.

“ Surrender, you rebel! We saw you run in! ” shouted the officer in command. “ We have got you this time! ”

Bessie’s heart was beating fast, but she put on a calm face. “ Search the house all you please,” was her quiet answer.

The troopers rushed in and examined every nook and corner of the cabin, but no scout could they find.

Before midnight Andrew crawled out of the dark hole under the kitchen floor and escaped to Washington's camp.

On another occasion, not many months later, Mrs. Fisher was again expecting a visit from her husband. The time was indeed full of peril, for the cowboys and Skinners were doing wicked things in the neutral ground. The devoted wife, however, was keeping close watch. Just at sunset she looked out of her cabin window to be sure that nobody was in sight.

She watched a clump of woods a little way back of the cabin. Suddenly she saw a man running at full speed toward her. As he dashed along he looked back, stumbled and fell, but in a flash was up and running again, as if for life.

"It must be Andrew. The Tories are after him again. Oh dear! what shall we do?"

The scout was soon inside the house.

"The Tories! They are coming! Hide me quick, somewhere, anywhere!"

“ Oh, what shall I do? ” thought the good wife. “ They will surely capture him this time. Oh, what shall I do? ”

She glanced into the yard. Near the kitchen door she saw her hens scratching in the ash heap. She seized a feather brush that was hanging beside the fireplace. She pulled out several quills, and with a knitting-needle pushed the pith out. Then she joined the quills together, making a tube of them.

“ Quick, Andrew! There is not a minute to spare.”

She ran into the yard with a shovel and began digging in the side of the ash heap.

“ Quick! ” and she gave the quill tube to her husband. “ Hold this in your mouth and get into this hole; I will cover you up. Keep your eyes and mouth shut.”

The scout lay down in the hole. Quick as a wink his wife covered him with ashes, leaving the end of the tube free, so that he could breathe.

She then hurried back into the house and

stood ready to greet her visitors when they came riding up to the door.

“ Who are you, and what do you want? ” she asked.

“ Let us have that young Andrew Fisher,” replied the captain of the Tory party.

“ Come in and find him, if you think he is here.”

“ Come on, boys! ” and the captain led the way. “ Last year this woman hid her husband under the kitchen floor. Perhaps he is hid there now.”

Twenty or more of the Tory band searched the cabin. They took up the kitchen floor; they tore open the feather beds; they kicked over tables and chairs; they went up the ladder and examined the loft. But no Andrew Fisher was to be found.

“ Go out and search the barn,” ordered the captain, walking toward the ash heap.

And now poor Bessie was almost ready to faint with fear. But the officer soon left the spot and followed his men to the barn.

At last, after ransacking the premises, the Tories gave up the search.

“ If we ever catch that rebel husband of yours, we will hang him to the nearest tree! ” shouted the angry captain, as he and his gang rode off down the valley.

It was a strange-looking man that crawled out of the ash heap a few minutes after the Tories rode away. Covered from head to foot with ashes, almost choked for want of air, and his eyes filled with dust, the poor scout looked sorry enough. But soap and water soon made a new man of him.

“ What were you thinking of when you were under the ashes? ” asked Bessie, with a hearty laugh.

“ I thought of what our good preacher says sometimes, ‘ Ashes to ashes. ’ ”

“ True enough, ” added Bessie; “ but out of the ashes you came to life again. Perhaps it will be so with our poor country. ”

VI

TEMPY WICKS HIDES HER HORSE

THE War of the Revolution had been going on for two years. Washington and his army were in camp near Morristown, New Jersey, not far from New York City. The British army was in camp near by.

A little distance away was an estate known as the Wicks farm. On it lived its owner, Mr. Wicks, with an only daughter, a young girl named Temperance. She was called Tempy for short. She owned a fine horse named Flora.

Now that there was war in the land, stragglers from both armies were making no end of trouble. Still, the young girl rode here and

there and everywhere, without fear, just as she had done in times of peace.

“Washington’s soldiers will do me no harm,” thought Tempy; “and I am sure my Flora can run faster than any horse the redcoats have. Let them catch me if they can.”

It was a lovely afternoon in June, and Tempy was returning home through the woods after a long ride. She was within a mile or so of the farm. All of a sudden from a clump of bushes beside the road stepped out a dozen British soldiers.

“Halt, young woman!” cried the sergeant.

She looked round in surprise. There were the redcoats drawn up in line, aiming their guns at her. The girl spoke to her horse, and the faithful animal stopped. Up rushed the soldiers and seized the bridle.

“What do you want of me?” asked Tempy; “this horse is mine, and I am on my way home; you have no right to stop me.”

“Never mind, miss; this is a fine horse of

yours;" and the sergeant took a good look at Flora.

"She certainly is, but she belongs to me, and I must ride home at once; so let me go."

"Not so fast, young lady," continued the officer. "This is just the horse my captain wants; his own horse died last week."

"I don't care anything about your captain and what he wants," cried Tempy, getting a little angry. "Go about your business and let me get home."

"I have orders to take horses wherever I find them," was the calm reply of the officer; "so, young miss, jump down!"

The girl saw that the redcoats were in earnest and were bound to rob her of her horse. She was keen-witted and quickly made up her mind what to do. She pretended to be getting ready to dismount. The redcoat who held the bridle let go of it, and turned aside for a moment to speak to a comrade. Quick as a flash the girl gave the spirited horse a

cut with her whip, dashed between two of the soldiers, and was gone.

“ Fire, men, fire! ” shouted the sergeant.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

The soldiers had fired their guns into the air, thinking to make the girl stop.

It was too late. Tempy was far down the road, riding as fast as the swift horse could carry her.

The redcoats did not give up the chase. Some of them knew where the girl lived. They ran through the woods, hoping to reach the Wicks farm first.

“ What shall I do with Flora when I get her home? ” and Tempy wrinkled her pretty brow; “ there are no men to help me, and these redcoats will be sure to go to the barn and carry her off. What shall I do? ”

She could ride over to one of the neighbors, but sooner or later she would have to come back. The redcoats would watch for her, even if it took a week. If she tied her horse to a tree in the woods and came back on foot,

the soldiers would soon find the animal's hiding-place.

Tempy did some lively thinking while she was riding home. An idea came to her just as she was within sight of the house. She looked down the road. The redcoats were not in sight.

Not a moment was to be lost. She dashed through the front gate of the large yard and jumped from her horse at the back door. Opening the door, she led the gentle animal through the kitchen into the front hall, and then into the parlor.

Now off the parlor was a bedroom, which was a guest chamber. There was only one window, and the shutters were closed when the room was not in use. Into this dark room Tempy quickly led her horse, and tied her to the bedpost.

Hardly had the young girl made everything snug when the angry soldiers came tramping into the yard. They searched the big barn, the carriage house, and the woodshed. At

last they came into the house and looked high and low, but they did not find the horse.

“Where did you hide that horse, young girl?” growled the sergeant. “Tell us, or there will be trouble.”

“Very well,” smiled Tempy; “but if you get my horse, you will have to find her first.”

Angry words were of no use; and at last the redcoats gave up the search and rode back to their camp. Flora was quietly eating her oats in the best bedroom. The noise of her feet had been muffled with a litter of hay.

As the story goes, Tempy kept her horse in the bedroom for three weeks. Shortly afterward the British troops broke up their camp in New Jersey and went back to New York. Not one of them, however, rode on Tempy’s horse. When the redcoats had gone, Flora came out of the guest chamber and went back to her stall in the big barn.

VII

PEGGY MILLER GOES MARKETING

“**W**ELL, Peggy, my girl, I have told you exactly what to say and what to do; and now if you are really afraid, you need not go. The trip is full of danger, and you are pretty young to be sent on such an errand.”

“Perhaps I am a bit afraid, Major Talmadge,” quietly answered Peggy Miller, a young girl of sixteen. “But never mind that; I am ready to go and I’ll do my best.”

For several months there had been sharp fighting around Philadelphia. The patriot army had the worst of it. General Washington and his ragged, half-starved men were in camp a few miles outside of Philadelphia,

while the British were living in the city itself, in ease and comfort.

Major Talmadge was in command of patriot cavalry that rode to and fro between the outposts of the two armies. His duty was to find out what he could about the British and send the news to headquarters.

This patriot officer had sent some of his youngest men, dressed as country lads, into the city with garden stuff to sell. The young men went to certain houses and brought back important information and letters, which were sent at once to General Washington at Valley Forge. But Major Talmadge had been warned that his messengers were suspected by the British, and that it would be no longer safe to send them again on such dangerous errands.

At the time of our story, which was in the winter of 1777, it was certain that the British were getting ready to make an important move. General Washington must learn their purpose, and learn it at once.

Major Talmadge and a few of his bold riders were staying at a small tavern a few miles from Philadelphia. The tavern was kept by a Mrs. Miller, whose husband and son were at Valley Forge with Washington. Her only daughter, Peggy, helped about the inn.

“Your daughter is just the one to go into the city and bring back the news I must have,” said Major Talmadge to Mrs. Miller on this winter morning.

“Peggy is willing to help, Major, but she is too young to go on such an errand.”

In came the girl herself.

“Let me try, mother,” she urged; “I am not afraid of the redcoats; I cannot be idle while father and brother Ben are freezing and starving at Valley Forge.”

And so it came about that the young girl, carrying a basket of eggs on her arm, set out for Philadelphia early the next morning. The country roads were bad, and the day was cold. These things did not trouble her, for she was thinking more of the peril before her.

Nobody paid any heed to her until she was near the city.

“ Here, my girl! Stop and tell us what you have to sell,” cried one of a half dozen British soldiers standing near the roadside.

Peggy’s heart began to thump, and she wished she were at home with her mother.

“ Only a few fresh eggs,” she replied, turning pale.

“ Good! I will take all you have; our mess is sadly in need of fresh eggs.”

“ No, indeed, sir, I cannot let you have all, for most of them are promised to Mistress Morgan on Chestnut Street.”

“ Aha! that’s the house where all you country people sell your stuff. Something is wrong about that house.”

Peggy set her basket down on the ground.

“ I can sell you two dozen; ” and she began to count out the eggs.

“ Nay, nay, my girl; we don’t want your eggs; I was only in fun. Some of you people are bringing in strange things for sale. Go

and sell your eggs; I think you are an honest girl."

Peggy picked up her basket and walked on. Once she looked back and saw the soldiers watching her. They seemed to be talking about her. She hurried along until she reached the street where Mrs. Morgan lived. She ran up the steps of the mansion and lifted the huge knocker. A redcoat standing at the street corner watched her as she stood at the door. Presently a maid appeared.

"I must see Mistress Morgan; I have some eggs to sell; I hope she will buy some."

"Come in and I will call the mistress."

In a few minutes Mrs. Morgan, a stately and prim Quaker lady, entered.

"What can I do for thee, my girl?" she asked kindly.

"I have some fresh eggs to sell."

"Is thee sure they are fresh?"

"Yes, madam, they are fresh eggs."

Mrs. Morgan gave her a quick, sharp look.

“ You have brought your eggs to the right market.”

The lady took the basket and carried it to the kitchen. When she returned, the basket had a loaf of bread in it. Not a word was said, but Peggy had been told that a letter to General Washington would be hidden in the loaf of bread.

“ If thee must destroy the bread,” said Mrs. Morgan, pointing to the basket, “ simply repeat these two words to Major Talmadge, ‘ Not yet.’ Does thee catch my meaning? ”

“ Certainly, madam,” and Peggy made a low bow.

She took her basket and made ready to leave the house. She looked sharply about as she walked slowly down the front steps. Nobody was to be seen. Even the redcoat was not in sight.

The young girl hurried along until she reached the outskirts of the city. There she found the soldiers whom she had met before.

“Come here, my girl, and tell us about it,” one of them called out.

“I have sold my eggs,” was her simple answer.

“What have you in your basket now, my girl? What’s this? As sure as I live, it’s a loaf of bread. It looks good enough to eat;” and the redcoat roughly grasped the basket and pulled out the loaf.

“No, indeed! Please!” begged Peggy; “it is for my little sister, who is sick. Please give it back to me.”

“Let the girl alone, Jack,” broke in another of the redcoats. “Give her back the bread; we are not hungry enough to rob her.”

With a laugh the man put the loaf back and gave her the basket again.

“Run home, girl, and don’t let us catch you another time. The next time we will arrest you and send you to General Howe. Hurry now and get out of our sight.”

Peggy did not need to be told to hurry. Without looking behind her she walked rapidly



IT WAS A MAD RACE FOR AN HOUR. *Page 57.*

away. Pretty soon she broke into a run. Out of breath and very tired, the young girl was at last safe and sound at home again.

"You have done well, my girl," were the words of praise of Major Talmadge, when he broke open the bread and found the note inside. "General Washington shall read this before sunset, and you shall not be forgotten."

Mrs. Miller burst into the room.

"Ride for your life, Major! The British are coming down the long hill. They will be here in a few minutes."

The major turned hurriedly to Peggy: "The redcoats are after us, Peggy; they suspect your errand. You must go with me."

Major Talmadge sprang on his horse and took the girl up behind him. The next moment they were galloping down the road.

It was a mad race for an hour. Down the hills, through the woods, across the rude bridges, the sturdy horse, covered with foam, carried the two safe into Germantown. Not

until the village was reached did the redcoats give up the chase.

The major helped the tired girl to the ground.

“ Well, Peggy, it was a pity to lose that loaf of bread, when so many of our men sadly need it. Still, General Washington needs that letter far more than all the bread in the whole Quaker city.”

A proud and happy girl was Peggy Miller the next morning when a company of troopers escorted her back to her home at the old inn. General Washington wrote her a little note, to thank her and tell her that her wit and coolness had saved him and the army from what might have been a sad mistake.

VIII

PAUL RUSSELL'S BACON IS SAVED

PAUL RUSSELL, a sturdy young patriot of South Carolina, was not happy. He was standing on the piazza of his father's house and gazing over the broad fields of the plantation. This was in the year 1780. Of all the dark years of the Revolution this was one of the darkest. One disaster quickly followed another.

Paul was a boy of sixteen. He and his father, Major John Russell, were in General Sumter's army, but had gone home for a brief visit.

The Tories found it out, and one dark night they swooped down on the plantation and captured both father and son. Paul was left

at home on parole, but his father was sent at once on his way to the prison at Charleston.

The boy was quick-witted enough to send a negro to a company of patriots close by and tell them of his father's capture. The patriots attacked the British escort halfway to Charleston and routed them; Major Russell escaped and went on duty again with General Sumter.

At this time the British soldiers were scattered far and wide over South Carolina. They were quartered in small companies on the plantations. Captain Heald, one of Tarleton's officers, and fifty of his men were making themselves at home on the Russell plantation.

While Paul walked to and fro along the broad piazza, idly watching the soldiers, he could see the British sentries on guard, marching up and down the turnpike. It made him angry to think how the redcoats had killed almost all the live stock on the place, to provide themselves with fresh meat. He was

also thinking how insolent the soldiers had been in dealing with his family.

The more the young fellow thought about it, the more angry and the more helpless he felt. Still, it was some comfort to know that the surly and brutal Captain Heald had left that morning for another command. Lieutenant Mott, the next in rank, and a much better man, was left in charge.

“Shut up here like a rat in a hole!” growled Paul. “I wish I were with father. I wish something would happen, so that I could go back to the army. I had rather ride hard all day long and waylay the British at night than be cooped up here like a rat in a trap.”

Well, something did happen to keep Paul's mind busy the rest of the day. A servant came and said his mother wished to speak with him at once. He ran up the broad stairs and found his mother in the doorway of his room, with tears running down her cheeks.

“Come in; I have something to show you,” she whispered, as she closed and locked the

door. "I found this on the table after Lieutenant Mott was through eating this morning."

Paul seized the letter from the trembling hand of his mother and read as follows:

"August 10, 1780.

"LIEUTENANT MOTT:— Paul Russell has broken his parole. He cannot have either a hearing or a trial. Upon receipt of this you are ordered to hang this young rebel. Hang him before sunset to-night. Send me word to-morrow morning.

"HEALD."

"That is an awful lie! I haven't broken my parole! It is murder if they hang me!" Paul burst out, his face deadly pale, and then red with anger.

"Be calm, my boy. Listen to me. I think Lieutenant Mott dropped that letter to help you. He is not a bad man like Captain Heald."

“ Never you mind, mother dear, I shall not hang this time, you may be sure of that. Don't give up. I will get out of this place somehow.”

It was a long forenoon for the boy. He walked up and down the piazza and across the lawn, and went and chatted with the redcoats. But those awful words, “ Hang him before sunset to-night,” seemed to be written in big letters across the sky. The birds seemed to mock him with them, and even the guards appeared to mutter them as they marched to and fro with their guns over their shoulders.

The boy could eat little dinner. It seemed as if the food would choke him. He almost broke down when he saw the haggard face of his mother.

His mother was almost frantic.

“ Oh, what will you do, Paul? I can't let them hang you! ”

“ Keep up your courage, mother. They will have to shoot me first. I shall not be hanged;”

and he kissed his mother and ran out on the lawn and sat down under a tree.

“ This will never do! I must think of something. They may come for me at any minute.”

He walked slowly down the road toward a large grove, where a big, good-natured fellow by the name of Tom happened to be on guard.

“ It’s a hot day,” he suggested, when he came near the sentinel, who was lazily tramping along the dusty road.

“ To be sure! And I guess you would think so if you had to carry a gun along this road for three hours.”

“ Why not rest a bit, Tom? Let me have your gun, and I will take your place.”

“ No, my boy, that will never do. Still, I am much obliged to you just the same.”

Tom tramped along the road, while Paul sat down to think. He watched the soldiers laughing and talking in their tents. One word of alarm, and they would be shooting at him.

Just then a little half-starved pig came out of the woods. He was perhaps the last of the

drove. He looked at Paul for a moment without moving; but when he saw the sentry, he turned about, gave a frightened grunt, and darted up the road as if Colonel Tarleton himself were after him.

“Here, Paul! Help me catch that crazy pig!” shouted Tom. “Hurry, and we shall catch him.”

Paul did not need to be asked twice. In another moment he and the sentry were after the little pig as fast as they could go.

The redcoats were out of their tents in a moment, shouting and laughing as if it were the best fun in the world.

Off came Paul’s hat and coat. For him it was a race for life, and he knew it. Once he nearly overtook the pig, but took care not to catch him. The frightened animal squealed and ran all the faster.

Tom meanwhile had stopped.

“Hey, there, boy!” he shouted. “Come back! We can’t catch him.”

Paul gave a quick glance behind him and

saw that he was out of range of the soldiers. The only danger now was from Tom's musket.

"Come back, Paul! Come back, or I will shoot!"

Paul did not stop.

Bang! went the gun, but the bullet whistled over his head.

"Now if I can only reach the swamp, I am safe;" and he ran faster than before.

He soon reached the grove, and in a few minutes was safe in the swamp beyond.

Before daylight the next morning he was telling his astonished father the story of his narrow escape.

"It was clever work, my dear boy; but don't let the Tories get you again. I wonder if they caught our little pig."

"I don't know, father," laughed Paul, "but the little porker did double duty; he saved his own bacon, and he saved mine too."

IX

FIGHTING THE BRITISH WITH BEES

ON the southern edge of North Carolina stands the little city of Charlotte.

The people of this section were full of the love of liberty. In less than one month after the Battle of Lexington they began to talk in favor of declaring independence from England. Five years afterwards, when Lord Cornwallis, the commander-in-chief of the British during the Revolution, came to Charlotte with his army, he found the people so eager to fight for their freedom, that he always called this little town the hornets' nest of the rebellion.

Early in the fall of 1780 these hornets were buzzing. The patriots had been defeated in

South Carolina, in the Battle of Camden. Lord Cornwallis now felt sure of success in North Carolina, and was marching toward the Old North State, with the intention of making his first stop at Charlotte.

The British soldiers robbed the patriots of their sheep and cattle, burned their houses and their crops, stole their horses, and drove their women and children into the woods.

“ I will protect your property and pay you for everything my army needs,” declared Lord Cornwallis, “ but you must take the oath of allegiance to King George.”

“ Never! ” was the determined answer of the bold North Carolina patriots. “ We have pledged our lives, our fortunes, and our honor to the cause of freedom, and we will not break our oaths. We will fight you to the bitter end.”

And fight they did, men, women, and children, and with a will. They made things so lively for the redcoats that they dreaded to be sent into the country for supplies. No

matter if a whole regiment went out, it was certain to lose some of its men before it got back to Charlotte. From behind trees, bushes, barns, and fences the deadly fire of the patriots thinned the ranks of the hated British.

One morning, while Cornwallis and his army were at Charlotte, a boy named John Clarke was at work in a field on his father's farm, about seven miles from town. The boy's father and brother were in the patriot army. John was left at home to take care of his mother and sisters.

He suddenly heard a great clatter down the road. He looked up and saw British soldiers coming into sight, round the bend in the road. He ran into the house with a shout.

“The redcoats are here. The whole army is coming up the road!”

In a few moments the British were riding up the lane.

Now John Clarke's mother had already had experience with British officers and knew what they were. She sent the girls upstairs and

seated herself on the piazza with John, to await the coming of the soldiers.

The leader of the redcoats halted his men near the house, leaped from his horse, and came up to the piazza.

“We are in need of supplies, and must search this place.”

“As you please,” replied Mrs. Clarke, quietly. “You have already stolen everything, and you will find nothing.”

The soldiers now began to search the house. Some went to the barn. Others ransacked the shed. They could not find much.

“I say, boy,” growled the British leader, returning to the piazza, “we can’t find anything here; you must have hidden something somewhere.”

“Of course,” grinned John. “We have one poor cow left; but you can’t get her, for she’s out in the woods, over a mile away.”

The officer was angry.

“One cow isn’t much, but it’s better than nothing. Take one of the horses and drive

her in; and be quick about it, you young rebel!"

John leaped on one of the horses, which had been tied to the rail fence. Some of the men tried to stop him.

"That's all right!" shouted the British captain; "he's going on an errand for me."

Trotting his horse by a row of beehives, John leaned over and upset several of them. He then struck his horse a sharp blow with a switch and away went horse and rider out of the lane and into the road. They were soon lost to sight in the woods.

The yard was now worse than a hornets' nest. The angry bees swarmed out of the hives till the air seemed full of them. The horses, maddened by the sting of the bees, began to plunge and kick. With oaths the redcoats ran here and there to escape. It was of no use. The bees made it so hot for them that they went helter-skelter down the road.

John had looked back as he rode out of the

lane. It was a sight that he never forgot. As soon as he was in the shelter of the woods he jumped off the horse and lay on the ground and laughed, while the British troopers went riding pellmell past him.

The road was soon clear of the redcoats, and John went back to the house to tell his mother and sisters.

“It was a funny sight,” he said. “You never saw anything like it. Some of those chaps had their eyes shut tight. Some of their noses looked like powderhorns. And they swore like troopers. I think I had better write General Washington about it; it is better than powder and balls.”

X

A TIMELY JACK - O' - LANTERN

THE first settlers in America made their homes along the sea, for the inland country was a trackless wilderness. From Maine to Georgia there was only a fringe of villages, scattered here and there along the coast. Shortly after the Revolution, however, great numbers of men and women began to go farther and farther west. Hundreds of thrifty settlers left their homes along the coast, crossed the mountains, and built new homes for themselves in the rich lands that are now the states of Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

Among the early settlers who tramped across the mountains and through the wilder-

ness to find new homes on the frontier was the Merrill family. They built a log cabin for themselves on the banks of a little river in southern Ohio. In that cabin there was only one room. The two boys of the family, David and Joseph, slept in a kind of loft, on a bed of dry oak leaves. The loft was reached by a ladder.

Their first winter was bitter cold. The snow lay deep and long upon the frozen ground; but there was plenty of dry, hard wood to burn in the huge stone fireplace. The oldest girl, Ruth, helped her mother. The boys set traps and snared rabbits, while their father shot wild turkeys and deer. There were no signs of Indians, and they were happy and contented, although living in the deep woods, many miles from their old home in Virginia.

At last the snow began to melt, the birds began to sing, and the trees put out their leaves. Soon it was time to plant.

One day David climbed up into the loft

to get a package of pumpkin seed which he had brought with him from the old home.

Not a seed was to be found.

“ Oh dear! ” he muttered; “ some of those red squirrels have gnawed a hole through the roof and carried all those seeds away. No pumpkin pies this year! ”

His father tried to comfort him.

“ Never mind, David, my boy, perhaps neighbor Johnson across the river can spare you a few seeds. Mother may be able after all to bake a few pumpkin pies for us this winter.”

A few days after this the two boys were at work in the clearing. They were burning some old stumps, when out of one of them popped a red squirrel and scampered away into the woods.

“ Look, Dave! ” shouted Joseph; “ there goes a big, fat red squirrel. Let us find his nest; it must be in that stump.”

“ All right, Joe. Perhaps it's the little rascal that stole my pumpkin seeds.”

The two boys began to dig round the stump. They found some old rags, bits of dry moss, and some empty shells of hickory nuts.

“ Hurrah, Joe! this must be the very chap that stole the seeds. We may find some the little thief hasn’t eaten yet.”

The boys continued their search. At last amid the empty shells they found three good pumpkin seeds.

“ Of course it’s better than nothing,” said Joe, glumly; “ but I must say, Dave, you have a pretty poor chance of raising much of a crop.”

David was a thrifty lad. He saved the three seeds and planted them in deep, rich soil.

How like magic those pumpkin vines grew that hot, wet summer! All the crops did well that year, but such huge yellow pumpkins have seldom been seen.

“ Dave,” his sister Ruth pleaded, one day late in the autumn, “ please make me a

jack-o'-lantern out of one of your pumpkins."

"Dear me, no, Ruth; I can't spare one."

But David liked to please his sister, and one rainy day he made a jack-o'-lantern out of his largest pumpkin. It looked like a giant, with eyes, nose, mouth, and teeth red with fire.

The next evening a man came riding along the trail by the Merrill cabin.

"Indians! Indians! The redskins are coming!" he shouted, as he rode swiftly by in the darkness.

Mr. Merrill had gone on an errand to the village, some ten miles away. Only Mrs. Merrill and her children were at home; but she was a woman of courage.

"Bar the door, and cover up the fire, children; get your rifle ready, Dave; the Indians may pass by if they see no light here."

Dave stood ready with his rifle. The youngest girl, Lizzie, climbed up into the loft. Ruth and her mother stood ready with the

powderhorn and the bullet-pouch to help David.

“Take the axe and stand at the window; look sharp for an Indian head,” David whispered to his brother.

They had not long to wait.

“There they are; I can see three of them crawling up the bank,” whispered Joe.

It now occurred to David that he might make use of the jack-o'-lantern.

“We cannot be any the worse off,” he thought; “I'll try it anyway.”

In another moment he had lighted a candle, put it in the jack-o'-lantern, and covered the lantern with his coat. He carried it to the window and uncovered it just as the Indians came to the cabin door.

The redskins had probably never seen anything of the kind before. Perhaps they thought some evil spirit was after them. They gave a yell and ran off into the woods.

The boy thought the savages might get over their scare and come back, and he kept

the lantern at the window until his father returned.

Mr. Merrill patted David on the back.

“Your pumpkin did us a good turn this time, my boy, and I am proud of having such a son to look after mother and the children. The pumpkin pies will taste all the better too. You boys may go to bed now. I will watch for the Indians.”

Perhaps the three Indians did not intend to do any harm. At any rate they did not come back again.

XI

MERCY TYLER TRAPS A PANTHER

THE early settlers in the old Granite State of New Hampshire were beset with many hardships and dangers. About the year 1790 a sturdy pioneer by the name of Jacob Tyler, with wife and two children, tramped from Salisbury, Massachusetts, through the trackless forests and built a cabin on the east bank of the Merrimac River. At this time his daughter Mercy was fifteen, while Parley, his son, was only six years old.

Although far from friends and neighbors, these good people were living a simple, contented life. Of course at times they were lonely and longed to return to the old Bay State. But it was said that other families

were coming to make their homes in the same region. The hope of this made them happy, and they had much else to be thankful for. They had plenty of good food, for the crops had done well that year. And the children had not been sick a single day since they had left their old home.

It was the third spring since the Tylers had left Massachusetts. Mr. Tyler had gone early one morning to his nearest neighbor, ten miles away, to borrow an axe, having broken his own a few days before. Mrs. Tyler was getting ready to do the washing, and Mercy was helping her. Parley was out playing in the clearing in front of the house. He had found a pair of old leather reins in the shed and tied them to the front door of the log cabin. With a birch stick for a whip he was driving as if he had a real horse before him.

“Mercy, dear, go up to the loft for mother and bring down the soiled clothes lying on the floor,” said Mrs. Tyler.

“ Yes, mamma,” and Mercy climbed up the ladder.

Suddenly a sharp cry came from the cabin loft.

“ Oh, Parley, come in quick! Hurry, Parley! Oh, mother, quick! quick! look out, quick! ”

It was Mercy’s voice, but it sounded as if it were that of some older person.

Parley was standing on the step outside the cabin door, gazing with smiling eyes and lips at a strange creature creeping through a patch of dead grass.

One look was enough for the mother. In a moment she knew the long, crouching form, with cat-like head, with its gleaming eyes fixed on the child. It was the panther, or catamount, the most dreaded animal in all pioneer life.

The little fellow turned to listen to his sister’s call, while the crouching panther glided forward.

The poor mother gasped for breath. She

dashed out of the back door and flew round the corner of the cabin, ready to fight the terrible creature with her bare hands; but when she reached the front of the cabin, she saw the animal struggling on the doorstep. It was crying as if in fear or in pain. Its big head was out of sight. The stout oak door had been shut with a slam on the panther's neck and held it tight.

“Mother, come quick! help! quick!” screamed Mercy; “I have his head squeezed in the door. Quick! I cannot hold on long!”

The brave little girl had climbed down the ladder from the loft, and in the nick of time had slammed the big door to, just as the animal was creeping over the threshold.

“Hold on tight, dear; mother will help you; don't be afraid! Hold on for your life!”

Meanwhile, the angry panther acted as if he were caught in a trap. He growled and snarled, and tried to get free. If the angry beast had forced his body inside the cabin, he

would have succeeded, but he only tried to pull himself out, and was held all the tighter.

What was to be done? The snarling animal was likely to get loose at any moment.

Mrs. Tyler seized the leather reins with which the boy had been playing, and held them tight.

“Now, Mercy, listen and do just as I bid you! Tell Parley to get papa’s gun up in the loft; be careful, for it is loaded. Then crawl out of the back window and bring the gun to me. Hurry!”

The angry creature was twisting his body to and fro and growling fearfully. It looked as if he would get away at any moment. It seemed a long time before Mercy came running round the corner of the cabin with the loaded musket.

“Give me the gun, Mercy. Hold these reins tight, while I shoot him.”

The trembling girl seized the reins, while the mother walked calmly toward the furious beast. She held the muzzle of the gun just

behind the animal's front legs and fired. The catamount made one leap, pulling the reins from Mercy's weary hands, and fell dead on the cabin floor.

The brave pioneer woman dropped the gun and began to cry.

“ Why, mother! the panther can't hurt you; it's dead.”

“ Mother knows that, dear; I am only weak for the moment. How thankful I am for such a brave little daughter! How proud your father will be! ”

XII

BESSIE BRANDON'S UNEXPECTED GUEST

BESSIE BRANDON was a pretty girl of fourteen. She lived with her father and mother on a plantation in South Carolina. It was a bright May morning in 1791, and the birds were singing in the big oak under which she sat. But the young girl was sad and almost ready to cry.

At this time the Revolution was at an end, after eight years of fighting. The thirteen colonies were now the United States of America, and General George Washington was the first President.

Now this great and good man, whom all the people admired and loved, made up his mind to travel through the South. He wanted to

see and to talk with the men and women who had borne so many hardships during the war. He longed to greet the many brave officers and soldiers who had fought so well and so bravely under Marion, Sumter, and Greene.

The people of the South were much pleased to have this great man with them. Everywhere they came in crowds to greet and honor their beloved President. In some towns arches of flowers spanned the road. In other places young girls scattered flowers and wreaths of roses before him as he rode along the street.

The morning on which our story opens was the very day that President Washington and his party were expected to ride through the town of Chester, about six miles from Bessie Brandon's home. All the family except Bessie had gone early; she was left behind to look after the house.

Washington and his party rode in a large cream-colored coach, drawn by four white horses. By the side of the coach milk-white

saddle-horses were led along, to be used when the President was tired of riding in the carriage. Then there were men on horseback, who rode as an escort, besides a number of servants dressed in white suits with yellow trimmings. Behind the coach came the baggage-wagon, drawn by two horses, and followed by an escort on horseback.

“What a splendid time they’ll have at Chester,” thought Bessie, sadly; “and brother Obed is to make an address of welcome. Too bad! too bad!” and this time she gave a sob as she thought of the gay scene, and herself at home all alone.

How quiet it was! and it was only nine o’clock, with the long summer day still before her.

Suddenly Bessie heard the sound of galloping horses. It could not be the redcoats, for they had gone away long ago. A party came galloping down the road. In another moment a great coach drawn by four horses stopped at the gate. Servants in yellow and

gold opened the door of the carriage, and out stepped a tall, fine-looking gentleman.

Bessie had dried her tears and now stood on the piazza, looking with wonder at the tall, richly dressed stranger, who walked slowly toward the house and paused before the steps.

“ Good morning, little miss. Can you not give me some breakfast? I have had a long ride since sunrise, and I am very hungry.”

Now, while Bessie was astonished at this request from a stranger, she was well-bred. She made a deep curtsy, as any well-bred girl of that time would do.

“ Father and mother have gone to Chester, sir, to see General Washington, and I am left to tend the house. I hardly know what to say.”

“ Pray tell me your name, little miss.”

“ Bessie Brandon, sir.”

“ And how old are you, Bessie? ”

“ I shall be fourteen next August, please.”

“ Well, Bessie,” continued the stranger, taking a seat on the broad piazza, “ never

mind if you are alone. If you will get me some breakfast, I promise that you shall see General Washington before any of your family do."

"Very well, sir;" and her bright eyes began to shine; "I will do the best I can for you, but our food is plain."

Bessie was an excellent housekeeper. Her mother had taught her how to cook and to wait on the table. In a few moments the young girl had spread the table with snow-white linen and got out her mother's best china and silver. She prepared bacon and eggs, and made coffee; and then with nimble feet ran to the spring for milk and butter. In a few minutes a meal good enough for the best man in the land was neatly spread on the table in the cool sitting room.

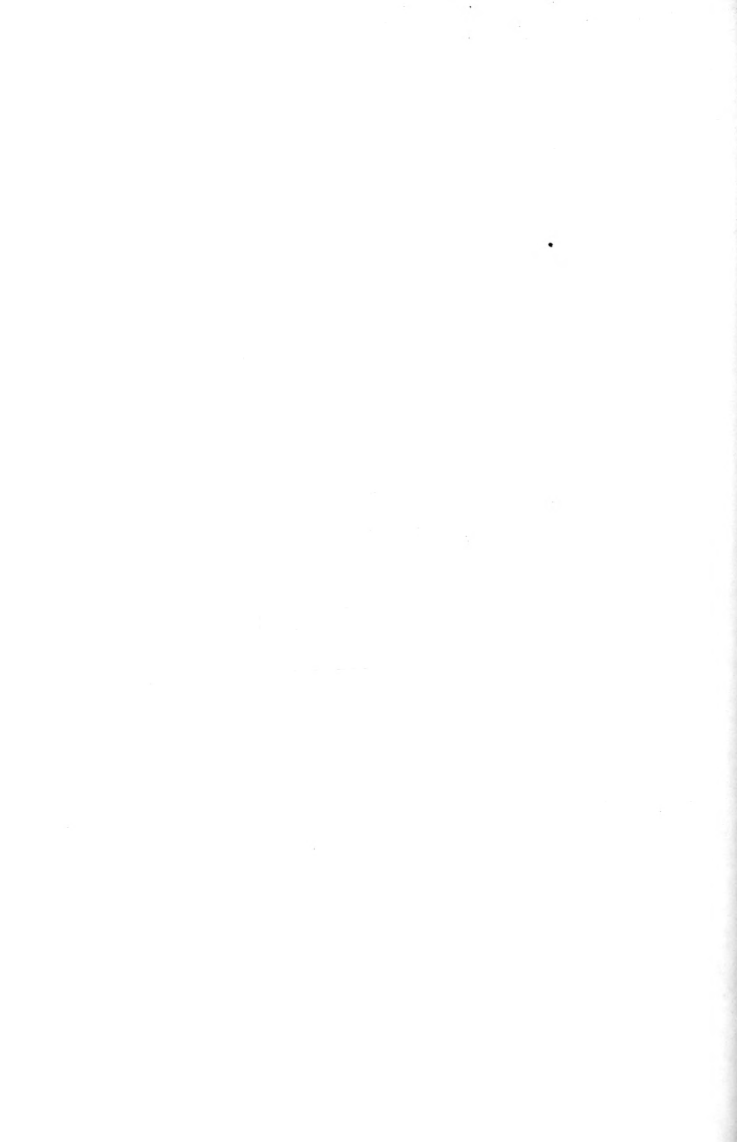
"Come, sir, your breakfast is ready," curtsied Bessie.

"Ah, my little maid, you have done well. Do you please sit down with me, and I shall enjoy this good breakfast with you."

The stately gentleman served his young



"DO YOU PLEASE SIT DOWN WITH ME, AND I SHALL ENJOY THIS GOOD BREAKFAST WITH YOU."



hostess, and then ate with relish the plain but dainty breakfast.

The guest was extremely dignified and sober, so dignified and so sober that I suppose Bessie was not sorry when the meal was over.

When he had finished his breakfast and was ready to go on his journey, he bent gently down and kissed his little hostess.

“ Bessie, my dear, you may tell your father and mother that you not only saw General Washington before anybody else did in the city, but that you ate breakfast with him, and that he kissed you.”

Bessie Brandon lived to be an old lady. She often told of the day when she had the honor of preparing breakfast for President Washington and of eating it with him.

XIII

DAVID MILLER KILLS A RATTLESNAKE

THE pioneers of Indiana had to fight many kinds of foes, seen and unseen.

The wolves killed their sheep, the foxes and lynx ate their lambs and pigs, and the raccoons and squirrels fed on their corn. Even the turtles in the ponds caught the ducks and the young geese. And then there were the savages, chills and fever, vermin, and poisonous snakes.

Perhaps the most dreaded foes of all were the deadly rattlesnakes and copperheads. In some parts of the state they were so thick that it was hardly safe to walk about. Not only were men, women, and children bitten, but cows, horses, and dogs met death in the same horrible way.

The rattlesnake gives a warning before striking, but the copperhead strikes as quick as lightning, and death soon follows.

A mother would be busy about her housework. One of her children would be playing out near the corn-crib, or the baby would be crawling across the cabin floor. Suddenly there was a scream. The mother ran to the help of her little one, but she was too late.

Many years ago a settler named Isaac Miller and his good wife Betsy owned a large farm on Raccoon Creek, not far from what is now the city of Terre Haute. They had three children. David was ten years old, Bessie six, and Sally five.

One morning in early summer Mr. Miller and his wife were going to town, to sell butter and eggs. The three children were to be left at home.

“Now, my boy,” said Mrs. Miller, calling David to her, “stay in the cabin and don’t go out into the woods. Take good care of Bessie and Sally. Rattlers are thick, and they are

ugly this warm weather. You know how your poor brother Isaac died from a rattler's bite only last August. We shall be at home before evening."

"Never mind, mother; I will watch the girls and keep them from getting hurt. I will stay close to the cabin."

The father and mother soon rode away. The children played together for a time, but it was a hot day, and the woods behind the cabin looked shady and cool. At the back of the cabin, under a shed, was a large bin for storing grain.

"I will let the girls play in the bin for a while," thought David, "while I go out and see if the squirrels are eating the corn."

So into the big bin climbed the two little girls and began to play.

"Come back quick, Dave," called Bessie; "we want you to play with us out in the woods."

David walked slowly toward the cornfield, through the shady woods.

Suddenly in the quiet of the morning he heard the children screaming at the top of their voices.

“ Oh, Dave! Oh, mother, mother! Come quick! A snake, a snake! ”

Poor David's heart seemed to jump out of his mouth. He ran quickly to the bin; and it was well he did; the sight almost froze the blood in his body. Bessie was sitting at one corner, while Sally was kneeling in the opposite corner. They were shaking with terror. A big rattlesnake was coiled up in the middle of the floor. His eyes had a wicked gleam, and he was ready to strike.

David was brave-hearted, and did not give way to fear for a moment.

“ Don't move for your lives, children! I will kill that rattler. Don't cry, I will be back in a minute.”

He knew that his mother had left on the crane in the fireplace a huge pot of hominy, boiling in lye.

“ Pour in more water, David, as fast as it

boils away," were his mother's last words that morning, when she was leaving the house.

David rushed into the cabin. He seized a half-gallon gourd which lay on the hearth, dipped it full of boiling hominy and lye, and hurried back to the bin.

The angry snake turned toward him as if to strike.

David kept cool. He leaned over the side of the bin and with a steady hand dashed the fiery stuff on the big snake.

"Come here quick, children!"

In another moment he had dragged his sisters out of the bin.

The ugly snake writhed in agony. It tried to wriggle its way back through the hole in the floor, where it had crawled in, but it was too badly scalded to escape, and soon died.

Late in the afternoon the father and mother came home.

"You did wrong to leave your sisters and go out into the woods," said his mother; "but you were a brave boy to kill that hor-

rid snake with the hot hominy. Some boys would never have thought of it."

"Yes, you saved the lives of your dear little sisters, my boy," added his father, "and I am proud of you."

XIV

LITTLE JARVIS, THE MIDSHIPMAN

MORE than a hundred years ago the British warships used to seize and search American vessels and carry off American sailors. The officers said they were deserters from the British navy. War between the United States and Great Britain seemed likely to break out at any moment.

To put an end to these and many other troubles, John Jay, one of the great statesmen of that time, was sent on a special mission to England. Mr. Jay succeeded in making a treaty; but this treaty made many of our people angry, especially those who wanted the United States to quarrel with Great Britain and take sides with France. The French were

angry at us for making the treaty, and ordered our minister to leave France. The French cruisers then began to seize American merchant vessels.

General Washington, who had twice been elected President, now declined to serve a third term. John Adams, who was chosen to succeed him, sent statesmen to France to try to keep peace. Agents of the French government told them that the matter would be made right if they bribed several members of the French government.

When this base and insulting offer became known at home, there was an outburst of anger from one end of the United States to the other. Everywhere the war fever grew hotter and hotter.

Such a feeling for war had not been known since the Battle of Lexington. Patriotic songs were written and sung. One of these songs, named "Hail, Columbia," written by Joseph Hopkinson, still lives as a national air.

“ Millions for defense, not one cent for tribute! ” became the popular war cry.

Men worked without pay in building forts along the seacoast. The women made flags and banners. An army was raised, and Washington was chosen to command it. Congress voted to furnish three frigates, the United States, the Constitution, and the Constellation.

In February, 1799, the Constellation, commanded by the gallant Thomas Truxton, captured the great French frigate L'Insurgente. This victory caused great rejoicing in the United States and in England.

The newspapers were full of praise for Captain Truxton, and a ballad called “ Truxton's Victory ” was sung everywhere. The London merchants sent him a service of silver plate costing three thousand dollars.

Among the under officers of Captain Truxton was a midshipman named James Jarvis, but thirteen years old. He was so small that he was nicknamed Little Jarvis. Like most

boys of his age, he was full of pranks. Indeed, if the officer of the deck happened to be out of sight for a few minutes, Little Jarvis would be turning a somersault or standing on his head. This of course was not allowed on the quarter-deck of a warship.

“Up the masthead, sir! the quarter-deck is no place for a circus. Mind you that, young man!” the officer of the deck would roar.

With a book in his pocket, the little midshipman climbed to the crosstrees. Although often punished in this way, he was liked by everybody, from the bluff Captain Truxton to the common sailors, for he was a manly fellow and never did a mean thing.

“If you please, sir,” he said one day, when he came down from the crosstrees and saluted the officer of the deck, “there’s a sail off the port quarter. I called out once before, but nobody heard me. I think, sir, it is a frigate.”

“Sail, ho!” called the lookout on the quarter.

It proved to be a frigate, and a French frigate too, La Vengeance, one of the great 54-gun ships of the French navy.

When the French frigate got a good look at the American warship, she tried to escape. The Constellation had to crowd on sail to overhaul her. It took nearly an hour for her to get within fighting distance.

Captain Truxton called his men round him and made a short speech before they went to their places. Little Jarvis had never been in an engagement. He knew well enough that he belonged in the maintop, but he was so full of fight that he wanted to be on deck and have a chance to show what he could do. But he was ordered aloft with several steady old topmen, who were told to keep an eye on him.

It was at midnight, and a lovely moonlight night, when the ships neared each other and began a sharp fight. The smoke soon got so thick that nothing could be seen from the crosstrees but the flash of the guns. The

young lad could hear the hoarse orders of the officers, the cheers of the gunners, and the cries of the wounded, mingled with the thunder of the big guns.

Little Jarvis could not do any real fighting, but he waved his sword and cheered as loudly as anybody.

“ Hurrah! Give it to them, men! Let them have it! ” he shouted again and again, but his voice was lost in the roar of battle.

For three hours the battle went on. The French frigate fought bravely, but could not stand against the skill of the American gunners. The gallant ship now rolled a helpless wreck. At the last moment of the battle a double shot came crashing through the rigging of the Constellation and struck the mainmast.

“ Mr. Jarvis, ” shouted the captain of the maintopmen, “ the mainmast is a-going! ”

“ Can we hold on a minute longer? ” asked Jarvis.

The mast was already swaying.

“ No, Mr. Jarvis; we can't stay a moment longer; it is death for us all.”

“ Yes, but I am an officer,” was the firm reply; “ I cannot leave my post. An officer must die at his post. If the mast goes, I must go with it.”

In vain the sailors shouted and swore at the boy. He would not move an inch. The topmen, without waiting for orders, began to go down, catching at the rigging as best they could.

Calmly and quietly, with a strange light in his face, the little midshipman remained at his post. The next moment the mast came down with a crash that shook every timber in the stanch frigate, and with it came the boy. He was picked up quite dead.

The captain of the topmen approached Captain Truxton and saluted.

“ He might have saved himself, sir, but he would not do it. He said he was an officer and could not leave his post.”

The next morning, wrapped in the American flag, Jarvis's body lay on the quarter-deck.

The officers and men stood with uncovered heads and heard the burial-service read. Two of the sailors made ready to unloose the flag and slide the body over the rail.

“No,” came the command of Captain Truxton; “make the flag fast. Mr. Jarvis has well defended that flag. He shall be buried in it.”

The next moment the body of the young midshipman sank quietly into the depths of the ocean.

“Gentlemen,” said Captain Truxton, with husky voice, “Little Jarvis has indeed gone aloft.”

The story of this splendid fight was soon told at home. Congress thanked the officers and men of the Constellation, and gave Captain Truxton a gold medal. It also passed a resolution in honor of Little Jarvis, saying, “The conduct of James Jarvis, a midshipman on said frigate, who gloriously preferred certain death to leaving his post, is deserving of the highest praise.”

XV

HELEN PATTERSON'S ESCAPE

DANIEL BOONE, the famous pioneer and first settler of Kentucky, made up his mind to leave his home and go to Missouri. He had lost all his land in Kentucky, and now in his old age he wished to begin life again in the silence of the wild region west of the Mississippi River.

“Why are you going into the woods again, Dan?” asked his wife.

“It is getting too thick around here for me; I want more elbow room. I must get back into the wilderness, where I can once more hunt the buffalo and the deer.”

So it came about in the year 1797 that the old hunter and Indian fighter took his family

and went over into the deep woods of Missouri. He built his cabin on the Missouri River, in the district of St. Charles, about forty miles west of the then little town of St. Louis. Missouri was at this time a wild country and full of bands of prowling savages. These Indians liked nothing better than to plunder and burn the log cabins of the settlers and steal their cattle and horses.

A few years after Daniel Boone had moved to his new home, another pioneer, a Mr. Patterson, also moved from Kentucky and settled only a few miles from the home of the old hunter.

At this time Mr. Patterson had a daughter named Helen, about eighteen years of age.

One day in June all the Patterson family except Helen were away from home. The girl sat by the open door, busily spinning. All of a sudden the lonely cabin was surrounded by a band of Indians. Helen knew well enough that it would be useless to cry for help, or try to escape. One of the redskins,

who could talk a little English, told her that if she made an outcry they would kill her.

The Indians ransacked the cabin and made ready to take away such things as they could easily carry. In a few minutes the whole band, with Helen as their captive, set off afoot to the north through the forest.

“ Oh! ” cried the girl; “ what will father and mother think, when they come back and find that I have been carried away? ”

She had with her a ball of white yarn. As they went through the forest, she occasionally broke off bits of yarn and dropped them along the way. She knew that her father and friends would follow in pursuit, and that the yarn would serve as a guide. A savage caught the girl at it, and raised his tomahawk as if to kill her. The ball of yarn was taken from her, and she was closely watched, for fear she would try again to mark the trail.

During the afternoon the Indians became uneasy. It was plain to Helen that her friends were in pursuit and that the savages

knew it. About sunset two of the Indians went back to find out the real state of affairs. The rest of the band had a long and exciting talk until their comrades returned.

It was now dark. The night was cloudy, and the rumbling of distant thunder gave warning of a storm. The savages crossed the creek they had been following, and led the girl into the deep woods, about a mile from the ford. They then tied her wrists together, pulled her arms above her head, and fastened them with strips of deerskin to a branch of a tree.

“Indians now go ford, and hide, and kill white man,” muttered the Indian, who could speak a little broken English.

Helen was now alone in the woods, and tied so tight that she could not hope to escape. Her fingers and wrists began to swell, and she was almost wild with pain and fear. She tried with all her strength to get free, but it was of no use. She knew that the savages might come back at any moment and kill her, and

she prayed to God to send somebody to set her free.

The lightning lit up the dark woods, and the peals of thunder came louder and louder. Down came the rain in torrents and drenched the captive girl. Once more she tried to escape, and this time her hands slipped easily through the rain-soaked thongs of deerskin. It took but a moment to untie her feet. Then, fleet as a deer, she ran toward the ford.

“ If I can only get there in time to warn my father and my brothers! ”

At last, tired out, she sat under a tree in the pouring rain and eagerly strained her eyes to catch a glimpse of her rescuers. In a short time she caught sight of some persons moving through the forest.

Who could it be? Might it not be some of the savages coming back for her? Could it indeed be her father and her brothers?

“ Father! father! ” she cried in a low voice.

“ Helen, dear girl, is that you? ” came the reply.

In another moment she was held in the arms of her father, and her two brothers and the two sturdy sons of Daniel Boone were praising her for her courage.

They now made their way home in safety over a new trail. Helen's mother, nearly frantic at the loss of her daughter, was overcome with joy at her return.

XVI

A LAST BLOW FOR SPAIN

IT was a bright July morning, nearly one hundred years ago. A boy of sixteen, dressed in the uniform of a captain of the Spanish army, stood at the outer gate of an old crumbling fort at Baton Rouge, in what is now the state of Louisiana. With red cheeks and flashing eyes the boy was listening to Sera, an old sergeant.

“ Captain Louis,” continued the old soldier.

“ Well, Sergeant Sera.”

“ There is sad news from above; the Americans are marching rapidly on our village. They swear they will drive us out.”

“ Let the Americans do their work,” proudly answered Louis Grandpré; “ we must do our duty. Who leads these Americans? ”

“ Captain Thomas leads the riflemen. Pas-
son, whose life your father once saved, leads
the dragoons. It is said there are one hundred
and forty of them in all. Pray, Captain
Louis, what can we do? ”

“ Do? ” cried the young captain. “ We
can hold the fort for Spain and for King Fer-
dinand. It is what we are here for. A soldier
of Spain must do his duty; if it comes to the
worst, he must die.”

The old sergeant shuffled off to his quarters,
talking to himself. He had watched over his
young master from the time he was a child.
He rejoiced at the boy's pluck and courage.
Yet the old veteran knew too well it was all
in vain.

There was trouble and unrest all through
this section of Louisiana, which was not yet
free from the power of Spain. The vast
region beyond the Mississippi, known as
Louisiana, had been taken by France a hun-
dred years before the close of the American
Revolution. Eighty years later France had

ceded it to Spain, at the time she gave up Canada and the Ohio valley to England. In 1800 the great Napoleon forced Spain to give it back to France. Thus the mouth of the great Mississippi River was closed to American trade.

The people of the West had now no outlet for their goods. They said they would march down the river and take New Orleans by force.

At this time Napoleon had great need of money, and sold us this whole territory for fifteen million dollars. It was a great bargain for our nation. This region contained more square miles than all the original thirteen colonies combined.

Of course Spain made loud objection to the trade. But she knew well enough that she could not hold this vast region against the wishes of our great republic. And France believed that this bargain must end forever Spanish rule on the American continent.

At the time of our story, only a strip of

country not much larger than the little state of Delaware was left in the hands of Spain. The American pioneers were bound to have this too. The only thing in the way was an old tumble-down fort at Baton Rouge, from which still floated the proud flag of Spain.

Louis Grandpré was now in command of this fort. He was no common boy. He had been born and reared amid all the dangers and hardships of frontier life. His father, a brave Spanish soldier, had taught him that to obey was the first duty of a soldier. On his death-bed his parting words were, "Loyalty to king, to country, and to flag."

What could the young Spaniard do? He had only a few crippled, worn-out veterans; and the fort had not been repaired for a dozen years.

He rode into the square of the little town of Baton Rouge and stood beneath the folds of the Spanish banner.

"Long live King Ferdinand! Rally to the help of the King's fort! I am here to defend it

against all enemies of the King. If you are true and loyal sons of Spain, follow me.”

He rode back with the banner floating over his head, and the fife and drum playing a martial air.

Within the gates of the fort he drew up his sorry-looking army of less than one hundred men. In a few earnest words he bade them stand firm for the King.

“ I am only a boy,” he added, “ but I will face my duty proudly and remain steadfast to the end. Here will I make one last stand for the honor of Spain. Here I will fight one last battle for the glory of my country and my flag.”

So it came about that on this hot July day a hundred poor, old, worn-out Spanish veterans stood drawn up in battle array within the old fort. Some of them even began to boast of what they would do again.

They had not long to wait. There was a clatter of hoofs through the deserted village, and the call of the bugle, demanding a parley.

Old Sergeant Sera, stiff in his joints and lame from many wounds, swung open the big gate.

Passon, with his mounted riflemen, dashed through and toppled over the old sergeant.

Young Captain Grandpré, sword in hand, faced the dragoon.

“ Sir, what means this insult, this hostile entrance into a fort of the King of Spain? ”

“ Well, well! ” laughed Passon, as he reined in his horse; “ are you the captain here? Well, my boy, we want your fort; and we must have it.”

“ This post of Baton Rouge belongs to His Majesty, King Ferdinand of Spain,” was the proud reply. “ I am in command. I am here to defend it with my life. Leave this fort at once, or I shall order my men to fire upon you.”

“ Well, what a fine young chap we have here,” cried Passon, while his men shouted with laughter. “ Indeed, you are a fierce young hotspur. We have taken a fancy to

this fort of yours, and we mean to have it.”

Upon this the bold captain of the dragoons reached down from his horse as if to seize young Louis as a prisoner.

“ Ho, there! ” shouted Captain Louis to his men. “ Drive these traitors out! Ready! Fire! ”

With drawn sword the young captain turned toward his veterans to urge them to fight.

Not a man was there. Such was their dread of the Americans that they had made haste to escape into the blockhouse.

“ Cowards! cowards! all of you. Will you run from a lot of Yankee traitors? Come out and fight! ” and his young face was crimson with shame.

“ Come, my boy, ” the dragoon urged, “ I don't want to hurt you, but we must have this fort. ”

“ Never! It is my duty to hold this fort, and hold it I will. ”

“ We are wasting time,” grumbled Passon, in anger. “ Charge, boys! Charge the block-house!”

Before the horsemen could reach the old tumble-down building, the young Spaniard had sprung to the gate and closed and barred it. In another moment he was rallying his men.

“ Follow me and drive these traitors out!”

Sword in hand, young Grandpré went forth to meet the foe. But he went alone.

At that moment Captain Thomas, with eighty riflemen, dashed through the southern gate of the fort. The dragoons jumped from their horses. They pounded away at the rickety gate of the blockhouse. Down it fell with a crash, and the Americans rushed in.

Bracing himself against the wall, with sword flashing in the sunlight, Captain Louis Grandpré stood facing his foe, one against a hundred, and he a boy.

“ Back, every one of you! Back, on your

lives! Ho! there in the blockhouse! Fire on the traitors!"

Clear and loud rang out the fire of the riflemen. With wild clatter, the dragoons charged up to the door. There, fighting for the fort which he deemed it his duty to defend, Grandpré fell, his king's name on his lips, "Long live King Ferdinand!"

Thus died Captain Louis Grandpré. Brave and faithful to his trust, the boy-soldier struck the last blow for Spain in the land where she had won and lost an empire.

XVII

THE CHARGE OF THE HOUNDS

DURING our second war with Great Britain, the War of 1812, the pioneers in the Southwest suffered much from the red men. The British supplied the Creek Indians with guns, and paid them in gold for scalps.

Alabama endured all the horrors of frontier life. In August, 1813, the famous Creek chief Red Eagle, with a thousand warriors, attacked Fort Mimms, the largest and strongest fort of this region. It was one of the most desperate battles known in Indian warfare. The fort was burned to the ground, and about five hundred men, women, and children were killed.

This was indeed sad news to the settlers in the region round the Alabama and Tombigbee rivers. It meant that the "redsticks," as the Creek warriors were called, were on the warpath. If the settlers would save themselves and their wives and children from a cruel death by the savages, they must get what food they could, leave their property to be carried away or destroyed, and seek shelter in the nearest stockade.

Such was the terror caused by the terrible fight at Fort Mimms that the settlers in what is now Clarke County took their families as quickly as they could to a little fort called Burnt Corn.

A little way from the fort lived two families consisting of twenty people. They did not believe there were any Creeks near, and decided to stay in their homes. That very night the redskins set fire to the cabins, and killed all but five of the inmates. These escaped to the stockade and told the sad news.

The next day the settlers went out from the

fort to bring the bodies of their friends and bury them. They believed the Indians had left the region. So sure were they of this that they did not take their guns with them, and even left the gate of the stockade open.

A large party of Indians was watching them all the time. Crawling like snakes through the underbrush, they came within a hundred yards of the stockade, while the settlers stood weeping round the graves of their friends.

Suddenly a savage war cry rent the air. The crafty chief Francis at the head of his warriors made a rush for the open gate of the fort.

The pioneers ran with all speed. They reached the stockade and shut the gate just in time. But to their horror their women and children were shut outside, and the Indians were between them and the fort.

It was a moment of terror.

Now at the fort there was a young fellow named Isaac Haden. Young as he was, he

was cool and fearless, and already well known as an Indian fighter. On this particular day he had been out in search of stray cattle, and just as things were at their worst he rode up with his pack of hounds at his heels. Quick as a flash he saw the peril of his friends. He knew that he must help them at any risk.

“ Here, Tiger! Here, Nero! Here, Cæsar! ” he cried to his oldest dogs.

In another moment, followed by the whole pack of savage animals, he charged on the redskins. Some of the Indians were seized by the dogs and brought to the ground. The others were only too glad to escape by running into the woods.

In the meanwhile the women and children had time to reach the stockade, and the great oak gate was shut. Isaac was left outside. The savages quickly rallied when they saw the plight of the young pioneer.

“ I have at least saved the women and children, ” muttered Isaac, when he heard the war cry of the Creeks. “ I suppose there is

no help for me; but I don't mean to die without making one more charge on those redskins."

He blew a blast on his hunting-horn, to call his dogs around him. Digging his spurs into the flanks of his horse, he again charged the savages. He broke through them, but his good horse fell dead from an Indian's bullet. He jumped from the saddle and ran with all his might toward the stockade.

With wild cries the Creeks were after him. The rifle bullets whizzed by his head. Several bullets passed through his clothing without his receiving even a scratch. The redskins were now close at his heels, but the brave young fellow reached the great oak gate, which the settlers were holding a little way open for him. In another moment he was safe inside, and the gate was shut in the faces of the bloodthirsty savages.

XVIII

THE DEFENSE OF FORT STEPHENSON

GENERAL HARRISON, the famous Indian fighter who became President of the United States, was in command of the army in the Northwest. Tecumseh, one of the greatest Indians that ever lived, was planning to drive all the settlers out of the Ohio region. He said that the white men had cheated the Indians out of their land, and he was eager for revenge. The Indians began war, but in the fall of 1811 they were defeated by General Harrison in the Battle of Tippecanoe, in Indiana.

When the War of 1812 began, Tecumseh took sides with the British. He thought his time for revenge had come.

At this period there were three forts near

the shore of Lake Erie. Fort Meigs on the Maumee River was the most important of the three.

In the summer of 1813, General Proctor with a force of British regulars and two or three thousand Indians crossed Lake Erie to capture Fort Meigs.

After a short time he decided to withdraw. He put his regulars on board the gunboats, and ordered the Indians to follow him along the shore; for he now meant to attack another of the three forts, a little stockade known as Fort Stephenson.

Fort Stephenson was an old stockade built round an Indian trader's house on the Sandusky River, about twenty miles from Lake Erie. It is now the little city of Fremont. The fort, enclosing about an acre of ground, was built of oak logs set in the ground and sharpened at the top. At the corners of the fort were little blockhouses. Outside the fort was a ditch about eight feet deep and five or six feet wide.

THE AMERICAN HISTORY STORY - BOOK

Now this fort was an important post. Its loss would leave the way open for an attack on the storehouses up the river, in which were kept the supplies for all the American forces in the Northwest.

When General Harrison learned what the British planned to do, he sent a scout named William Connor to carry a letter to Major Croghan.

“Destroy the fort and the stores and retreat if you can do so in season,” were the orders.

The woods were full of Tecumseh’s painted warriors. More than once the scout was forced to seek the shelter of the bushes to escape the prowling savages. It is no wonder that he lost his way and was a long time in reaching the fort.

“I must see Major Croghan,” said Connor, when admitted to the stockade.

“I’m your man,” replied a young officer; “what do you want?”

“No, young fellow, you can’t fool me,”

objected the scout, looking at the smooth-faced young man. "You are nothing but a boy, and I want to see the commander. I have a letter for him from General Harrison."

"I'm Major Croghan," insisted the young commander. "I am twenty-one years old; old enough to command this fort and old enough to put you in irons if you don't hand over that letter in two minutes."

"This beats me," muttered the old scout; and without another word he gave the letter to the young officer.

"Wait here," said Major Croghan; and he went out to talk with his officers, who were even younger than himself.

In a few minutes he returned with a letter to General Harrison. It ran as follows: "It is too late to retreat. We have made up our minds to defend this place, and by heaven we will."

This letter from so young a man was too much for an old soldier like General Harrison.

He at once called the young officer to headquarters to explain matters.

Now Major Croghan was a great favorite with the old Indian fighter. His family was famous in American history. He was the nephew of the celebrated George Rogers Clarke, who saved for us the three great states of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. His father had fought through the Revolution. After graduating from college, at the age of eighteen, young Croghan went into the army and soon proved his courage. For bravery at the siege of Fort Meigs, he was made a major in the regular army, when he was only twenty years old.

The young major told General Harrison it was not safe to retreat from Fort Stephenson with so large a force; for the woods were full of savages. He declared he had sent him the note with the hope that it would fall into the hands of the Indians. He also insisted he could hold the fort or make the British pay dearly for it.

Harrison agreed and hurried him back to his command.

The garrison at Fort Stephenson worked all day and all night to get ready for the attack.

About noon the next day, which was the first day of August, large numbers of Indians were seen skulking near. We are told that one redskin, bolder than the rest, climbed to the top of an elm tree which overlooked the stockade. He was shot dead by a Kentucky rifleman. Several others did the same thing and met with the same fate.

About four o'clock in the afternoon, General Proctor, the British commander, sailed up the Sandusky River with his gunboats, landed about five hundred soldiers, and planted his cannon. At the same time the Indians showed themselves all about in the woods.

General Proctor now sent Colonel Elliott to the fort.

Lieutenant Shipp, the youngest officer in the stockade, went out to meet him.

“ I am sent to demand the surrender of your fort,” began the British officer.

“ We shall defend it to the last moment.”

“ Look at these four hundred veteran soldiers and seven hundred Indians. We are sure to take the place. The Indians will kill all of you. Tell your commander to surrender and save the shedding of blood.”

“ When you take the fort there will be nobody left to kill; they will all be dead.”

“ You’re a fine young man, too fine to be tomahawked and scalped by the savages,” continued the British officer; “ don’t be stubborn.”

At this moment an Indian sprang out of the bushes and tried to snatch the lieutenant’s sword; but Shipp, not the least afraid, drew the weapon and made as if to kill the Indian.

Colonel Elliott now begged the young officer to go back with all speed if he would save his life, since he could not control the Indians.

All this time Major Croghan was watching the scene. He saw the insult to his messenger.

“Come in, Shipp!” he shouted. “We’ll blow them all to pieces.”

The battle now began in real earnest. The six cannon on the shore and the gunboats opened fire on the little stockade.

In the fort were one hundred and sixty-two men and one cannon, an old six-pounder.

“Put Queen Bess on the blockhouse on the north side,” ordered Major Croghan. “Hide her from the British. Load her to the muzzle and point her so that she will sweep the ditch.”

That night and the next day until about four o’clock in the afternoon the British cannon and the regulars pounded away at the little fort.

“Keep cool, boys,” said Major Croghan, calmly. “Shoot to kill. We must beat them or die.”

The Indians did not like this kind of fighting. There was no chance to skulk behind trees. They had taken no scalps. If they showed themselves, the sure aim of the Ken-

tucky riflemen brought them down. They grew restless. They wanted to get into the fort and begin the bloody work.

A thunderstorm was rising, and by four o'clock it was almost as dark as night.

General Proctor decided to storm the fort on the northwest corner and make an attack on the south side at the same time. Under cover of the smoke the regulars marched forward.

“Cut down the pickets! Show the Yankees no quarter!” shouted Colonel Short, leaping into the ditch.

A deadly rifle fire flashed from every port-hole. The redcoats were checked and thrown into confusion. They quickly rallied. Again the men leaped to the front to cut down the oak logs.

The colonel's voice again rang out.

“Cut away the pickets, my boys! No quarter for the Yankees.”

These were his last words. He fell headlong, pierced by a bullet.

THE AMERICAN HISTORY STORY - BOOK

All this time good Queen Bess, loaded to the muzzle with spikes and slugs, was hid from the sight of the enemy. The port now flew open. The old six-pounder spoke with terrible effect. Grapeshot and slugs raked the ditch and filled it with the struggling soldiers. More than a hundred men lay wounded or dead.

The British did not rally. Without a leader, they turned and fled to the woods, followed by the deadly fire of the Kentucky sharpshooters.

The two hundred regulars storming the fort on the south side were at the mercy of the riflemen. They were soon forced to seek shelter.

The garrison had but one man killed and less than a dozen wounded. Of the British about one hundred and twenty men were killed or wounded. The savages had kept themselves out of the way, in a ravine near the fort. The whole attack was borne by the British regulars, who acted most bravely.

After dark General Proctor stole on board

his gunboat, leaving behind him his stores, guns, and clothing. The next morning the redcoats were far out on Lake Erie. Not an Indian was to be seen.

The little band of fighters had saved the region from British conquest. Never again did a British soldier set foot in Ohio or Michigan except as a prisoner.

Major Croghan lived for forty years after this gallant fight. He made good the promise of his youth. At twenty-seven he was promoted to be a colonel. After the war he filled many offices of trust and honor in the South. He was the youngest man, it is said, ever to receive the gold medal of honor awarded by Congress for heroic exploits. General Harrison's report contained the following:

“ It will not be the least of General Proctor's mortifications to find that he has been baffled by a young man who has just passed his twenty-first birthday. He is, however, the hero, worthy of his gallant uncle, General George Rogers Clarke.”

M D M



