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## THE MEADOW CLAIM.

By the rough pine table within Lightsey's cabin, at the head of Tamarack Gulch in the Coeur d'Alene Mountains of Idaho stood Lightsey himself, dark, broad shouldered, and bearded, drying the tin plates and cups with a flour bag. Crackling flames in the wide stone fireplace illuminated the rude log walls, the bunks piled with blankets and tearskins, and the shimmering array of picks and shovels.

Lightsey was a miner, wintering on his prospect. He listened with intense interest to the conversations of certain guests.

These were Jack Byers and his son Mitre from the prospect adjoining, and Devondorf, of Condon Peak.

Devondorf had just come from Spokane, and had stopped here overnight on his way home. His report of affairs in the outside world was heard with special zest.

Supper being finished, Devondorf filled his pipe, and he pressed the tobacco into the clay bowl he launched forth on a new theme.

"I tell you, b y s, there will be many a fine farm picked up within the next week on the Coeur d'Alene reservation. Lawyers say the act of Congress provides for no proclamation by the president, so that settlers can settle down at once in safety. Most of the river bottoms are taken all ready, but I saw an extra piece of timber ground on the lake front Saturday that will be worth \$5,000 within a year, and I'd have taken it but for my property on the Peak."

"Where was it?" asked Jack Byers, a heavy-set and muscular man, about forty years of age, who sat mending his snowshoe with rawhide.

"A mile west of Graff's Landing just behind the stony point. I saw it from the trail. All the trails in the reservation are open. The Indians are travelling more than common this winter. I'd say there was a hundred and fifty-acre level as a floor. It lies behind a range of cottonwoods. No one would ever notice it from the lake, and it was by accident I saw it from the trail, for it is in sight at one point only."

Here Devondorf plucked a pitch splint; thrust it against the coals, and with it lit his pipe.

"For half an hour he stood narrating to his friends the varied gossip he had picked up on his trip; then Jack Byers arose and buckled on his greatcoat.

"Any mail to go out, Lightsey, or any errands? I may run down to Wallace to-morrow, now the roads are open again."

"Why, father, I thought"—cried Mitre, in a tone of surprise. At a gentle push of his father's foot against him he had stepped. Then Jack Byers held out his snowshoe.

"H-re, Mitre, lend the pair and lay them both at the door."

Sc Mitre went forth beneath the gaunt tamarack, under a sparkling wintry sky. He was a boy of sixteen years skinny, active, and eager. He could hardly wait until they had tramped on their broad snowshoes beyond earshot when he queried:

"What are we going to town for?"

"Speak low, Mitre. Did you note Devondorf's story of the timber land on the lake? It's just the chance I've wanted. We must have that land. We'll go down there, and I'll appropriate it. We can throw up a cabin, do some ploughing in the spring, build a fence, and live there winter until I can sell the right. It's a good timbered meadow, it will bring nearly \$5,000."

"When shall we start?"

"About midnight. After the moon rises. Must not call a minute. First on the ground wins. Devondorf has told this to half a dozen men, for all we know. May tell it to a half a dozen more to-morrow. We'll take the axe and rifle, and what provisions we can pack, and if our canoe on the river has not been stolen we'll reach that timbered meadow day after to-morrow."

True to this prediction, in the forenoon of the second day Jack Byers and his son rounded the stony point west of Graff's Landing in the reservation, and approached the fringe of cottonwoods in their dusty dugout. They had paddled this level as the Coeur d'Alene River, and crossed the lake.

Tying their canoe, and spreading their spatter d tent over a bush in the sun to thaw, they passed the scrawny cottonwoods, and with exclamations of delight stood on the edge of a beautiful tract behind.

It was as Devondorf described it, level as a floor, and not much higher than the level of the lake itself.

Although harsh winds had buffeted their rude boat during that chilly passage on the water, here the air was still under shelter of the towering pine and mountain. A bright sun glancing on the snow, disclosed

that the meadow was untrodden by the foot of man.

Some sixty or seventy acres lay in this one tract. It narrowed about eighty rods below, and a knoll covered with pines and underbrush intruded on the flat. Beyond this knoll they could see that the bottom land widened again into a similar tract.

In all there was probably about a quarter section of ground, just enough for one homestead claim.

"This is tip-top! It's a fine timbered field as a man could strike. Come on, let's go to the other end and see it all. No need of snowshoes. This snow has settled, and is stiff enough to walk on."

They tramped toward the knoll more delighted at every step. A forest of large pines came down the hillside to the edge of the lower d, assuring firewood and lumber. At one point a brook tumbled from the declivity, and disappeared beneath the snow. Jack Byers called attention to this as a suitable spot on which to set the cabin.

When near the knoll the father laid a heavy hand on his son's arm, and both came to a halt. The stroke of an axe sounded suddenly in the winter air, not far away.

"Somebody is before us," cried Mitre in dismay.

The miner's face grew dark, and he gripped his rifle resolutely. Long accustomed to the frontier, he was not disposed to yield possession without evidence that his rival had been first in the field. He pushed up the rise and through the grove.

A small tree fell beneath the vigorous strokes of the axe as they came down the farther slope. Here stood a tall, slender, elderly man, trimming boughs from the fallen pine.

"Hullo, stranger!" he said, looking at Jack Byers, and suspending his work, in evident surprise.

"Hullo, yourself!" replied the miner gruffly.

He looked about him. Neither on the knoll nor on the meadow was any sign of habitation. He believed the woodchopper was, like himself, newly arrived. He resolved to drive him off if possible. So he continued, with a confident air.

"What are you doing on my land?"

The tall woodman eyed Jack Byers keenly. He was weather-beaten and toll-worn, but his shrewd glance and Roman nose bespoke an enterprising and intelligent character.

"Is this your land?" he queried.

"Yes," rejoined Byers, boldly leaning on his rifle.

The woodchopper stepped aside where he could look out over the meadow. He shaded his eyes with his hand and scrutinized the tract.

"Where are your improvements?" he demanded.

This query staggered Jack Byers. He had often heard that the man who first put improvements on Government land had the first right of possession; but he answered with composure:

"My house ain't built yet."

Quick came the response: "There lies the first log for my foundation. Show me where you have cut any."

"I have a tent," said Byers.

"On shore?"

"Yes, sir, on shore."

"H'm! I have one, too, in my boat."

The tall woodman waved his hand toward the lake.

"When did you get here?"

Again Jack Byers faltered. "I came early—I came today," he said.

"How long ago?"

"Under pledge to my dead wife, Byers had taught Mitre to tell the truth. He dared not falsify before his boy. Reluctantly he answered: "Half an hour ago."

"You hear that, Abby," said the woodman, turning to a short, stout woman, who now came from the underbrush, bearing a frying-pan, a basket and a shotgun.

"This man claims the land. He says it is half an hour since he arrived."

The woodman pulled a watch deliberately from his pocket, and showed it to his wife. "See? We landed here at 11 o'clock exactly. You remember that. It is now twenty minutes to 12. We got here ten minutes ahead of you, stranger, and have the witnesses to prove it."

"My tent is on the place," rejoined Jack Byers steadily.

The woodman buried his axe to the eye in the butt of a soft pine near.

"Here goes for the second log of my foundation," he said.

Jack Byers cocked his rifle, and thrust it forward ready to shoulder. Long used to the rough and ready habits of the miners, he concluded to make a show of force. He shouted fiercely, "Get out of here! Take your tent and go! This land is mine, and I mean to hold it!"

The wood-chopper drew his axe from

the tree. His lips closed firmly together. He did not stir from his tracks; but he asked quietly, "What is your name, stranger?"

"Never mind my name. You get beyond yonder pine, Mitre."

Byers noted with secret concern that the woman had dropped her frying-pan and was handling the shotgun with remarkable dexterity.

"Think's going to be trouble here right now," said the woodman, turning anxiously to his wife. "This stranger won't give his name, but you heard him call the boy Mitre. Take notice of him. If he kills me go to my brother's folk in Walla Walla. They've got the money. They'll hunt him down and see him hanged."

"I'll never give him the chance," replied the woman. Her face was very pale, and her breath came hard, but she managed the shotgun like an expert. "If he shoots you, father, I'll shoot him first and the boy after."

"Think twice before you fire," said the woodchopper calmly to Byers. "We've lived on the border a good many years. She has shot more wolves than you ever heard howl in Idaho. Ho, girls! Chat! Florence! This way. Here's a man claims our land. If he shoots, don't let him get away."

Jack Byers looked around. Two tall, robust young women, carrying utensils and blankets, and one bearing a rifle, were coming up behind him. They seemed much frightened and were plainly not of a resolute character as their mother; yet Byers had an instinct that if he made them desperate they were capable of troublesome hostilities.

Byers went over to his son. "Well have to give it up. Mitre. I thought I could bluff 'em off, but they've got too much nerve. Besides, I don't like to scare the women."

"We'd better go," rejoined Mitre, who was much agitated by the turn of affairs. "She is liable to fire off that old shotgun any minute."

"Way-o-o-o-o!" rang out a sonorous, laughing cry from the woods above. They looked up. On an edge of rocks, where the trail crooked like an elbow around the hillside, there sat an Indian on horseback.

He was clad in bright buckskins, with a red blanket swinging from his shoulders. He brandished a Winchester, and waved his hand mockingly as he looked down on their defiant attitudes. While they all regarded him, he made a gesture to denote that he was coming, then vanished from view.

He was followed by a squaw, her head bound in a scarlet cloth, and girl with gay, bright shawls. The squaw, too, looked down on them as if amused. Even at that distance they could see the sarcastic smile which broadened her tawny face.

Byers looked at the woodchopper curiously, and the latter gazed with distrust upon the miner. At first each feared that the other was about to receive an ally. Then each concluded that the Indian was not a reinforcement for either, but was coming upon an independent errand—perhaps to assert his own claims. They awaited the arrival uneasily.

Soon the Indian broke from the timber and rode out on the level. The whites went out on the flat to meet him. He was a man of massive build, his attire a mixture of Government uniform, tanned skins and gaudy blankets.

Behind him came the squaw, and after her came a long train; first a horse dragging lodge poles, to which were lashed the rolled mats of a tepee, then half a dozen glass-eyed pack ponies, each bearing bundles strapped in buckskin hides. Both the natives were of middle age, with glittering black eyes, and long braided hair.

The Indian advanced with much dignity. At a distance of fifty feet from the strangers he hung his Winchester to the saddle-bow, dismounted, and dropped the bridle-chain. He said "How?" holding out his hands with the palms upward, and nodded courteously.

The miner scowled and made no response. The woodman waved his hand in friendly salutation.

Thereupon the Indian put an interrogation in the deep guttural of his native tongue, and motioned up and down the level land. Evidently he was making inquiry as to their quarrel.

"This place is mine, and I intend to hold it," said the miner, loudly, with an authoritative motion.

"If you stay here you will have six feet of the meadow, and no more," retorted the woodman grimly.

The Indian smiled. He stamped on the snow and pointed down.

"That squawquack!" he exclaimed.

"What does that mean?" said the wood-chopper.

Byers shook his head. "He's talking Chinook jargon, I guess. I never understood it."

"Squawquack!" repeated the Indian.

"What does he mean, Mitre?"

"Don't know," replied Mitre. "Except that word keekquilly. You remember the claim of Rogers's at the bottom of the washout? You never could remember its name. The name was Keekquilly, and Rogers told me it meant below."

"Keekquilly! U-h! Yes; I remember. Bad sign. I worked a month there, and never got a dime for it. The claim wasn't worth the powder he wasted. Keekquilly!"

Byers turned excitedly, struck by a startling thought. "Mitre, can he mean there is gold underneath? This meadow is nothing but wash from the hills. Look here, granger, I take this flat as a placer claim! And let me tell you, miner's rights leads farmer's rights in these mountains, by a long ways." He clutched his rifle with an air of exultation.

"And I shall hold it as a ranch until you show the gold," rejoined the settler sternly.

Still armed with the axe, he was formidable by virtue of his own firm temper, the brave wife who accompanied him, bearing her shotgun so handsily, and the stout daughters in the background. He secretly overawed Jack Byers for all the miner's bluster and bravado.

The Indian stepped between them. "Chuck! Chuck! Keekquilly!" he cried, and scraped in the snow with his mocassin.

He reached impatiently for the axe, and with its keen blade cut out the snow for a space a foot square or more. Ice showed beneath.

Into this he chopped for some minutes, when the water gushed into the narrow cleft at the bottom. Then drawing a slender lodge-pole from the packhouse near a straight iron stick about nine feet long, he thrust a smoky end through the cleft. Down went the lodge-pole its full length, and came up dripping from its soundings.

"H-s! Keekquilly chuck!" repeated the Indian, grinning wider than ever.

"Keekquilly!" I should say it was keekquilly!" cried the miner in disgust. He dropped the butt of his rifle to the snow. A cold sweat of disappointment stood on his brow.

"Why, this is nothing, but a lake here, back of the cottonwoods! There is no meadow at all! We are standing on the ice."

The Indian leaped to the saddle, laughing heartily. He headed his cavalcade back to the trail. His deep guffaws, and the musical chatter of his squaw echoed from the trees as they quickly disappeared, neither looking round again at the disappointed whites who had so fully deceived.

"Stranger, you can have Keekquilly," said the woodman, sighing a little as he earned upon his axe. "This place claim is yours. Miner's rights leads farmer's rights amid the Idaho hills."

"Thank you," rejoined Jack Byers, with an awkward attempt at repartee. "You're a newcomer. It wouldn't be polite to interfere with you. I make you welcome to this fine ranch."

"Better both of you find out first if things are worth fighting over," said the wife, drawing a long breath of relief. Then she added gently to her husband, "Ask him to take dinner with us."

"Come in under the trees. Light a fire, Chat, and put the coffee on. Stay a bit with us, you two. We'll have some coffee and bacon. Come in; come in. Don't hesitate. We both wanted this place, and tried to hold it according to our different ways. Perhaps it's lucky the matter went no further. This way we should all feel at home, here at Keekquilly."

Merrily they took their midday meal together as they separated; the miner for Tamarack Gulch, and the woodchopper to his covered wagons across the lake.

LIKE AN EARTHQUAKE ON WHEELS.

Thus Seem a Rotary Snow Plough to a Man Inside of it.

For the benefit of those who have never seen a rotary snow plough it can be simply described as an elongated box carrying a windmill on the front end. The wheel is about ten feet in diameter and fitted on its face with knives or fans set at an angle like the fans of a windmill. The backs of these knives are turned over in the form of a trough, slightly curved, and as the snow slides in through the cutter it is carried up and thrown from an opening just back and above the rim of the wheel. Any one who has seen a blower pumping air can understand the working of the rotary. They both operate on the same principle. In the latter snow instead of air is drawn backward between the fans and projected from the tunnel. When

feeling well and turned against work of its liking, a steam rotary picks up the offending snow and hurls it into the next town-ship.

The rotary carries its own operating plant, but is propelled by a locomotive coupled on behind. By means of a whistle the man who handles the fan signals the engineer when to back or fill or break away. The combination of noises which greet the visitor boxed up inside the rotary is something appalling. An earthquake on wheels would be a mild comparison. There is a hiss of steam, shrieking of whistles and the rumble and rattle of machinery which causes the entire fabric to tremble and dance on the rails. Then, by the whirling knives carve their way foot by foot into the frozen drifts, there comes a horrible, crunching, crumbling sound, as if some strong-jawed man somewhere in the fan was eating dry toast with his mouth open. Small rocks clutched once as they strike the metal and then go whizzing through the tunnel and strike the opposite bank before the snow in a graceful arch of dissolving views can cover half the distance.

## BORN.

Moncton, Mar. 3, to the wife of H. L. Bass, a son.

Alton, March 6, to the wife of L. L. Sibley, a daughter.

Halifax, March 10, to the wife of Roderick McDonald, a son.

Truro, March 6, to the wife of Daniel McLeod, a daughter.

Stellarton, March 4, to the wife of Isaac Downey, a daughter.

Halifax, Mar. 4, to the wife of C. E. Hanson, a daughter.

Dartmouth, March 10, to the wife of W. G. Lavers, a daughter.

North Sydney, March 11, to the wife of D. Lamsie, a daughter.

Amherst, March 14, to the wife of B. W. Baker, a daughter.

Oxford, N. S., March 3, to the wife of H. L. Hewson, a son.

Big Meadows, March 3, to the wife of John T. Murray, a son.

New Mills, March 6, to the wife of P. H. Sheehan, a daughter.

Stellarton, March 3, to the wife of James D. Donald, a son.

Upper Stewiack, March 2, to the wife of H. H. Opliv, a son.

Halifax, March 12, to the wife of James W. Woilerton, a daughter.

Dartmouth, N. B., Mar. 8, to the wife of Jerome S. Dawson, a son.

## MARRIED.

Southside, March 9, by Rev. B. P. Parker, Clarence Cox to Edith Nickerson.

Kentville, N. S., by Rev. Dr. Brock, Geo. Hatchett to Emily Edith Burrows.

Moncton, March 9, by Rev. J. M. Robinson, John McMillan, to Lillie Berry.

Victoria, March 12, by Rev. Canon Neake, Chas. W. McCann to Ada Boser.

Brooklyn, N. S., by Rev. J. McKewen, John F. Monzer to Mrs. Ziba Smith.

Weston, March 4, by Rev. Dr. Craig, Emmerson Uiley to Mrs. Ruth Power.

Westville, March 6, by Rev. Dr. McLeod, Daniel McKay to Cassie McDonald.

Wood Harbour, March 7, by Rev. W. Miller, Jacob Nickerson to Emily Nickerson.

Tusket, March 12, by Rev. J. W. Freeman, John W. Parker to Caroline Babine.

Pleasant Lake, March 4, by Rev. J. W. Freeman, Fred C. Archer to Clara Wyman.

Woodville, March 13, by Rev. J. D. Hart, Barnham St. John, March 13, by Rev. J. W. Cooke, Henry Calhoun to Agnes Vail, of King's Co.

Sydney Mines, March 4, by Rev. D. McMillan, Alexander McDonald to Jean Dixon.

Hopewell, N. S., March 13, by Rev. Wm. McNichol, Jacob Otto, to Cassie Glenbrook.

Compbellton, March 11, by Rev. A. F. Carr, Mark Sedgwick to Beale Miles, of Wey's Brook.

Liverpool, N. S., March 4, by Rev. Z. L. Fash, M. A., Robert Leander Buller to Margaret Labra-

Windsor, March 14, by Rev. J. L. Dawson, William J. Howe of Halifax to Alice Maud Boile-

Maple Ridge, March 6, by Rev. John M. Allan, M. A., assisted by Rev. Wm. Dawson, D. D. John B. Boucher to Amanda Jones.

Falmouth, March 5, by Rev. John Murray, M. A., Capt. John McDonald to Jane Lockhart, of Falmouth.

Jacksonville, N. B., March 10, by Rev. J. B. Morgan, B. A., John N. Harper to Mrs. Mary Hannah.

## DIED.

Halifax, March 17, Joseph Barry, 60.

Halifax, March 14, McCormack, 70.

Halifax, March 13, Mary Hinds, 68.

Halifax, March 11, James Mills, 20.

Halifax, March 13, Anne Walsh, 51.

Townscap, March 3, Marie Hill, 58.

Bathurst, March 6, Mary Robb, 47.

Gaspereau, March 8, Chas. Allen, 64.

Brookfield, March 7, Wm. F. Cox, 68.

Shag Harbour, March 7, Philip Goodwin.

Port Rigo, March 6, Mary Sprague, 73.

Kingman, March 4, James Murray, 72.

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HAS AN ANNUAL SALE OF 3,000 TONS. DEARBORN & CO., WHOLESALE AGENTS.

Spry Harbor, March 9, Hugh Hawes, 42.  
Halifax, March 10, Mrs. Ann Mitchell, 79.  
Wolville, March 12, William G. Rand, 57.  
Dalhousie, March 12, David Ritchie, 60.  
Falmouth, March 9, Catherine Curry, 64.  
Truro, March 11, Mrs. Thomas McCallum.  
Maitland, March 9, Matilda McDonald, 25.  
Hopewell, March 2, John McDonald, 55.  
Folly Village, March 8, John B. West, 58.  
Bridgetown, March 10, James B. Kinney, 71.  
Yarmouth, March 10, Mrs. Joseph Harris, 57.  
Central Chetogue, March 10, Mrs. Haley, 78.  
Middle Chetogue, March 9, Lizale Dixon, 57.  
Port Rigo, March 8, Mrs. Mary Sprague, 78.  
Six Mile Brook, March 4, Bella M. Gunn, 31.  
Six Mile Brook, March 9, Bella M. Gunn