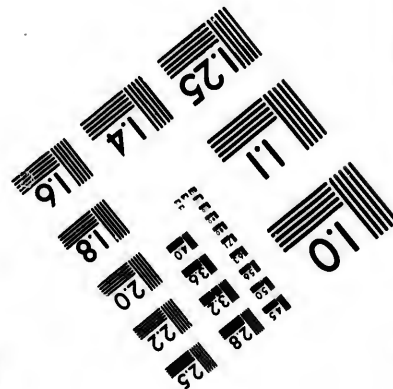
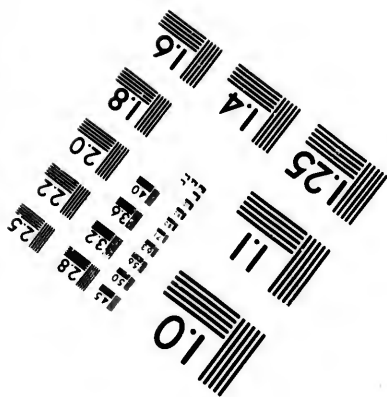
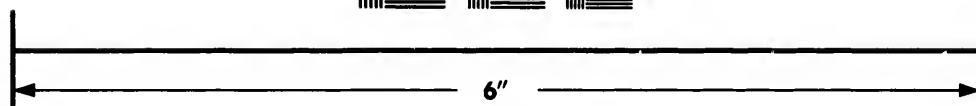
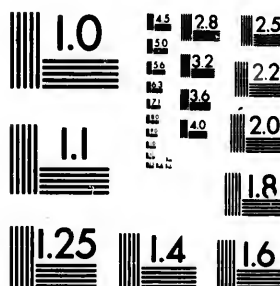


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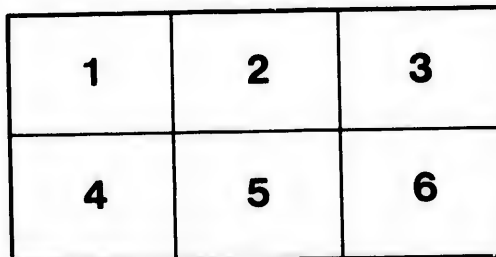
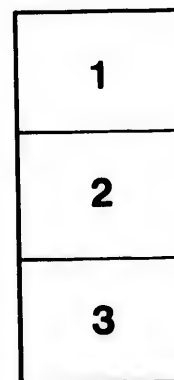
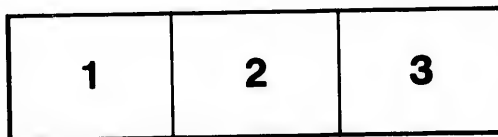
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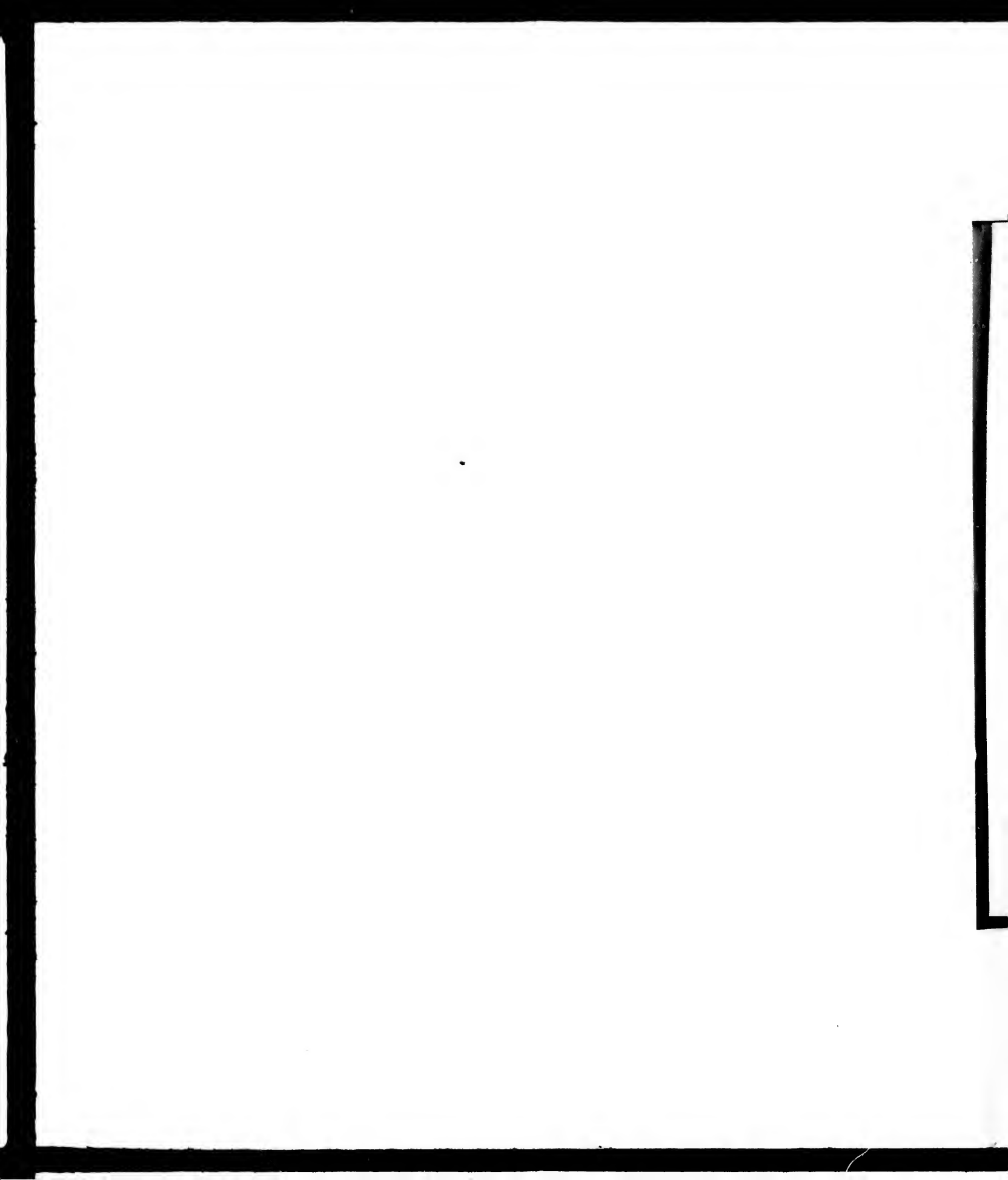
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"Because every man at this table is my prisoner." Page 316.





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THE BOYS OF THE GREAT LAKES

BY

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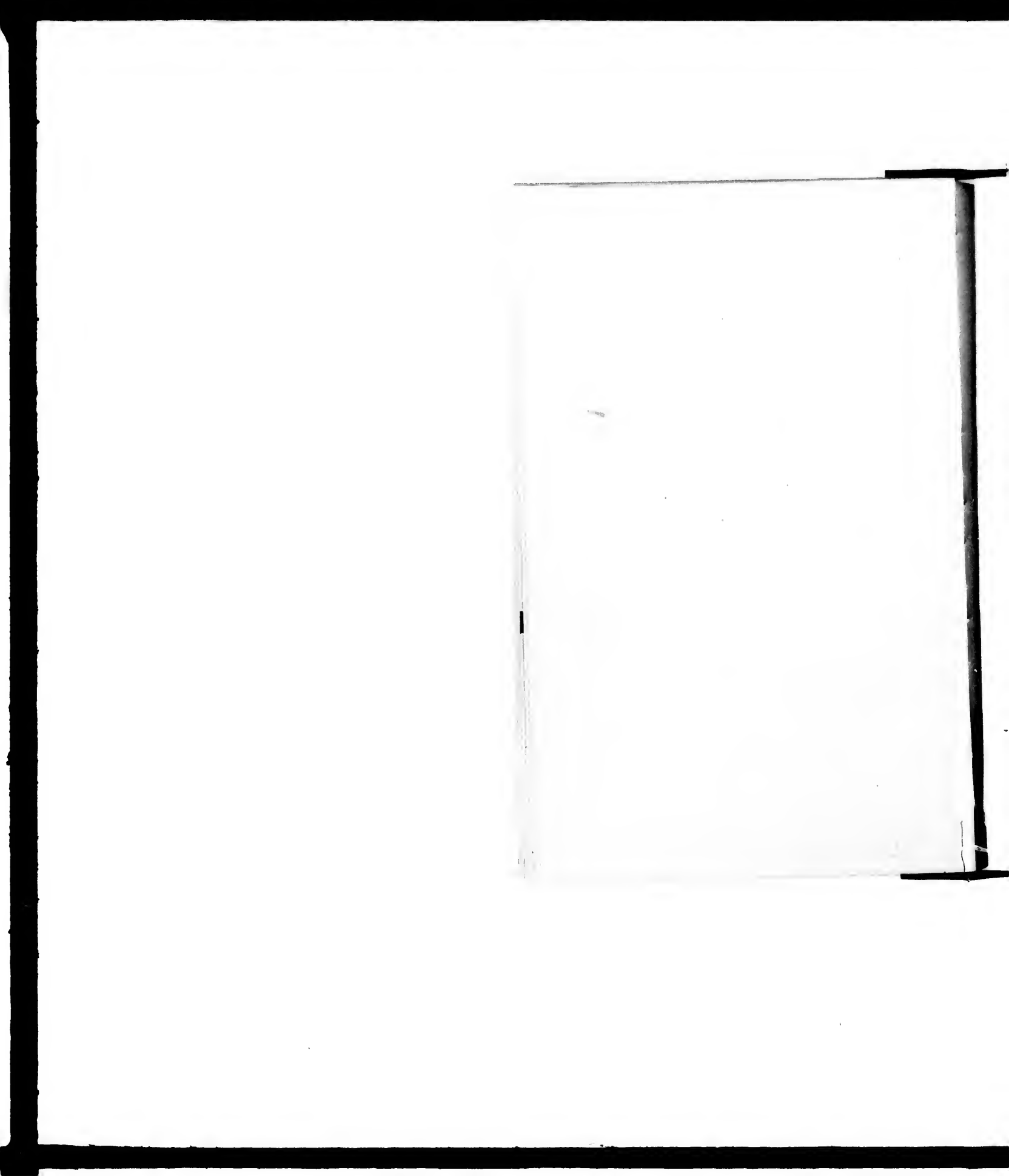
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TO
Ethel Brown.



PREFACE

THE year of 1814 brought to our country many and varied experiences. The second struggle with England was then becoming desperate, and our strong and weak points alike were manifesting themselves.

On the Great Lakes, the scene of this story, the situation was remarkable, in that almost no engagements took place, although each side was fairly well equipped with war-vessels. As one quaint writer has put it, "The British and the Americans just built frigates at each other, and called it square."

On the borders of the lakes, however, several stirring engagements occurred, with honors very evenly divided at the close of the year. On Lake Champlain and in the South more decisive events occurred; but as this story is concerned with another portion of the land, they have only slightly been touched upon here.

In the immediate connection of this story it may be well to state that the expedition to Oswego, the attack on the fort there by the fleet of Sir James

Yeo, the capture of one of the nineteen boats which left that place with supplies, the fight on Sandy Creek, the journey across the country with the heavy cables designed for the new vessels at Sackett's Harbor, are all recounted in the early records. So also are the capture of the Black Snake, the burning of the Canadian schooner, the attempts to blow up vessels by each side, the loss of Lieutenant Gregory, and many of the other incidents incorporated in this story.

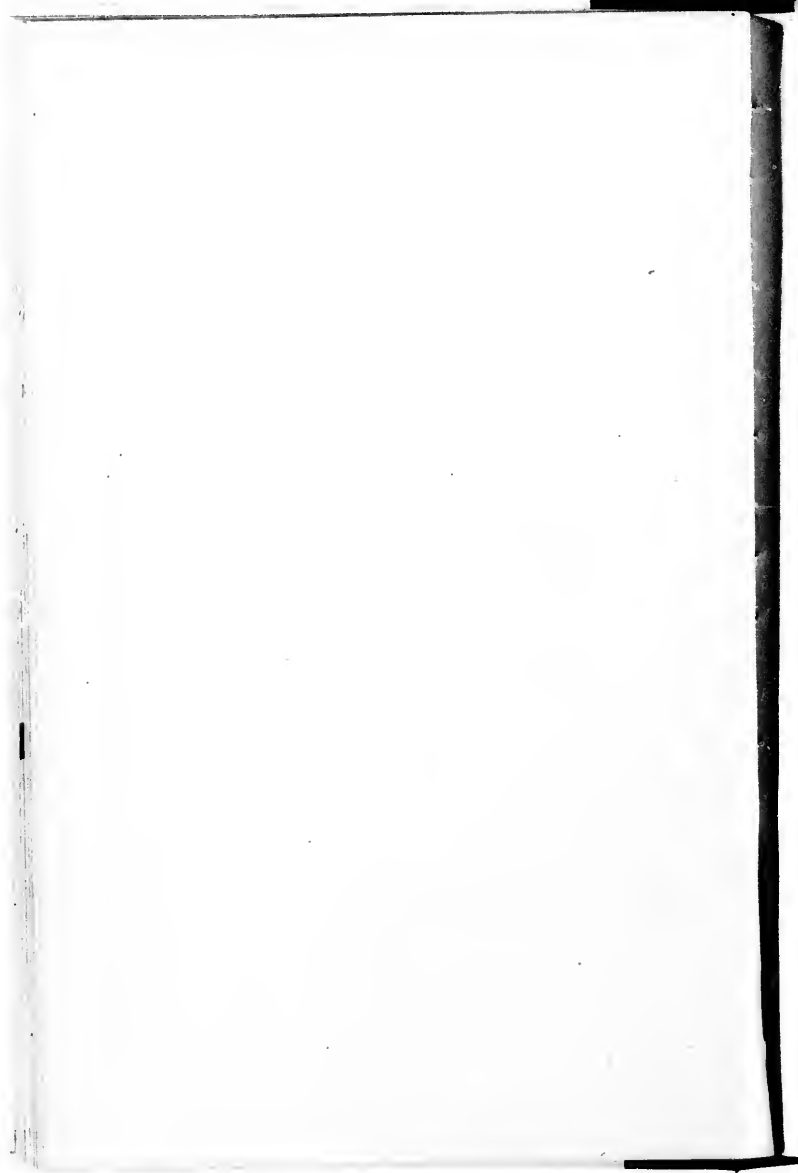
The illness of Commodore Chauncey, and the consequent rebellion of his men, the use of such men as Nairne by both sides, have ample warrant in the earlier histories.

So I think it may be justly said that the entire setting of this book is historically accurate; and my leading desire has been, not only to interest my readers in a story, but also to lead them into an appreciation of the efforts of their fathers to strengthen a land already dearly bought. Other men labored, and we have entered into their labors. If something of the same spirit can be gained, though I trust it may never be necessary to display it under the same forms, the work has not been vain.

Non sibi, sed patriæ is the motto of one family I know, and surely it may well be that of many. Peace has her victories as well as war, and the truest patriot is not always he who is most willing to fight his country's battles in arms. Problems different

from those of our fathers still confront us, and must be faced; and if the love of country and the desire for the greatest good to the greatest number still live, our fathers' children's children will give a good account of themselves in the struggles which are yet to be.

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON.



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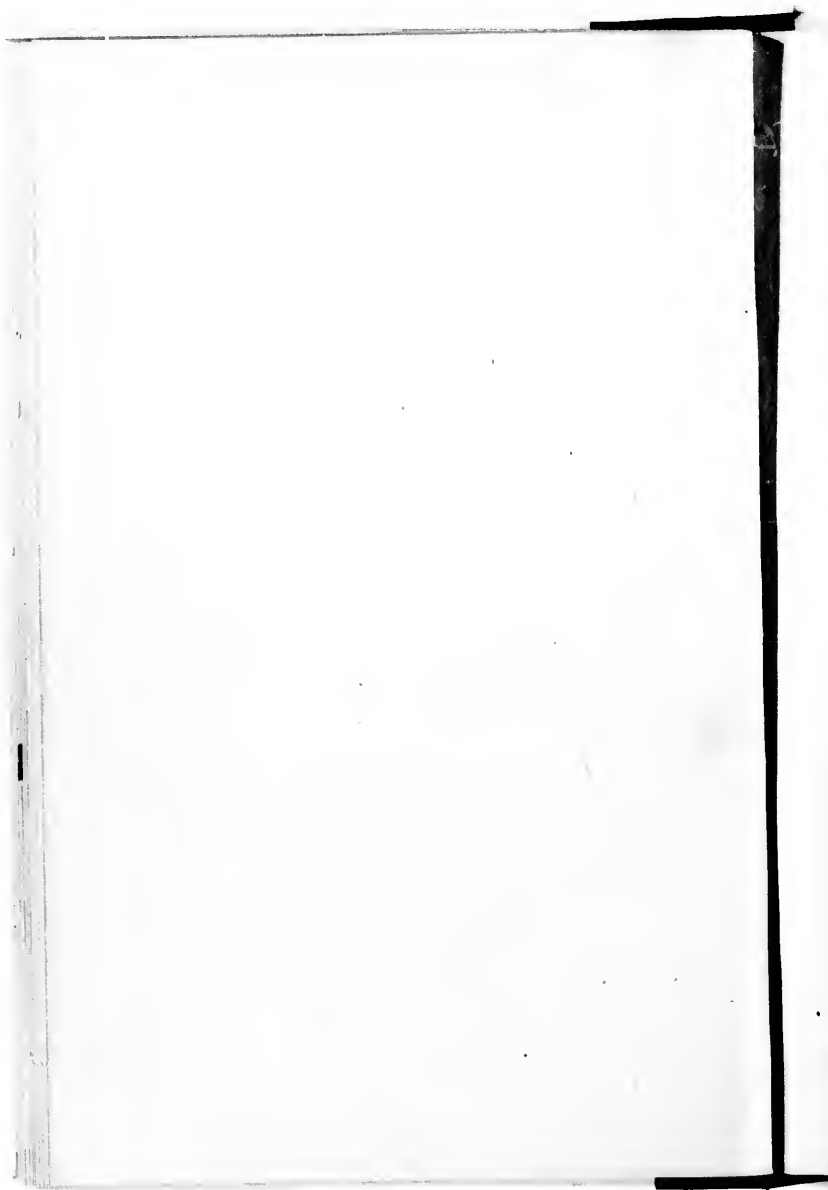
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GUARDING THE BORDER

CHAPTER I

SPRING WORK

THE old Field House near Sackett's Harbor, at the eastern extremity of Lake Ontario, was the scene of unusual activity late in the spring of 1814. For several weeks Andrew and David Field had been home; and now that the storms of the winter had gone, and the ice had disappeared from the lake, there were more signs of returning life than the voices of the singing birds afforded.

There was a movement of the forces towards Sackett's Harbor, and preparations were going rapidly forward for the summer campaign in the war which aptly has been termed the second struggle for national existence. And these two young men, although they had passed the greater portion of the winter in the quiet and seclusion of the farm, had not abandoned the service. After their return from the disastrous expedition which General Wilkinson had led down

the St. Lawrence river, they had followed the example of many of the soldiers in that war, who would be in the army for a few months, and then would return to the cultivation or clearing of the land in the region which still was comparatively a wilderness. They had not yet forgotten the example of the Minute-men in the earlier struggle of the colonies.

The long winter at last was gone. The fierce snow-storms, which often lasted for days, and buried almost everything from sight, were things of the past. The long evenings when neighbors assembled about the huge fireplaces and told stories, or learnedly discussed the movements of the government and the plans that would be adopted, while the cider and apples and popcorn were passed from hand to hand, were over, and the realities of the struggle again must be faced.

The glamour of the war was all gone from our young soldiers now. They had seen enough of the danger to feel that a struggle such as that through which they were passing was no holiday affair. There were homes near theirs from which a father, or a son, or a brother had disappeared forever; and the problem of existence, always a severe one in a new and sparsely settled region, had become doubly severe when only wives or daughters had been left to meet it alone. Perhaps they, too, would be the next to fall, for the conflicting rumors sometimes made them think that the post at Sackett's Harbor

would again be attacked; and, while it was with no loss of courage they looked out upon the spring campaign, still it was with a sober and subdued feeling that they thought and spoke of it.

Dwelling so near to the garrison as these young men did, they had been able to attend to the duties of the soldier life, and at the same time keep an oversight of the work on the farm. As yet they had not been summoned to leave their home this spring, and the work there had been pushed ahead rapidly. The rough fields had been ploughed, the fences had been repaired, the barns had received their careful attention; and at the time when our story opens, there were seven men moving side by side over the uneven ground, which had recently been ploughed, and were dropping the corn into the "hills," and covering it with the moist earth as they moved onward together. Those who have read the earlier volumes of this series would need no introduction to any of these men who had assembled on the Field farm to assist in the spring work in return for the favors which the Field boys had shown them. For the benefit of our new readers, however, a word of introduction may be helpful.

At the right of the line was Andrew Field, who held a sergeant's commission in the American army, and at any hour now expected to be summoned to Sackett's Harbor. Two years before this time he had been "pressed" into service on board one of the

British ships of the lake, but had been rescued after a long search by his younger brother David, and his two boy friends, Elijah and Henry Spicer, whose home was near, and who for a long time had been close friends and companions of Andrew and David.

Andrew Field was a young man about twenty-four years of age, and he and his young wife had managed the "Field farm" since the death of his father; and with them dwelt David, the younger brother, and their widowed mother.

David Field, now a young man of eighteen, of strong and sturdy frame, was of the same age and size as Elijah Spicer, and with him already had had a share in the struggle on the lakes. They had been to Niagara, to Toronto, and far down the St. Lawrence; and young as they were, each had received a corporal's commission, and they, too, were daily expecting a summons to join the army which was gathering at Sackett's Harbor.

Henry Spicer, the younger brother of Elijah, now a well-grown boy of sixteen, had arrived at the time when he, too, could enter the army; and although he had had a slight share in the activities of the other boys, for the most part he had been kept at home by his father, who would not give his consent that a lad of his years should go with the others into active service. That time was past now; and far more eagerly than any of his companions Henry Spicer was awaiting the opening of the campaign.

By the side of these four young men three others much older were working. The first of these was one who plainly was an old man, and scarcely able to maintain his place by the side of his younger companions. He was familiarly known as the "hermit," from the fact that he had been found living alone on one of the Thousand Islands. His sad experiences in his earlier life already have been related; and for two years now he had made his home with the Fields, looking after the farm-work in the absence of the boys.

Along with him was a strange-appearing man, whose face beamed with good-nature, and who showed his contentment in his every word and act. He had been a cook on board the vessel which had impressed Andrew into the service, and with him had escaped from a place which was thoroughly distasteful to him. "The one-legged cook at the Fields," was the term by which he was familiarly known among the neighbors; due, perhaps, to the fact that one leg had been shot away at the knee, and its place supplied by one of wood.

The man at the extreme left of the line was the strangest character of all. He was a long, lanky individual, with a great shock of bushy red hair, and rejoiced in the name of Heman Jeduthan Chubb. And when I say he rejoiced in the name, I write what was simply true. Mistress Chubb had given her offspring the name in which he delighted, as one

which might induce the musical qualities of the famous "Heman the singer" mentioned in the Book of Chronicles to descend upon him. Whether it was the name she had given, I cannot say, but Heman Jeduthan had developed certain musical qualities as the years passed, and he himself attributed his ability as a singer to the original Heman, whose praises he never tired of relating; and next to singing himself, he delighted in quoting the unfamiliar expressions and genealogies the Books of the Chronicles have recorded. It was commonly believed by his young friends that he could quote both books by chapter and verse at will. He had fallen in with our boys in one of their expeditions, and, homeless himself, had accepted the open hospitality of the Field household; and, if it could be said he had a home, it was with them.

If he had lived a few centuries before the time in which he happened to have been born, he certainly would have been one of the troubadours, or wandering minstrels; for his ability as a singer was joined to a restless and wandering disposition that seldom made him contented to remain more than a few weeks in any one place. He had been a schoolmaster and singing-teacher by turns, and since the war began had had many strange experiences which already have been recorded.

Side by side moved the seven men on this beautiful morning in the late spring of 1814. The many

hands made the rough work lighter, and the mild and balmy air appeared to soften the feelings of young and old alike. It was a delight to work, now that the long and dreary winter was gone; and the exciting reports that were current, we may be sure were the chief topics of their conversation.

"They say as how Congress is all right for the war now, and there is a good working majority to hold up the hands of the President," said the hermit as they came to the end of a row.

"The Federals were defeated in New York," said Andrew, "and that's a good thing."

"I did hope," replied the hermit, "that somehow the President could accept the offer the Emperor of Russia made to bring about peace. It would have been a good thing if it could have been done right. The war is right; there's no doubt of that. But while I believe in this war, I believe a good deal more in peace, if we could get it in the right way."

"No," interrupted Heman, "there's no peace for the wicked. They are like the waves of the troubled sea when it cannot rest," and rolling his eyes, and throwing back his head, he leaned for a moment on the long handle of his hoe and began to sing, —

"Oh, lonely is our green old fort,
Where oft in days of yore
Our gallant soldiers bravely fought
'Gainst savage allies bold.

But with the change of years have passed
The unrelenting foe,
Since we fought here with Harrison
A long time ago."

"I hear the New England States haven't backed up the President very well," said Elijah, as they all turned into a new row, and began to work towards the other side of the field.

"No," said the hermit. "Governor Strong of Massachusetts has openly denounced the war, and urged his legislature to adopt measures for bringing about peace; and he doesn't seem to care very much how they get it, if only it can be had."

"That's pretty nearly what I call the traitor act," said Henry quickly.

"Oh, well! the property holders always oppose anything that threatens a change. That was the reason why most of the rich men were Tories during the Revolution," said the hermit. "But they're no worse than some of the merchantmen who, while pretending to be neutrals, have kept on along all the coast, trading with the British at the West Indies. They say that they've been using the licenses the British have given them too. It's too bad!"

"You mustn't forget," said Andrew thoughtfully, "that it's not all one-sided. Just think how Harrison's got hold of Michigan again. Then Perry's fight up on Lake Erie is enough to start us up if

nothing else would, to say nothing of Chauncey's work here on Lake Ontario. That's no small fish affair, I'd have you know."

"But you forget all about Fort Meigs," said Heman. "Don't forget that. I was there myself."

"We're not likely to forget it while you are anywhere near, Heman," said Elijah. "You won't let us. I should have liked to see you there. What did you do, Heman, sing or yell?"

"I sang," replied Heman indignantly; "I sang like Heman of old, and this is what I sang, —

"Farewell, peace! Another crisis
Calls us to the last appeal,
Made when monarchs and their vices
Leave no argument but steel.
Let not all the world united
Rob us of one sacred right,
Every patriot's heart's delighted
In his country's cause to fight."

"I don't wonder they fought," said Elijah, "if you sang like that, Heman." Elijah spoke soberly; and Heman apparently was not quite able to understand the laugh which followed, and in which all but he joined. He looked from one to another, but made no reply.

"The peace party's pretty strong, though, I hear," said Andrew, as again they came to the end of the row.

"Not strong enough to stop the war now," re-

plied the hermit. "New York's true blue every time."

"But I'm afraid we'll have more trouble now," said Andrew. "That check Napoleon has met with at Leipsic, on his march towards the German Ocean and the Baltic, is likely to leave the British free to give a little more attention to us than they have been giving during the past two years."

"Still," said the hermit, "I hear a British schooner has brought word that the English are ready to call it quits with us now, if we'll give up the thing we've been fighting about. They say they can't accept the offer of the Emperor of Russia, but they'll quit if we will, and call it square."

"What! and leave them free to work their press-gangs, and stop any boat we've got on the ocean or lakes, and take any of the men they choose?" said Henry impulsively. "Not much! I'm just going into the fight, and I'll not quit."

His companions laughed as he spoke, and the boy was covered with confusion in a moment.

"The lad's right. He's right through and through," said Heman. Just listen to this, —

"She comes, the proud invader comes,
To waste our country, spoil our homes;
To lay our towns and cities low,
And bid our mothers' tears to flow;
Our wives lament, our orphans weep, —
To seize the empire of the deep."

"Which is going to weep for you, your orphans or your mother, Heman?" inquired Elijah,

"Never you mind, young man. I haven't any orphans now; but if I had, they'd weep."

"No doubt about that," replied Elijah. "Any orphan of yours would weep whenever he thought of his father's name. It even starts the tears in my eyes now. Heman Jeduthan Chubb! Just think of it!"

"I suppose you know that song you were singing was written about the attack on Sackett's Harbor, don't you?" said David, who saw that Heman was becoming angry.

"Yes," said Heman quickly, "and here's another about the little schooner that Andrew's been on, —

"For a nautical knight, a lady, heigho,
Felt her heart and her heart-strings to ache;
To view his dear person she looked to and fro,
The name of the knight was Sir James Lucas Yeo,
And the Lady — 'twas she of the lake."

"The Lady of the Lake is the smartest craft around here," said Andrew. "And she's given Yeo a lively dance more than once too. I know, for I've been there. But they say the government is going to enlist the new men now for a term of five years. That doesn't look very much like giving up the war."

"Well, if they do attack Sackett's Harbor, I hope they'll meet with as good a reception as they did be-

fore," said Henry. "I'm going to have a hand in it now."

"Keep still, and I'll sing you a song about that very time," said Heman, who had been waiting impatiently, —

"So Sir James Yeo steered with Provost's chosen bloodhounds,
But Brown his dogs of valor cheered, militia blood, but good
hounds.

He chased them from the bloody track, and Yeo's bull dogs
slighting,

Though Chauncey was not there, he showed Sir James the art
of fighting,

Bow! wow! wow!

Fresh water dogs can tutor them with

Bow! wow! wow!"

"I'm tired," said Elijah. "Come, Heman, let's take a rest. You need it, and I know I do."

Heman was inclined to be angry again; but Andrew broke in and said, "We'll all have a rest now. The field's all planted, and I don't see why we aren't ready if the general sends for us to come over to Sackett's this minute."

The line was soon broken, and the older men started towards the house. The boys, however, lingered about the barn, still talking of the war, and the prospect of an early summons.

"I'll tell you what, boys," said David, "if we're not summoned to-morrow, let's take a day off. I'd like one more try at the bass before I leave home. The cook was down at the dock yesterday; and he

caught twenty-five of the neatest bass you ever saw, right off the dock."

"That's the programme!" said Elijah eagerly. "They say the bass are running in great shape this spring. What time do we want to start?"

"Oh! come over by sunrise. That'll be all right. We'll try it off the dock; and if we don't have the cook's luck, for I believe he'd catch bass in a mud-puddle, we'll troll a bit."

The boys separated, going to their homes, and full of the thoughts of the sport on the morrow. They little dreamed, however, how the day's enjoyment was to be interfered with, or what new problem was to face them before the following day had passed.

CHAPTER II

AN INTERRUPTION

THE sun was not yet in sight on the following morning when Elijah and Henry Spicer dismounted from their horses, and approached the home of David Field. But early as it was, David was waiting for them, for he well knew the value of an early start in such an expedition as they had in mind. It had been long since the boys had had a day of sport together; for the anxiety at Sackett's Harbor, and the necessity of rushing the early work on the farms, had demanded all their time and attention.

Now that the possibility was theirs, they were once more boys again, and for the time the heavy responsibilities that made even those who were young feel and share in the burdens that oppressed their elders were almost forgotten. They were ready to enter heart and soul into the enjoyment the day promised; and as for the morrow, they were content to let that look after itself.

"Glad you're on time, 'Lije," said David, as he left the house and went with the boys to the barn,

where they were to leave their horses for the day.
"The early bird gets the worm."

"Well, I hope the early boys get the fish. If they're as punctual as we are, there'll be some fun before we come back. Got all the bait, David?" said Henry.

"Yes; I've got some worms and frogs. The minnows we'll have to get by the dock. There are always plenty of them there, and it won't take long to get a pailful."

"That's good. We've just the kind of a day we want. It seems good to see the spring again. We've had a tough winter of it, and for one I'm glad it's over," said Elijah.

The boys almost stopped for a moment, as if to take in Elijah's words. The tardy spring at last had come, and the morning was one to delight those who had known the monotony and confinement of a long and dreary winter. The air was soft and balmy, and the robins and the bluebirds were chirping and twittering as if they, too, shared in the common joy of life in the early springtime. The gray dawn promised a clear but not a bright day, just such a one as was likely to be a fisherman's delight. Even the cattle, which already were busy in the pastures cropping the fresh green grass, added to the peacefulness of the scene by their presence; and there was nothing as far as the eye could see to indicate that such an evil as war was threatening the land.

About a mile away they could see the still blue waters of Lake Ontario, its surface as unruffled and smooth as a floor; and the little dock where their skiff was fast seemed to be but a short distance from where they were.

"It doesn't seem possible this morning that there can be a redcoat anywhere near the lake," said David; "but I suppose there is, if the reports are true."

"Oh, you're always thinking of such things, David!" said Henry quickly. "I'm in for the fun of the day itself, and then I'm in for the other fun too. You've had a share, and I want mine."

David smiled, but made no reply. In a few minutes the horses had been tied in the stalls, and the boys, with their long cedar poles over their shoulders, started down the road which led to the dock where their boat lay. The War of 1812 was almost forgotten now in the immediate prospect which lay before them, and unconsciously they quickened their pace as they advanced.

They had gone about half of the distance when David suddenly stopped, and exclaimed, "There! I've forgotten the minnow-net!"

"Oh, well, never mind!" said Henry; "we've got the worms and frogs, and that'll be enough."

"No, it won't either," said Elijah. "The bass'll take a minnow quicker than anything else this time of the year."

"I know what that means. I'm the fellow that'll

have to go back and get it. That's what comes of being the youngest. I've had my dose of that all my life. I just wish there was some one I could pay it off on," grumbled Henry.

"Your turn will come all right," said David. "But I don't see how I could have forgotten it. I took everything out of the shop last night before I went to bed, and put everything I thought we'd want together in the kitchen. You'll find it in the shop, Henry, hanging right over the first shelf. It won't take you long to get it, and we'll wait for you here."

"You're very kind, Corporal," said Henry, making a wry face. Whenever he wished to put an especial vigor into his words, he addressed his brother and David as "Corporal." He was almost as proud as they of the title they could claim; but it was not in the nature of a boy of sixteen, who, from his earliest years had known and associated with these two boys, one of whom was his own brother and the other a friend almost as near, to be overwhelmed by the dignity to which they had attained.

But there was nothing else to be done now, and Henry started swiftly up the path to get the forgotten net. The "shop" to which David had referred was well known by him, being nothing else than a small room on the ground-floor of the barn which Andrew and David had partitioned off with rough boards, and in which there was a rude bench where they

were accustomed to do such repairing as was required in the work on the farm. A few tools were kept there, and along the walls were hung some of the trophies of the boys' success in trapping and hunting. A bear's head was over the doorway; and the story of how they captured bruin in the pit they had dug for him was a familiar one. Opposite the doorway was the head of a buck, its branching antlers serving as pegs on which they hung their coats when they were working in the summer-time. Snakes' skins and hornets' nests also adorned the room, and around the walls were the various parts of their fishing outfits. These would have made a modern sportsman smile, for they were rude and simple; but they had served every purpose of the boys, and many of those who to-day would have spoken derisively of their outfit would not have laughed could they have seen the results which these hardy young pioneers brought to pass.

Henry knew all about "the shop;" for he himself had spent many pleasant hours there, assisting his friends in their labors, or listening to the stories they had to tell whenever they were together in this favorite meeting-place of all the boys in the region.

He hurried on his way back to the barn, frequently glancing behind him to assure himself that the boys were mindful of their promise to await his return where they were. He soon had gained the place, and flung back the heavy barn doors. The horses

whinneyed as he entered, for they as yet had not received their morning's care. But the "chores" this morning were to be done by the men, who had for the day taken this task upon themselves in order to give their young companions a free day to themselves. The barn was yet almost dark within, and Henry several times almost fell over the various implements that stood on the floor; but in a brief time he arrived at the door of the shop, and tried to open it.

To his surprise it was fast; and, push against it as he would, it would not respond to his efforts to open it.

"That's a great note!" muttered the impatient boy. "Why didn't David tell me he had locked it?" He could see more clearly now, but there was nothing he could find which held it. He lifted the latch again and again, and threw himself against the door, exerting all his strength; but it stubbornly refused to yield to any of his efforts, and apparently was as firm and fast as if it had been a portion of the walls of the barn.

Henry became more and more irritated. He had counted so much on the day, and had been so eager for an early start, that he was not at all patient when he found his plans balked at the very beginning.

"Why didn't David tell me he had locked the door?" he exclaimed again, after he had continued his efforts several minutes, and still found the door

as unyielding as before. "Well, he'll have to take the consequences himself, and come up and open his own door. He might have done that in the first place, and saved all the trouble, instead of packing it all off on me. The two corporals will have to come and put their heads together." He quickly ran out of the barn and started towards the boys, but stopped when he saw that they were approaching. They, too, had become impatient at the long delay, and, leaving their rods and implements behind them, had started together back towards the barn to find out the meaning of Henry's failure to return with the minnow net.

A quick wave of the hand by Henry as soon as he saw them quickened their pace, and in a few moments all three were together.

"What's the matter with you, Henry?" said Elijah. "Trying to weave a net? We didn't tell you to make one, only just to get the one that hung over the bench."

"That's all right; but the next time you mighty officers of the great American army send a private to get a net out of a room when the door is locked, you'd better send the key along with him too."

"'Key!'" said David quickly. "What are you talking about? There isn't a lock on the door. You must have lain down on the hay, and gone to sleep and had a dream. There isn't a key or lock about the door."

"Well, Corporal, all I've got to say is, that the door's locked, then, key or no key."

"Nonsense!" replied David. "Come on, and we'll open it for you." And all three entered the barn, and pushed against the door. But their united efforts availed no more than Henry's alone had done; and the door was still firm and unmoved.

"That beats the Dutch!" said David. "I can't imagine what has got into it."

"More likely something's got behind it," said Elijah. "Probably something's dropped against it on the inside, and holds it."

"Perhaps that may be so," replied David dubiously, "but I can't imagine what it can be. The window's loose, anyway, and you two go around to the outside. Elijah, you can help Henry in through the window, and he can soon fix it."

"Yes, that's right," said Henry. "Help 'Henry' in. It's always Henry. What's the matter with one of you dropping through the window? Maybe you think it isn't big enough to let your heads through."

"Never mind, Henry," said Elijah. "You give me a boost, and I'll go in if you're afraid."

"Afraid! Afraid of nothing!" said Henry, who was over his pet as soon as he saw that his companions were not inclined to impose upon him. "I'm lighter than you, and if you'll help me up, I'll crawl through and see what the trouble is."

"All right, then," said David. "I'll stay here

and push from this side as soon as you give the word."

The brothers at once left him; and, going around to the outside, Elijah soon lifted Henry so that he could raise the window; and in a moment he had crawled through, and dropped upon the floor within.

"What's the trouble, Henry?" called David as soon as he heard the sound of his fall within. "Is there something against the door, or what is it?"

There was a silence for a moment, and then both David and Elijah were frightened by the calls that came from within the shop. "Oh, help! Open the door! Quick. It's alive. Come, open the door. Open it. Open it!"

Elijah, who hurriedly had run around the barn to regain his place by the side of David, and assist him in pushing against the door, when Henry should remove the obstacle, whatever it was, looked quickly into the face of his companion, and saw that it was as pale as his own. What could the trouble be? Was Henry struggling with some beast? Before they could reply to the calls of the frantic boy, Henry again began to shout for aid, and his tones too plainly indicated his terror. "Open the door! Open it! Why don't you help me! Open it! Quick! Oh, please open it! Please do!"

The frightened boys, moved as by a common impulse, threw themselves again against the door, work-

ing at the latch, and pushing with all their strength. To their surprise, the door suddenly gave way before them; and as both fell forward upon the floor, something quickly rushed past them; but the boys in their consternation could not tell whether it was beast or man.

Quickly regaining their feet, they turned, and saw standing in the open doorway of the barn a strange-looking little figure which had stopped, and was calmly regarding them. It was a man, but his little body was not taller than that of a boy of ten years of age. His head was large; and his arms, as long as those of an ordinary man, looked strangely out of proportion. He smiled as the frightened boys turned towards him, and said, "Well, boys, wings is the things, after all. If I'd only had 'em, you wouldn't be as scared as you are now."

"The dwarf! It's the dwarf!" shouted Elijah, who now had recovered sufficiently to recognize the strange-looking being before him. "Where did you come from?"

"From walking up and down the earth," replied the dwarf slowly. "But if I'd had wings I'd been better off. Wings is the things, boys; wings is the things!"

"But what were you doing in the shop?" asked David. "You've frightened Henry almost to death!"

"To say nothing of the two corporals in the great American army," rejoined Henry, who had now re-

gained his composure. "I guess if you'd dropped through a window before it was fairly light, and fallen onto something that moved, and then began to claw into you, you'd call to two wooden-headed corporals in the great American army who were standing outside, and doing nothing but run one poor little private into danger."

"What were you doing in the shop?" said David, ignoring Henry's remarks, and turning again to the dwarf, who had remained silent while the boys were speaking.

"Well, the way of it was this. I've been to Sackett's. I've been for Jim. Jim Nairne. You know him?" and he smiled maliciously.

Know him? The boys knew him too well! They had not forgotten that he was the lieutenant of Smith the freebooter, who had a stronghold on an island in the St. Lawrence, and who with his followers were now on one side in the struggle and now on the other, but always for their own advantage and gain. Nor had they forgotten their own experiences with him and this dwarf who now was standing before them.

"Well," resumed the dwarf, "I've been to Sackett's. I've seen the general. I've given him the word Jim Nairne told me to. Then last night I started back this way. I got as far as the Field house. I almost went in. But I was afraid of that one-legged cook. He's wicked. He's bad. He's got

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a wooden leg. I wish I had wings." He stopped and glanced about him as the boys laughed at his reference to the dangerous qualities of the cook, whom they knew to be one of the gentlest and most inoffensive of men. "I put up in that room," said the dwarf. "I put a block against the door, and braced it to keep out the cook. But he came. He came, and in the night he tried to get in."

"Where are you going now?" asked David.

"Back to Jim; and I wish I had wings, I do. Wings is the things."

"You stay here with him," said David to the boys, as he started towards the house.

"Where are you going, Dave?" called Elijah.

"Up to the house to get Andrew, and see what we ought to do."

CHAPTER III

THE DWARF SPREADS HIS WINGS

ANDREW FIELD and the men were just on the point of leaving the house when David hurriedly entered. His words were sufficient to quicken their movements; and in a few moments the little group were standing about the dwarf, and curiously observing him.

Frightened as the little man undoubtedly was, the sight of Andrew served to restore his confidence in a measure, and he ran to his side, and clung to his arm as a timid boy does to his father's.

"There, never mind the others," said Andrew consolingly to the dwarf; "just tell us how it is that you happen to be here this morning. You needn't be afraid, for you're with friends, and we sha'n't forget very soon the help you gave the boys down on Smith's Island in the St. Lawrence."

His manner and words, instead of calming the strange little being, seemed to serve the opposite purpose; and he clung more closely to Andrew, glancing quickly about the group, and trembling in every limb, but he made no reply.

"Why don't you tell us about it?" said Andrew again, looking down at the trembling form beside him.

The dwarf still was silent, but after a swift glance about him again, he took Andrew by the arm, and pulled his body lower until he could whisper in his ear. The young soldier listened attentively; but as he again stood upright he laughed slightly as he said, "Yes, I know your opinion on that subject. Wings are quite a good institution; there's no doubt about that. He's still getting off that old saw of his about wings being the things. I don't know just what he means, and I don't believe he does either. But, boys, we'll have to look into this a bit. I'm not due myself at the Harbor till ten o'clock; but as you boys are off for a fishing-trip, I think you'd better take him along with you."

"He'll only be in our way," said Elijah quickly. "Why can't we leave him here, and you take him over with you when you go?"

"Because he must go now," replied Sergeant Andrew decidedly. "We can't pick much out of him, and it may be what he has told you is the truth and maybe it isn't. It won't take you long to go over to the Harbor, and you can troll over and back. There's no better place in the lake for bass than out by the bar, and you'll be apt to strike something there going over or coming back."

"That's so," said Henry quickly. "Last summer

when you fellows were away I went out there alone one day trolling. I was barefooted, and tied the line to my big toe so that I could tell if I had a strike. It wasn't long before I had one, and a big one too, and I couldn't get the fish in alone. I thought I had hooked the whole bottom of Lake Ontario; but I made the line fast in the boat, and pulled ashore, and there I hadn't any trouble in landing his majesty without a net. It was a pick-erel, and he weighed fifteen pounds. Oh, the bar's a good place!"

"Whew, what a fish-story!" said Elijah, holding up both hands as if to express his astonishment.

"It's gospel truth," began Henry indignantly; "and if you don't believe it"—

"Of course we believe it, Henry," said Andrew. "I've told bigger ones than that myself. But just now I'm hoping you won't be detained on your way over. Wait till you come back."

"Come on, then, boys," said David as he started towards the lake. "I hope they won't take us for another British skiff loaded with powder," referring to an experience the men at Sackett's Harbor had had about a month previous when three skiffs had been chased away, and afterwards it was reported that they had about six hundred pounds of powder on board, and the men had intended to blow up some one of the vessels in the American fleet.

"Never you fear," replied Andrew. "Good luck

to you, but come back before dark. Don't forget my experience with the bass and the British. There you, go along with the boys," he added turning once more to the dwarf, who hesitated a moment, and then started obediently after the young fishermen.

"It'll be too late if we don't hurry," said Elijah. "The bass run better in the morning, and it'll be high noon before we know it."

"Hold on! don't go so fast," replied David. "Don't you see this man's legs were not made for running?" looking at the dwarf, who was running as a duck does, and doing his best to keep up with his more fortunate companions.

No further words were spoken until they came near the dock, when the dwarf, startled as he saw the place to which they were going, spoke up quickly, "No, no; not there! O David, no! Oh, wings is the things! Why haven't you wings?"

"Yes, yes; right here," said Henry mockingly. "We're going to fly too. We're going to fly over the briny deep — no, the fresh-water deep I mean. Come on, boys."

The light-hearted lad ran down the shore now, and out on the dock in advance of his companions. He kept on to the end of the dock; but as he glanced over into the lake he uttered a startled exclamation, and turned quickly and ran back to his companions. "Boys," said he in an excited whisper, "there's a

boat there at the end of the dock, and a man in her fast asleep."

"What!" said both boys together, as they started to run to see for themselves whether Henry had spoken truly or not. The dwarf was pulling at David's arm, and doing his best to hold him back; but with an angry exclamation the boy threw him off and ran down the dock, and came to the edge just as a man leaped lightly up from the boat below, and stood before them.

The sight startled the lads, for the man was not very prepossessing in his appearance. Neither David nor Elijah was small, but standing beside this giant they looked to be almost like children. He must have been almost six and a half feet high, and his broad shoulders and muscular arms showed the strength he possessed. The gun which he held in one hand did not tend to decrease their fear, and for a moment no one spoke. But both David and Elijah at once recognized the stranger as Jim Nairne, the dwarf's master, and the dreaded lieutenant of Smith, the freebooter and guerilla of the St. Lawrence.

"Well, boys," said the stranger at last, "did ye come down to call me to breakfast? I'm hungry as a bear, and don't care if I do; for I remember I had a hand in feeding you fellows for a bit of a time, and free of all expense to you, too, down the St. Lawrence last year."

"No," replied David; "we'd just started for the Harbor, to take this man over to General Brown."

"Oh! ye did, did ye?" replied Nairne, with a loud laugh. "Well, not this trip, I guess. Here, you imp incarnate, jest you crawl in;" and he kicked at the dwarf, who nimbly escaped the overture of the giant, and slipped over the edge of the dock into the boat below, and disappeared from sight at once within the little cabin.

"But my brother Andrew's a sergoant, and he told us to take him over there," said David.

"Oh! he did, did he? Well, suppose you jest take him; that's all I've got to say."

"Well, you know what it means to hinder us; that's all I can say too." David was speaking more boldly than he felt; for the sight of this man, powerful and armed as he was, was not very promising.

"Yes; I know, I know," and Nairne burst into a loud laugh. "Why don't ye take him? that's all I say? You'll get reported for not doing yer duty. Now, why don't ye take him and start?"

David made no reply at first. He knew an encounter with this man could end in but one way, although they were three against one. Once he thought of making a quick rush against him, and trying to push him over into the water; but luckily he abandoned the project as soon as it presented itself. "Well," he said at last slowly, "the dwarf said he had been over to Sackett's to see General Brown

for you; but Andrew didn't know whether he was telling the truth or not, so he said we'd better take him over and find out."

"The little imp leaked, did he? I'll fix your tongue so it can't waggle so much," he said, turning and kicking towards the dwarf, whose head had appeared for a moment at the entrance of the cabin. "Well, lads, if the truth must be told, he did go to Sackett's to see General Brown for me. I had some particulars of that wonderful fight of Wilkinson's up by Lake Champlain, and I thought he'd be interested. I s'pose you know that Wilkinson's over by Lake Champlain; and it was a wonderful fight he made. The wonder was that he fought at all," and the giant laughed so loudly as to startle his young listeners. "Yes," he resumed, "as you know, Wilkinson's up there, and on the 30th of March he set out to down the British; for he had heard that about twenty-five hundred of them were coming across lots to sweep up Lake Champlain and all the Yankees on it. Wilkinson had about four thousand men, and crossed over the Canada line; and up at La Colle's mill they had what they called a fight. The British had about two hundred men in the old stone mill, and Wilkinson was doing his level best to dislodge 'em. They fought and fought; but the British couldn't be touched, and their force kept growing till it got to be a thousand men. They had all sorts of engagements, and finally Wilkinson

marched away again. He's a genius, that fellow is! He ought to be President. I will say, that I hear some of his men did work fit for a king; but what can you expect of such a putty man as Wilkinson? I don't believe a bullet would make any more impression on him than it would on smoke. There isn't enough of him to hit."

"Did he lose many men?" inquired Elijah, who was interested in spite of himself.

"He had thirteen killed, a hundred and twenty-eight wounded, and thirteen more he never got any trace of."

"How about the British? Did they have any losses?" inquired David.

"Yes; a few. They had eleven killed, two officers and forty-four men wounded, and four that they couldn't find. But I guess the Yankees will be all right pretty soon, for I hear they've made officers out of you;" and he broke into another loud laugh, that sounded strangely over the lakes, and caused the cheeks of the boys to turn scarlet.

"That's always the way! It seems as if every fool in the army was made a general," said Henry indignantly. "We had a good taste of Wilkinson ourselves last winter. But there's nothing going on around here except to keep cooped up in the Harbor."

"Oh! there'll be music here soon enough; never you fear," said Nairne. "Perhaps you ought to fix Wilkinson the way some of the men at Sackett's are

doing. I hear as how there's a captain there that didn't dare lead his own men for fear he'd accidentally get shot from behind. Great works these!"

The boys were silent. They knew too well the reports which were current of the feeling of the men towards some of the minor officers, who had tried by their severity to make up for what they lacked in knowledge and ability. The men were punished with the strap for the slightest offences, and several executions had occurred for desertion. The last had been that of a young boy only fifteen years of age, who, homesick and forlorn, had tried to desert from the army, and make his way home again, but had been caught and hung for his heinous crime.

"Well, General Brown's all right," resumed Nairne. "If the folks at Washington only had brains enough, they'd put more power into his hands than he has, though. They say as how the War Department has a fool for a leader too. But there's one man who's not a fool, and that's Jim Nairne. He likes butter on his bread, and he knows which side to put it on too. He's not over particular just which side it is; but either side'll do, if it's only butter, and good and thick at that. I've tried both, and I don't give that for the difference;" and he snapped his fingers derisively. "What are they fighting about, anyway? Only a sentiment; that's just all. Talk about the press-gang! Why don't they 'press' me? I'm standin' right here waitin' to be pressed."

"Then, you won't take the dwarf over to see General Brown?" he resumed. "Well, I don't mind tellin' you that he's seen him. I sailed over here yesterday; but I kind o' thought as how I wouldn't go over to Sackett's myself, so I just landed here, and sent my vice-president over in my place, and he's just turned up. Here, you!" he called out to the dwarf, whose face had appeared again, "Crawl in! These officers say as how they don't care for your company." And the loud laugh again followed.

"Well, I must be a-goin', if you won't take him with you." He slipped the little mast into its place, and the sail was quickly spread. The fresh breeze which had arisen soon filled it, and the boat sped onwards towards the open lake.

The boys stood in silence on the dock, and watched it as it bent before the wind till the sail almost touched the water. What a mockery the pleasant morning seemed to be! The only sight, as they looked out over the lake, was that of the swift-sailing little craft which was rapidly leaving them. Not a suggestion of war, not a sound of a gun, not a token of any such thing as an enemy, was within hearing or sight. And yet near by the soldiers were gathering; there were hundreds of men working day and night upon the great war-vessels, and munitions were being dragged through the forests towards Sackett's Harbor by long lines of teams and men, over the rough log roads which had been made since the war began.

Several times Jim Nairne turned, and waved his hand or lifted his hat to the boys, who still stood on the dock watching him as he sailed away.

"Look there! What's that imp doing now?" said Henry quickly, pointing towards the disappearing boat.

"It's the dwarf, and he's dancing," said Elijah, as they all saw the little man take his position on the deck, and execute some strange movements. Several times they could see him as he raised his hands to his shoulders and bowed low.

"He thinks he's got wings. Well, he's going as swift as a bird, and I'm going too," said David as he turned and ran towards the shore.

"Where you going, Dave?" called Elijah, starting to follow him.

"Stay where you are. I'll be back pretty quick. I'm going up to the house to see Andrew."

In a half-hour David returned, and reported that Andrew had advised them to go over to Sackett's Harbor just the same as if the dwarf were still with them, and report what they had seen.

In a few minutes their sail had been raised, and they, too, were sweeping over the lake under the strong breeze which had sprung up. But there was little conversation on board; the experiences of the morning had been too disappointing to encourage that. The loss of the day's sport, the depressing news Jim Nairne had brought,— which they had

every reason to believe was true, — and perhaps, above all, the ridicule the giant had heaped upon them, all tended to make them silent.

They had sailed out across the bar, where they had hoped to spend a portion of the day, and had just turned the point towards Sackett's Harbor, when Henry suddenly called their attention to a little canoe, with a solitary occupant, which had shot out from the shore, and, impelled by the strong strokes of the paddle, was approaching as if to head them off.

"He wants to talk with us; can't you see?" said Elijah, watching the motions of the man.

David brought the boat to; and in a few moments the canoe was alongside, and its occupant stepped on board.

"It's Garangula," said Henry, as the boys welcomed the new comer.

CHAPTER IV

THE SUPPLIES

THE young Indian, Garangula, was one of the Oneida tribe which had remained faithful to the cause of the United States thus far in the struggle. The use of Indians in the War of 1812 had been confined largely, as we know, to the western and southern portions of the country, although there had been some tampering with those who dwelt along the borders. The death of Tecumseh, who, although he had been used by the British to further their own ends, had been a patriot among his people, and doubtless hoped by siding with the redcoats to drive all the white men from the homes of his fathers, had served to quiet the Indians in the West. The Indians in New York State had not taken an active part in the war, though they were somewhat divided in their sympathies.

The Oneidas had remained loyal to the cause of their white neighbors, and the young brave who stepped on board David Field's boat already had made many journeys between his home and Sackett's Harbor as a courier. More than once he had

stopped at the hospitable Field home, and had shared in that welcome which nearly every one that came there received. As he was not much older than David and Elijah, a feeling of warm friendship had sprung up between them; and they were more than glad to receive the young warrior as he seated himself in the boat, and kept his own little canoe in tow.

He responded to the cordial greetings of his young companions in few words, and they soon were informed of the purpose of his journey.

"Sagoyewatha has a word for the white captain," said the young Indian.

"Sagoyewatha?" replied David. "Oh! that's Red Jacket. I've heard something about his doings. He's a good friend to us."

"Let's see; he's an Onondaga, isn't he?" inquired Henry.

"No Onondaga, no Oneida. Sagoyewatha a Seneca," said the Indian, glancing half scornfully, half pityingly, at the lad who had displayed such ignorance.

"What does Sagoyewatha mean?" inquired Elijah. "I know what his English name 'Red Jacket' means, for it came from the scarlet coat the British gave him during the Revolution. But I should like to know what his Indian name means too."

"Sagoyewatha?" replied Garangula. "Sagoyewatha mean the keeper awake;" but he frowned as

he spoke, and added in a low voice, "But eye shut some time."

The boys made no reply, for they had heard the sad stories of Red Jacket's drunkenness. A great orator, a loyal member of his own tribe, he had fallen into the worst of the faults of his white acquaintances, and already was almost a confirmed drunkard.

"Complanter great chief," resumed Garangula, "but Complanter gone. Red Jacket big chief now. Send word to white captain."

But Sackett's Harbor was in sight now; and conversation ceased as the attention of the boys was drawn to the vessels which lay in the harbor, and formed a portion of the fleet which Commodore Chauncey was preparing.

"My! but they'll have a fleet this season," said Henry enthusiastically.

"They've got to, and that's all there is about it," replied David. "The British have been working all winter long at Kingston; and they've got enough to clear the lake, they think. We've just had to keep up, and the commodore proposes to be ready for them."

"Tell me the names of them," said Henry, who was greatly interested in the sight.

"That ship over there to the left is the General Pike, and the commodore handles her. She carries twenty-four guns. The other ship is the Madison, and she has twenty guns."

David went on to point out the various schooners that were in the fleet, of which there were thirteen; and all together they carried forty-eight guns, in addition to the forty-four the two ships had, and the sixteen which the brig Oneida boasted. In addition to these there was the little bomb-vessel, the Mary.

Then, too, there was the great frigate Superior, almost ready now, having been built in eighty days, and capable of carrying almost as many guns as all the rest of the fleet together. And in addition to the Superior, high on the stocks they could see the great hulks of the Jones and the Mohawk, on which hundreds of men had been working day and night for several weeks past, and which were almost ready for their rigging and armament.

The boys, familiar as they were with the sight and names of the great war-vessels, were deeply impressed as they swept up the harbor. But in a moment their attention was drawn to a sight on shore which so startled and alarmed them that in a moment the fleet was all forgotten. A mob of men was in the street, and shouts and cries were heard on every side. In a moment a shot was fired, and the shouts redoubled. The boys glanced at each other; and before they could utter a word Garangula had slipped into his canoe, and was paddling up the lake as fast as his skill and strength could send him.

The boys hesitated. Should they venture on shore? Had the British come and surprised the

garrison? What could be the meaning of it all? They changed their course, and sailed back out of the harbor, and, making their boat fast in a place with which they were familiar, once more approached the village from the land side.

But as they drew near now, the confusion had ceased, and the alarm, whatever had been its cause, had passed.

"What does it mean?" said Henry. "What's all the trouble about, anyway?" But as neither of his companions was any better informed than he, no reply was made to his questions.

"There's Andrew Field," said Elijah quickly. "He's beat us over, after all. Don't you see him up the street talking with that other young officer?"

"That's so," replied David; "and that's Lieutenant Frank Gregory with him too. They say that Commodore Chauncey is bragging a good deal about him. I've seen him before, and I know he's a smart fellow. Come on, and Andrew will tell us what all the racket is about. Come on, boys."

The three young soldiers approached; and as soon as Lieutenant Gregory had gone, Andrew turned and said, "I came over on horseback, boys. I got to thinking it over, and decided that the people over here ought to know about the dwarf's visit; but it's all right. It's just as he said it was. Jim Nairne sent him."

"But what was all this racket about just now?"

We didn't know but the British had come; the only reason for thinking they hadn't being the fact that we couldn't see any one running away," said Elijah.

"You haven't any business to talk that way, Elijah Spicer," said Andrew indignantly. "You're a corporal now, and ought to show a different spirit. But the trouble you saw was just this. There's been a strong feeling for some time between the ship-carpenters and sailors, and the soldiers. Instead of working together, they somehow seem to pull apart. Some of the men who were at work on the Superior have been too happy since it was launched for the welfare of the community at large; and one of the dragoons happened to meet two or three of the drunken men, and they pitched into him. He ran up to a storehouse where there was a sentinel, for protection; but the other fellows got a crowd together, and took after him, and in the course of the row one of their men was shot. It was just like throwing a lighted torch into a powder magazine, and for a time things looked pretty squally. The carpenters had their axes and adzes, and some of the sailors had boarding-pikes and cutlasses; and they formed in a solid mass right in the street in front of the storehouses. The fellow got out just as the troops came up; and they formed in a hollow square, and had him in the midst of him. Just as I rode into town I saw the men — that is, I saw the sailors and carpenters — shaking their fists and bran-

dishing their axes, and moving up towards the soldiers. They were yelling like demons, too, or like men who were crazy with whiskey, as I guess they were; and just as I expected to see a pitched battle, up came General Brown and Commodore Chauncey and Eckford, and, taking their stand right in between them, they talked good and straight to the men, and finally got the carpenters to leave, after they had promised them that they would take the poor frightened man in hand, and deal with him as he deserved. I believe they're going to try him pretty soon. But it's a bad state of affairs."

"I should think so," replied Elijah. "But why don't they get rid of the sailors by sending them out on the lake?"

"They want to just as soon as they can, but they aren't quite ready."

"No, they never are," replied Elijah. "It's always hold on a bit, and wait a minute, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow. It's always to-morrow."

"You don't know anything about it," said Sergeant Andrew impatiently. "That's one trouble with the whole war. Everybody wants the army to pitch in, and end things in about thirty seconds. But there are lots of things that aren't ready yet. Here are the Jones and the Mohawk. They aren't even fitted out with rigging, to say nothing of guns or other supplies. But I suppose you'd like

to have them go out on the lake, and say to the fleet of Sir James Yeo, 'Surrender, you redcoats,' and then expect that the British would be so scared they'd drop every sail, and begin to beg for mercy. You might as well try to scare them with a ghost of a ship. You'll know more when you're older."

"But why don't they fit them out, then, I'd like to know?" said Elijah, who had no thought of giving up his point. "It's all well enough to say they aren't fit to fight with, but why in the world they don't get them ready is more than I can understand."

"No doubt, no doubt. You can't expect to understand everything. The reason they don't fit them out is just because they haven't anything to fit them out with."

"Oh! but that's the very thing I'm talking about. Why don't they get it?"

"Because it isn't here. You can't make a whistle out of a pig's tail."

"Where is it, then? I don't believe it's anywhere except in their eyes."

"Well, Elijah, I don't mind telling you what I've heard. The stuff is all at Oswego Falls. A lot of stores have been collected there, and they're going to bring them over too. And there's trouble ahead, I'm afraid. Here are General Brown and Commodore Chauncey; it's reported that they're chafing almost as badly as you are. They want to push things, but

they can't do it alone. Still, it's no bad piece of work which in two months takes the very trees from the forests, and changes them in that time into a frigate like the Superior. They've done their part well. Eckford is a great builder."

"But why don't they bring over the supplies from Oswego, then, if they've got any there? I don't half believe they have, or they'd have done something before this," persisted Henry.

"That's the very plan they're talking about now," replied Andrew; "and, do you know, it was about that that Jim Nairne and the dwarf came here?"

"Is that so?" said David, who up to this time had taken no part in the conversation.

"Yes. He brought a report that the British are planning to fall on Oswego, and carry off all the stores there; and I guess he knows something about it too."

"He ought to," said David soberly. "Who is the leader, does he say?"

"General Drummond is to lead the land forces, and Commodore Yeo the fleet. And I think something will be done pretty quick now."

"Andrew," said David, "we saw Garangula out on the lake. He came with us part of the way to the Harbor, but he cleared out and left us when we heard that awful racket up the street."

"That's all right," replied Andrew. "I haven't heard anything about young Garangula, but I have

heard that the Oneidas are going into the thing. Red Jacket's come out strong on our side, and that'll help us."

"I thought you didn't believe in using the Indians in this war, Andrew. I have heard you tell lots of things about the way the British made use of the savages up in Michigan Territory."

"Neither do I," replied Andrew; "but what can you do? If the British use them on one side, we're bound to use them on the other in pure self-defence, aren't we?"

"I don't know but we are," replied David dubiously. "But I don't like scalping folks. We've suffered enough on our own side to know that."

"Oh, don't you believe it, David!" said Henry eagerly. "If the British use the redskins, why shouldn't we, I'd like to know?"

"Andrew, shall we go back to the farm or stay here? What are you going to do?" said David.

"I'm going to stay here all day. I've got to. Winfield Scott has made a translation of a French book on military tactics, and I've got to help drill the men. It's the first book of the kind we've ever had in America, and the whole land knows we need it badly enough. The racket between the men this morning is enough to prove that. But you might just as well go home. There's nothing you can do here. I'll be over by night, and I may have something to report when I come."

"All right," replied David; and the boys left the young sergeant, and again sought their boat.

There was not a very strong inclination for conversation as they sailed homeward. The morning had been a stirring one, and the fishing they had planned for the day was all forgotten. They could see from Andrew's words that there was a prospect of something to be undertaken soon; and the older boys had no eagerness to enter upon any new enterprises, as the experiences they already had had were sufficient for them.

Not so, however, with Henry. Now that he had arrived at the time when he could be enrolled regularly in the army, he was eager for action. Perhaps by the time the summer was ended he, too, might come to feel as David and Elijah did.

The little boat was made fast to the dock, and securely fixed for the night; and Elijah and Henry soon left their companion, and started for home. David busied himself during the remainder of the day in the work about the farm; and just as the evening chores were all done Andrew rode up in front of the barn.

"Well, Andrew, how is it?" asked David. "Anything to report?"

"Yes," replied Andrew soberly. "We start tomorrow morning for Oswego."

David said nothing, but turned and assisted his brother in caring for his horse; and then both boys started slowly towards the house.

CHAPTER V

ATTACKED

EARLY on the following morning our four young soldiers, along with Heman the singer, were on board the Growler, the schooner which Captain Woolsey was to command, and which was to bring from Oswego the guns and naval stores for the frigate and the two brigs at Sackett's Harbor. These equipments had been brought from Albany up the Mohawk, and through Wood Creek and Oneida Lake into the Oswego River; for in springtime the roads from Utica to Sackett's Harbor rendered their transportation by land impossible.

Their only fear was of an encounter with the fleet of Sir James Yeo, which was known to be hovering about the lake in the vicinity, and, thoroughly equipped and ready for the campaign, had hitherto kept the impatient Chauncey and his men within their snug little harbor.

"This is something like it," said Henry eagerly, as the sails filled, and the Growler began rapidly to leave Sackett's Harbor behind her. "This is what I've been waiting for all winter."

"You may sing another tune before morning, young man," said Elijah. "If we happen to run across the fleet of Sir James, they'll swallow us up in a minute."

"Who knows anything about his fleet, anyway, I'd like to know?" said Henry. "It's always Sir James and Sir James. I'm sick and tired of the name!"

"Well, we know they've left Kingston Harbor. That much we're sure of, for Lieutenant Gregory was telling me about it yesterday. He was out on the Lady of the Lake, and saw them as they sailed away, and that was only a few days ago," said Andrew.

"They'll never show up against the Growler. We've got five guns, and they'll have something to say;" and Henry proudly pointed to the long cannon with which the schooner was equipped.

"Five guns! You don't know what you're talking about. Why, the flagship of Sir James, the Prince Regent, has got fifty-eight guns alone, to say nothing of the Princess Charlotte, the Montreal and Niagara, and Star and Charwell, and Magnet and Netty. Then, they've got ten gunboats besides that carry one or two guns each," said David.

"All I hope is that we can slide along by the shore, and keep out of their sight," said Andrew. "If we can only get into the Oswego River, and load up with the stores and creep back here again, I shall

be satisfied; and then we'll fix out the Superior and the Mohawk and the Jones, and we can speak a piece to Sir James that he will understand. But we can't do anything with this little tub."

But Henry, in his inexperience, was not convinced; and all day long he wandered about the deck, talking with the men, and eagerly watching everything that was done on board. The men, however, were anxious, and a constant watch was maintained; but out over the broad expanse of the lake not a sail appeared, and the blue waters were undisturbed by anything save the breeze which drove the Growler and her men onward.

The schooner was kept near the shore throughout the course; as Henry said, to "enable the men to take to the woods if the occasion demanded." The white gulls followed them, flying low over the water, and green woods lined the shore all the way. The day was a perfect one, even for early May; and to Henry at least it was one of pure enjoyment.

In the evening the Growler dropped her anchor in the Oswego River; but before the men turned in for the night, a messenger from Fort Ontario came on board, and our boys crowded about him, listening to his words.

Fort Ontario had been built away back in colonial times, and, while large, was far from being a strong place. Only six old guns were there at the time; and as three of these were utterly useless, having

lost their trunnions, the prospect of a strong defence was not over bright. Lieutenant-Colonel Mitchell was in command at this time, but he had less than three hundred men in his battalion. The five hundred people who then dwelt in Oswego Village were in a constant state of alarm; for reports of the movements of the British fleet had come to them also, and an attack was both feared and expected every day.

Henry Spicer was the first of the boys to appear on deck in the morning. The novelty of the situation, and his eagerness to behold all that was occurring, caused him to rise before any of his companions, and the young soldier looked about him with all of a boy's curiosity. High on the bluff he could see the walls of old Fort Ontario, now dimly defined in the light of the early morning. Out on the lake the whitecaps were on each little wave, and presented a scene of ceaseless bustle and commotion. The sleeping village had not yet awakened, and a silence rested over all that ill befitted the restless boy. Suddenly he stopped as the sound of the *réveille* at the fort was heard. He listened attentively, almost inclined to leave the Growler and go up to the fort; but as Heman and his boy companions just then appeared, he said nothing of his project, and turned to greet them.

"Some folks stay in bed all the time," he said as they approached.

"Especially when the bed's a hammock," replied Elijah, gaping.

But Henry made no reply. He had turned, and was looking out over the lake; but the sight that met his eyes was one that caused him almost to forget even the presence of his companions. Sail after sail swept into sight, until it was only too apparent that the entire fleet of Sir James was bearing down upon them. And yet how beautiful it was! The ships and frigates and brigs and schooners moved on together; and though they yet were far out on the lake, their graceful proportions, and, above all, their power and speed, could be readily seen.

In a moment there was great confusion on board the Growler. The men were summoned by Captain Woolsey, whose powers of decision were ever quick and sure; and to prevent the schooner from falling into the hands of this powerful enemy, preparations were at once made to sink her where she was.

This was soon accomplished; and the force was then divided, a part going to the fort to assist in its defence, and a part joining the messengers whom Colonel Mitchell already was sending out to alarm and summon the men from the neighboring regions.

Mitchell knew that with the few men in his command he could not defend both the village and the fort; so he ordered that every tent among the stores

should be pitched in the village, and every man was withdrawn to the fort.

The British troops, who now were approaching in fifteen large row-boats, were caught by the deception, and viewing the array of tents by the village, at once concluded that a large force must be there; so they turned to give their entire attention to the feeble old fort. Some hours had passed, meanwhile; and it was past noon when these boats, covered by gun-boats, drew near, and the cannon from the larger vessels began to pour their fire into the fort.

But Mitchell had not been idle, and had sent down to the shore an old iron twelve-pounder; and the two men who handled it began to open their fire on the boats as soon as they came within range.

Again and again they hit the mark, and many of the boats were badly damaged. Some were abandoned; but the British sailors, with all that were yet seaworthy, turned, and again sought the shelter of the fleet. A strong breeze just then sprang up, and all the squadron put to sea, — or to lake, if one prefers so to term it.

“There! didn’t I tell you?” demanded Henry Spicer in high glee. “And we went and sunk the Growler! We might just as well have saved her.”

“You haven’t seen the end of it yet,” said Andrew; “and Captain Woolsey knows what he is about every time. Just you wait a bit, and you’ll see the second volume.”

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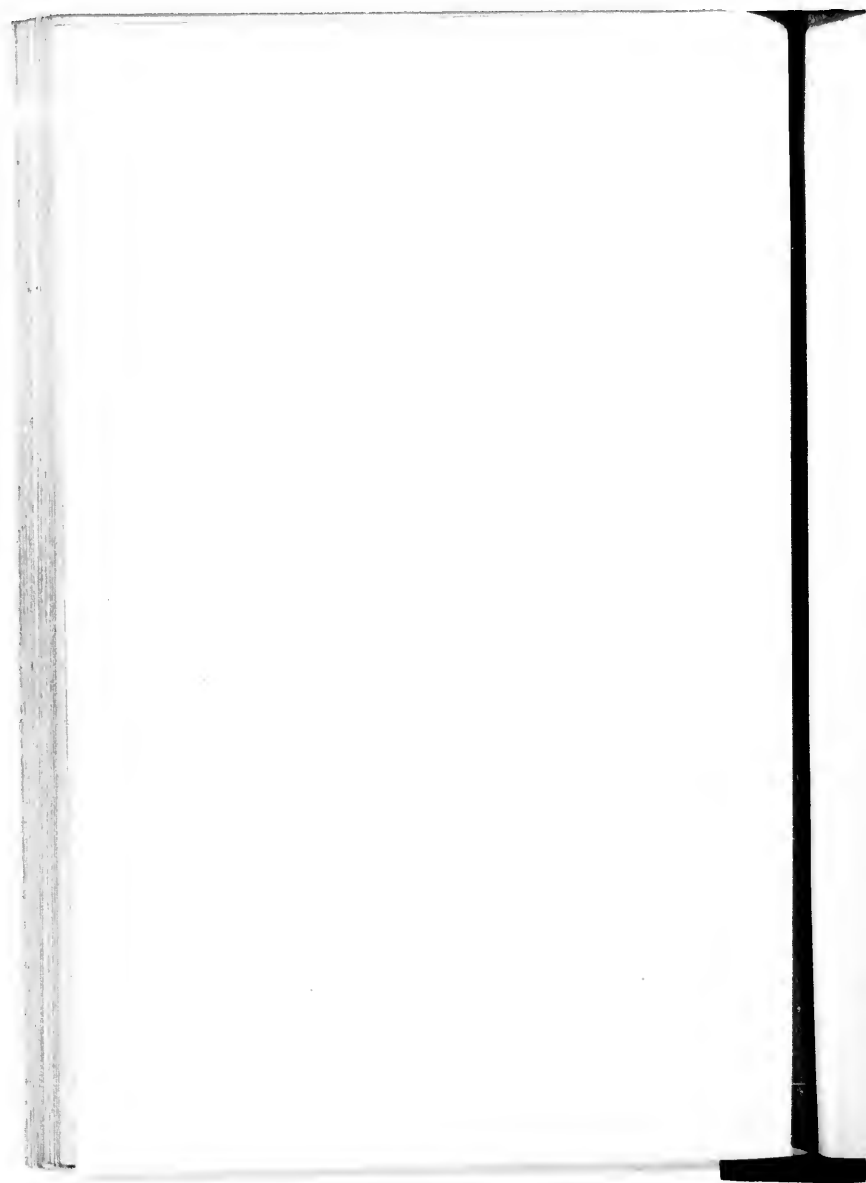
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"An old iron twelve-pounder." Page 66.



Andrew's words proved to be true; for on the following morning the British again appeared, and this time it was evident that they came with a purpose. Two of the ships took a station near the mouth of the river, to land their troops, while a third covered the village with her guns. Our boys could see the twelve hundred redcoats as they poured out of the boat, and this time Henry was silent. He realized now that something was to be done.

Early in the afternoon the British troops began to ascend the long, steep hill which led to the fort. The Americans began to send their bullets into the midst of the advancing enemy, and were assisted by a small body of militia which had been stationed in the woods near by to harass the British as they advanced. On came the lines of the redcoats, not heeding the loss of the men who dropped from their ranks at every fire. The Americans were doing nobly; but the commander soon saw that with his feeble force, scarce a quarter of the numbers of those who were advancing upon him, he could not hold the place. So, leaving a small force behind as a reserve, he took his men and advanced to meet the British in the open field.

The struggle now became a desperate one. On their flanks the little band of Americans were receiving the discharges of the heavy artillery, and the enemy before them were well-drilled regulars.

For a long time the struggle continued, neither

side knowing what it was to abandon an attempt when once they had entered upon it; but at last the brave colonel saw that it was useless to try to hold the place longer, and with his troops, among which now were our boys and the men from Sackett's Harbor, he moved back up the Oswego River to Oswego Falls, leaving old Fort Ontario in possession of the British.

His defence had been a noble one, and was not abandoned till five of his men lay dead on the battlefield, thirty-eight were wounded, and twenty-five more were missing. It was some time afterwards before it was known that the British had lost nineteen men, and had had seventy-five wounded.

Great was the rejoicing among the men from Sackett's Harbor when they learned that the sagacious Colonel Mitchell, anticipating such an attack as the British had made on that sixth day of May, 1814, had previously had all the stores removed to Oswego Falls, whither he knew no enemy would dare to follow him, and that the very things for which they had come were then safe and sound.

On the afternoon of the following day, the report having come from the scouts that the British had sailed away early in the morning, the men returned to Oswego. But what a sight was before them! The ashes of the barracks were still smoking, the fort had been dismantled, and all the guns and the few stores had been carried away by the victors.

Even the Growler had been raised, and had departed with the British fleet.

"We'll never get our stores to Sackett's Harbor," said Henry, when first he learned of the loss.

"Ho! you are the young gentleman who wanted a brush with the British. Brush! you've had a broom! I hope you're satisfied now," said Elijah.

"I'm not. I'm worse than ever," said Henry. "My, they've done some of the meanest things a man ever heard of. I hear they've taken away with them some of the men from the village."

"That's just what they've done," replied Andrew. "They've taken Alvin Bronson, the public store-keeper, too. Oh, Sir James ought to be the next king of England! I expect they'll be taking Charity and mother next. I can tell you, I've had one good taste of the British press-gang myself, and I don't want any more."

"But how did they happen to take Mr. Bronson?" inquired David.

"Why, the story is," replied Andrew, "that Sir James was personally looking after the loading of the stuff they'd stolen. No, that isn't fair. I won't call it stolen; for we'd probably have taken it, too, if we'd been in the same condition. But after he'd loaded up pretty well, he wanted some one to pilot the boats, for he wasn't at all sure of his way out over the bar. He went to Mr. Bronson, and told him to send him some one who could serve as a pilot.

The storekeeper told him that all the men of the village were gone; and so, of course, he couldn't send any even if he'd wanted to. 'Go yourself, then,' Sir James growled and swore; 'and if you get the boats aground, I'll shoot you.' Fine way that for a commodore in the British navy to talk, isn't it?"

"I suppose Mr. Bronson went then like a lamb, didn't he?" asked Henry.

"Not quite. Colonel Harvey, who, they say, is a gentleman, if he does wear a red jacket, was standing near, and he said to the commodore, 'That's the public storekeeper, and he may be useful to us.' Sir James then called Mr. Bronson back, and said, 'You're my prisoner; and I shall expect you to inform me what stores have been recently forwarded for the army and navy, what remains in the rear of the post, and what, if any, are secreted in the neighborhood.'"

"What did Mr. Bronson say to that?"

"The man that told me about it, said he shook his head and said, 'My books and papers have been removed for safety, and I cannot therefore give you the desired information; nor would it be proper for me to do so if I could.' They say he was as quiet as if he was talking to a customer. And when the great Sir James began to fume and swear, they say Mr. Bronson just said, 'I'm ready to go, sir,' and then the great commodore of Lake Ontario packed him off to the Prince Regent."

"They'll hear of him again, though," said Henry quickly, "or I hope they will."

For several days the boys remained at Oswego, Captain Woolsey not yet daring to start with his stores. So much depended upon his success in transporting them to Sacket's Harbor that he preferred the delay to venturing forth then.

At last, in the latter part of May, everything was in readiness to start. Nineteen large boats had been provided, and in these the cables and cannon were packed. As there were twenty-two of the long thirty-two pounders, besides ten of the twenty-fours and three of the heavy forty-twos, as well as twelve of the great cables, the boats were heavily laden, and the men were provided with long oars to use when the wind failed. It was understood that one hundred and fifty of the Oneida Indians were to meet the flotilla at the mouth of Salmon River, and travel along on the shore abreast of them, to assist if an attack by the British should be made. This then made clear to the boys the meaning of their meeting with Garangula. About one hundred and thirty soldiers, under the command of Major Appling, were in the boats; and when at dusk on the 28th of May they left the harbor, there was not a man on board who was not fearful of an attack by the British before the morning came; for while the enemy had gone from Oswego, it was not thought they were so far away as to render an attack impossible.

Pilots were placed in the boats; and as our boys were somewhat familiar with the region, each of them was assigned to this duty.

"Good-by, David," said Andrew just before they embarked.

"Good-by, Andrew," replied his brother. "I hope we sha'n't be separated long." But many long weeks passed before they were together again; and the parting at Oswego when the signal was given, and the long procession of boats started, was looked back to by both for many a day.

CHAPTER VI

CAPTAIN REID'S HAIL

THE night when the flotilla of nineteen boats left Oswego was one of the darkest of the year, and had been chosen for that very reason. The sounds of the oars were indistinct, but they were all that served to keep the boats together. The men were silent, for all were oppressed with fear, and it was known that the British fleet was still lying off and on to intercept any vessels that might attempt to pass between the posts; and, as Chauncey's fleet was still held at Sackett's Harbor, the British practically had the lake to themselves, an advantage which they purposed to keep. But Captain Woolsey well knew that if he could safely carry his cannon and cables to Chauncey, the entire aspect would be speedily changed, and the Americans would be in a condition to contend with their foe, who had been ready for the summer campaign so much earlier than they.

The men, too, shared in his knowledge, and also in the certainty that the British must be aware of their plans, and consequently must be as eager to prevent the transporting of the stores as the Americans were

to carry them. All this, we may be sure, increased the zeal, as it did the watchfulness, of all.

The darkness that wrapped them round was typical of the feeling in every heart. The disasters that had followed so many of their efforts had made the men somewhat timid, and as they rowed on in the darkness the eyes of all were kept intently upon the lake before them. Any moment might reveal the presence of a British war-vessel, and stores and men alike might fall into its possession.

For several hours the boats kept well together, a low hail occasionally passing from one to another; but their main dependence was the regular sound of the oars, which the men handled with the precision of machines, and dipped with great caution. When midnight came, the darkness was intensified by a heavy fog, which was so thick that it almost seemed like a fine rain falling upon the water.

David Field sat in the bow of his boat, and in low tones gave an occasional direction to the men behind him. He had been over the course several times before; but he did not feel at all certain of his directions, and had consented to serve as a pilot only because he thought perhaps he knew a little more of the lake than most of those in the party. He had felt like withdrawing from the task when he saw that the man in command of the boat to which he had been assigned was none other than Captain Reid, the officer of whom we have already heard as being afraid

to lead his men into action for fear they would shoot him instead of the enemy; but it was too late to give up then, and without a protest he had resolved to do his best, come what might. He was, however, in almost as great fear of the brutal and self-willed man as he was of the prowling British; and, not thoroughly familiar with the course, he was depending more upon the sound of the oars in the other boats than he was upon himself.

Shortly after midnight, when the darkness was so thick that he could not see more than two or three yards before him, he lost the sound of the other boats. He leaned forward and listened intently, but the oars in his own boat were the only ones he could hear.

"Hold your oars a bit," he said in a low voice; and the men, almost as nervous as he, quickly obeyed.

"What's the trouble up there?" growled Captain Reid. "What ye stopped for? Lost your way, have ye? That's just what I expected. They didn't have any business to give me such a young numskull."

"Captain Reid, please do not speak so loud," said David. "I don't know whether we've lost our way or not; but if we have, we don't want to let the British know we are anywhere near."

"Shut up, you young upstart! What you talking to me in that way for? I'd give you a taste of my boot if I was near enough. You don't know anything about the course, and have got us into a scrape

already. If you have, I'll make you pay up well for it."

The captain spoke in a loud tone, which could have been heard far over the lake. David was angry and chagrined, and there were murmurs among the men; but no one spoke, and for a moment there was an intense silence.

Far off to the right David thought he could hear the faint sound of oars. Again the sound came; and, satisfied now that he was right, he gave directions to the men, and the course was slightly changed.

The oarsmen put new strength into their labors, the fear of becoming separated from their companions being a sufficient motive for renewed efforts; and in a brief time David had the satisfaction of hearing the sounds much more plainly, and with a feeling of great relief he again changed the course of the boat so that it would run parallel to that of the others. There was the danger of a collision, too, constantly present in his mind; and if such a thing should occur, with the boats so heavily laden, and in such a dark night, the outcome would be very uncertain. It was doubtful whether all the men could be seen and rescued if they should be thrown into the water; and the young soldier had never yet had a task that pressed so heavily upon him as did his duty as a pilot on that dark and foggy night on Lake Ontario, the 29th of May, 1814.

For two hours more they held on their way, and as

yet they had not lost the sounds of their companions, and no enemy had appeared. Soon it would be morning; and with the returning light his responsibility would be ended, although the danger might not be over even then. Sometimes he felt as if he must take an oar himself, and help the slowly moving boat forward. There was a damp chill on the water, but David as yet had not felt it.

Sometimes, in his anxiety, the perspiration stood out on his forehead, and his arms ached as if he, too, had been toiling all the night. Any mistake on his part would throw not only himself into danger, but would endanger his companions also; and perhaps, what was of even greater value, the precious cargo they were carrying might fall into the possession of their enemies, and all the plans and efforts of the commodore come to naught. He wondered in which boats the other boys were, for he knew that each had been assigned to a duty similar to his own; and if they felt as he did concerning it, the night of misery would be one they never could forget.

He was roused from his thoughts by the consciousness that again he had lost the sounds of the other oars. Listen as he would, he could not hear them, and there was nothing to be done but to call for another rest.

"Hold your oars again a bit, men," he said; and as the men quickly obeyed, Captain Reid again broke out in his anger, "There you are again! If ever I

put to sea again with a fool for a pilot my name won't be John Reid. What's the matter with you anyway, you young ignoramus?"

David made no reply, although he was thoroughly angry. The fault was not his, he knew; and the wonder was not that they had now lost their way, but that they had not lost it many times before.

The men were all listening intently, but the silence was unbroken. Was it possible that the others had slipped past them in the darkness, and now were beyond their hearing? David felt sick at heart when he thought that such an event was not only possible, but extremely probable. Still, morning could not be far away, and they must be so far on their return now that in the light their present danger would be lessened.

Suddenly the voice of Captain Reid broke in upon the silence. "Hello! Hello the boats! Where are you? Hello! Hello the boats!"

The men were angry and alarmed, for the captain could have been heard a half-mile away. Their murmurs moved even the brutal officer, and he hastened to explain his action. "It's almost morning, and the danger's over. We're likely to suffer more from having a young fool on board than we are from the British. They know enough to keep inside such a night as this. I'm wet to the skin, and chilled to the bone. What a night to carry this stuff in!"

"Hark!" said one of the men. "Isn't that a call I hear?"

A faint shout came over the water, and again it was heard far off to their right. Once more the call was repeated, and this time all could hear it.

"That's right. That's our men," said David quickly. "Give way, men; we're bearing too hard to the left all the time. Some of you men are too strong."

Courage had now returned with the answer to the captain's hail, and the men answered the call of their young pilot with long and steady sweeps of their oars that sent them swiftly on in the direction from which the call had been heard. The captain growled from his seat in the stern, but all the others were silent. They were too eager to regain the company of their companions now to mind the complainings of the brutal man.

"Slow up a bit, men," said David after a time. "We don't want to join them head on. We might send some of them to the bottom of the lake, as well as make us go there ourselves."

"Don't mind the young jackanapes," said the captain. "We want to catch up with the others, that's what we want."

"Hold, hold!" cried David. He had just caught a glimpse of a boat directly in their course, and just in time to avoid a collision. The men backed water, and the danger was averted.

"What are you men up to?" said a voice in the other boat. "You rowing a race? If you had our load you wouldn't go tearing over the lake in that way, running crafts down in the dark. You want to mind your p's and q's better than that."

"Is that you, Elijah?" called David, who thought he recognized the voice of his friend.

"That's just who it is, and you want to leave me on top of the lake. I'm surprised at you, Dave, racing in this way."

"The little fool doesn't know anything," growled the captain. "When I get him on shore I'll give him a taste of my boot." The boats were only a few yards apart now, and the forms of the men could be dimly seen.

"Well, Captain Reid, you'd better save your strength, then. If you've as much strength in your leg as you have in your jaw, your pilot must be frightened," called Elijah.

It was an impudent speech for the young soldier to make; but he felt safe in the darkness, and did not believe his voice would be recognized. The laugh of the men which followed his speech increased the anger of the captain; and rising in his place, he peered through the darkness as he called, "Who are ye, young man? Who are ye? I know ye! I know ye! What's your name? Who are ye? I'll pay you well for that insult. Who are ye? What's your name?"

Another laugh by the men followed this somewhat disjointed speech of Captain Reid; but without heeding him, David called to the other boat, —

“Where are the others? Do you know where the other boats are?”

“Not sure,” replied Elijah; “but I think we’re way off on the left, and are farther out in the lake than any of the others. But you’re too near us. You’d better veer off a little to your left. We might bump if we keep as closely together as this, and that wouldn’t be pleasant for Captain Reid. He might get his boot wet; and that wouldn’t be pleasant for you either, Dave, for he says he’s going to give it to you.”

Another laugh on the part of the men greeted this speech of Elijah; but David turned to his crew and said, “I think that’s so; we’d better veer to the left a bit. But don’t go so far that we’ll lose the sound of their oars.”

The men quickly obeyed, and for a half-hour rowed on in silence. They were becoming thoroughly tired now, and all were eagerly waiting for the light of the morning to appear. No one knew what was to be done then; but if they could keep together, the problem would easily be solved.

Perhaps it was this thought in the minds of the men that furnished a new incentive; but whether it was or not, it seemed to David that the speed had very materially increased, and he was afraid they

would leave their companion boats too far behind. But he said nothing of his fears; for the anger of Captain Reid was very easily aroused, and he knew he would vent his feelings upon him.

There was another fear in David's heart now. For a half-hour he had not been able to hear the oars in Elijah's boat. The first faint streaks of dawn were beginning to appear, but the fog was as thick and heavy as before. There might be even more danger in that than in the darkness. David felt certain that they must be well out in the lake, and it would not be wise to venture farther without a rest. They must find out if possible where they were.

At his word the men again rested on their oars, but the silence was unbroken. Without waiting long, the captain again sent forth his call, and far to the rear they heard a faint response. The call was repeated, and the men waited for the others to appear.

Soon, through the fog, and looming up as if they were twice their natural size, two boats were seen approaching. They were manned by about the same number as was in their own; but as they drew nearer, David, moved by some ill-defined feeling of fear, turned to the men and said, "I think we'd better row on. We're all right now."

"You hold your tongue, young jackanapes!" called the captain. "I'm the boss in this boat, and I'd like to have you know it too. Don't one of you

men take your oars. I want to wait, and talk with these fellows."

His men obeyed, though they all shared somewhat in David's feeling. Not a word was spoken, as all watched the approaching boats which now were more clearly seen. On and on they came; and when near, they separated, one passing to one side, and the other to the other. It was a strange movement; and although David could not see the occupants clearly enough to recognize them, he was thoroughly alarmed as the men in each boat rested on their oars when they came within a few yards of them.

"I wanted to talk with you a bit," said the captain, rising in his place.

"Haven't time for that," was the reply. "We want you to do something."

"What's that?" inquired the captain.

"Surrender," was the sharp reply. A score of guns in each boat were aimed at them, and it was apparent that the newcomers were prepared to enforce their demand.

CHAPTER VII

IN THE UNIFORM OF THE KING

A MOMENT of intense silence followed the unexpected demand; and Captain Reid, after glancing hopelessly about him, was about to reply to the summons, when a murmuring arose among the men. No one ever knew just how it began; but, as though moved by a common impulse, the men together suddenly gave way, and the cutter darted forward. The captain was nearly thrown into the lake; and when he regained his position, the dim light and the fog had shut out the sight of the other boats, and his men were bending all their energies to place as great a distance as possible between them and the British, who had been so taken off their guard by the sudden departure that as yet they had taken no action.

The sunrise could not be far away; and while the fog was dense and heavy, every man in the cutter knew that the possibility of an escape depended almost entirely upon their immediate efforts. But what could they do? They were weighed down by a heavy load, and the long cannon, which formed the portion of the stores they were to carry, was an addi-

tional burden. Besides, it was directly in the way of some of the oarsmen, and sadly interfered with their efforts.

They had gone but a few yards, however, before the British recovered from their surprise, and they could hear their hail. "Stop! Stop!" shouted one of the pursuers. "Stop, or we'll shoot." No attention was paid to the summons, but David could see that the faces of the men nearest him were drawn and hard. They fully realized how desperate was their attempt, and a chance shot might send them all to the bottom of the lake.

"Pull steady, men! Now give it to her, and all together," said David, speaking in a low voice. The captain had remained silent after the boat had started, and the young corporal felt that some one must say a word of encouragement. The men responded to his call, and he could see that the cutter had gained an increased speed. The men had been toiling all the night, and were in no condition to stand a long-continued strain; but there was a willing mind, however, and the oars fell together, and the cutter still sped onward.

"Stop! Stop your boat!" came a hail which sounded from the right.

"Stop your boat! Stop, or we'll shoot!" sounded from their left; but still no reply came from the cutter. The men were pulling at their oars; and although every one knew that the other boats had

been gaining rapidly upon them, not one had a thought of giving up.

"Perhaps they won't dare to fire," thought David. "They are running almost parallel, and maybe they'll be afraid of hitting each other. I hope they are;" and as yet no sound had broken in upon the stillness except that of their own oars and the calls from the other boats.

Suddenly David thought of a new plan. The others, owing to their lighter load, and the efforts they must be making, would certainly overtake them. Perhaps they might already have gone so far ahead as to be in advance of them now. If he could speak to the men in tones which could not be heard by their pursuers, why could they not back water, and by going back in the direction from which they had been coming, leave the others to continue their chase, and they escape in the other way?

Filled with the thought of his new project, David arose from his seat, and leaning forward, was about to speak to the men, when directly in front of him, and not more than twenty yards away, he saw the dim outlines of a schooner.

Hastily concluding that it must be one of the fleet of Sir James Yeo, and perhaps was the very vessel to which the pursuing boats belonged, he was about to utter the warning, when there came again the sharp, quick hail from the left, "Stop! Stop your boat, or we'll fire on you!"

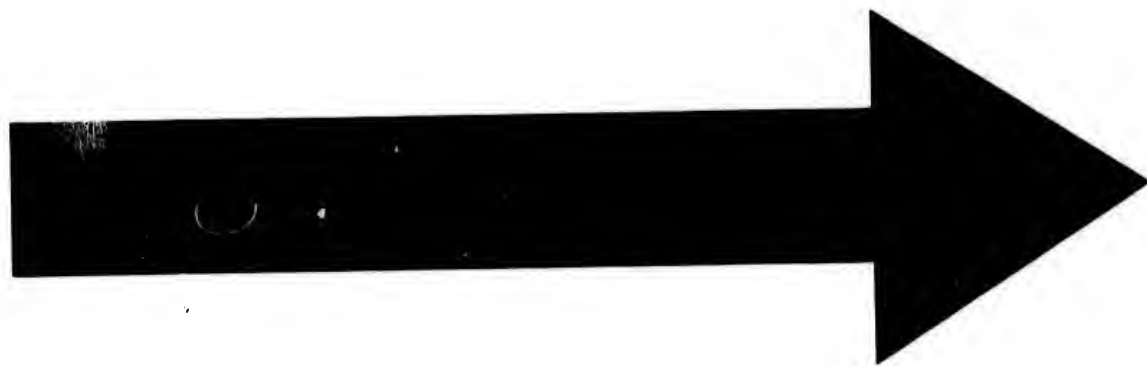
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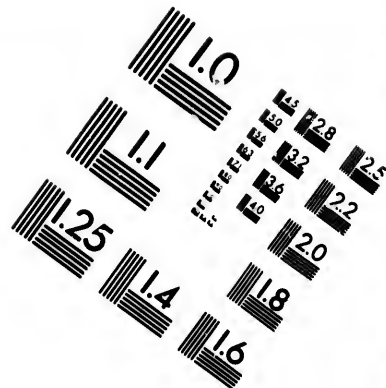
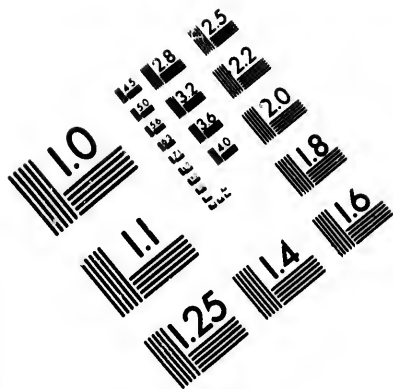
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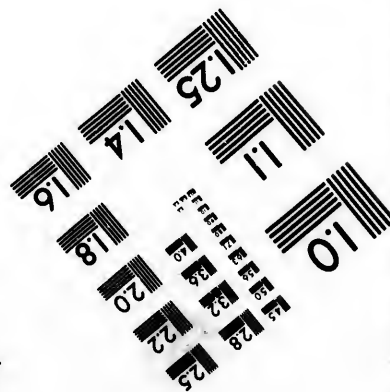
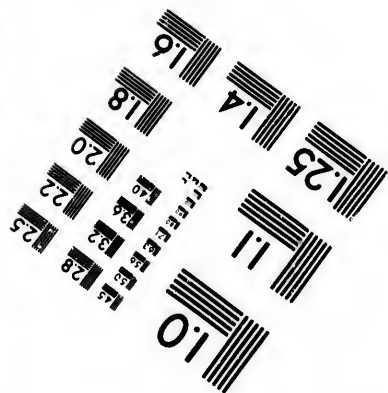
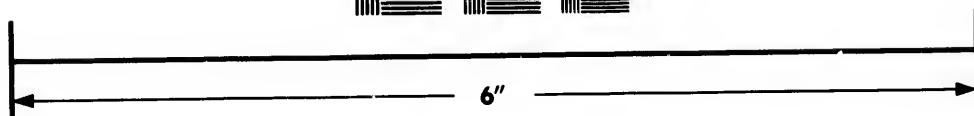
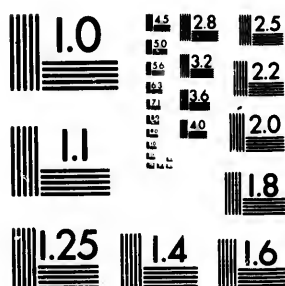
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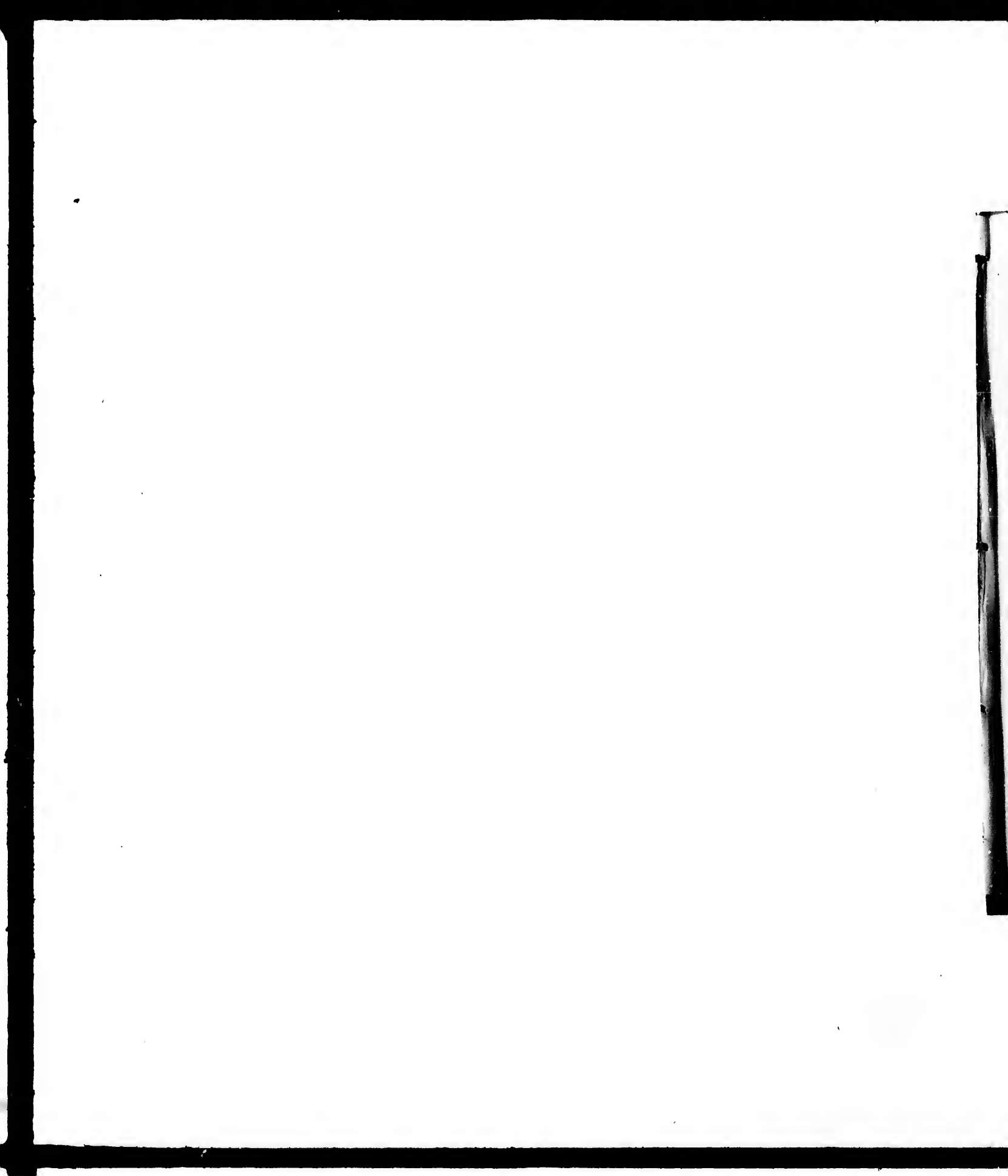
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Captain Reid, who also had now caught sight of the schooner before them, and, startled by that and the repeated summons, quickly called out, "We surrender! We surrender! Don't fire!" A number of his men dropped their oars as he spoke, uncertain what to do in the confusion of the moment; but suddenly there was a flash and a roar, and David felt as if he had been lifted into the air, and was feeling about for some place on which to stand. The cannon-ball had struck the cutter in the bow, almost in the very place where the young corporal had just been seated, and had carried it away.

In a moment the water rushed into the boat; and, weighted down by its heavy load, it sank at once. The men were thrown into the water, and every one was struggling for his life.

David Field was an expert swimmer; and although his heavy clothing was a load, he easily maintained his place among the struggling men. He could see them all about him; and grasping one by the shoulder, and holding him before him, he still managed to keep his own head above the surface.

But the men in the other boats had heard the calls of the desperate swimmers, and quickly responded. Man after man was drawn from the water, and but a few minutes had passed before all had been rescued. As soon as they were satisfied that all in their power had been done, they rowed towards the schooner, and the prisoners were safely delivered on board.

A crowd of the sailors at once gathered about them, and listened to the story which the man who had been in command of one of the boats told the captain. A shout followed his words, and for a moment there was great rejoicing on board the *Netty*; for that they found the name of the schooner to be, and jeers and much mock sympathy were offered the unfortunate prisoners.

"Now I want to know, Captain Reid," said Lieutenant Owens, who was in command of the schooner, "what you were up to. Where were you bound? And what was your plan?"

The prisoners waited in silence, and watched their captain, to see what he would say.

"We were in the flotilla of Captain Woolsey," replied Captain Reid slowly.

"Flotilla of Captain Woolsey? And how many were in it?"

"We had nineteen boats altogether."

"And what did you have on board?"

"Cannon and cables and stores for the boats at Sackett's Harbor."

"Oho!" said the lieutenant. "And you were carrying them from Oswego. I think I begin to understand. But surely you didn't expect to transport them all the way in such little tubs! Woolsey's no such fool as that, I know."

"No, sir. There's a detachment of one hundred and fifty men under Major Appling, and they ex-

pected to land at the mouth of the Big Salmon. Perhaps they've landed already."

"Don't believe it is possible. And what was to be done at the mouth of the Big Salmon?"

"Why, they were planning to carry the stores from there overland. They thought very likely that some of your fleet wouldn't be very far away, and they didn't care to chance it."

"I shouldn't think they would," replied the lieutenant with a grim smile. "But were they expecting any re-enforcements at the Big Salmon? Who was to be there?"

"I believe they were expecting a detachment of the Oneida Indians to meet them there. I'm not sure about it, but that's what I heard."

"Oho! I thought Brother Jonathan didn't believe in using Indians in this war. But then that's like some of the sneaking Yankees. They howled unmercifully because Tecumseh took a hand in the little brush up by Detroit, but they're willing enough to use the redskins now themselves. Well, you've given me a pretty good report. You've done your duty like a little man, and told me all you knew." The lieutenant spoke almost sneeringly; and as he glanced from the captain towards the other prisoners, he could see disgust expressed on almost every face before him. And the men all were angry. To be taken prisoners was bad enough, but to have their captain reveal all the plans of their leader was far

worse. The hatred they felt for the brutal captain was deeply intensified now that they saw he was a coward as well as a bully. And the captain himself seemed to be aware of the feeling, for he glanced from one of the men to another; and as he saw disgust and anger plainly expressed by all, his bold manner entirely disappeared, and he kept his eyes upon the deck, muttering, "I had to do it. There wasn't anything else to be done, and I've saved a lot of trouble by it too."

The lieutenant, as soon as he had heard the captain's story, had turned quickly, and given some orders to one of the officers standing near. David heard only the word "Montreal;" but as he knew that was the name of Yeo's flagship, he at once concluded that Sir James must be near, and that word was to be sent him at once.

When he saw the boat leave the schooner, as it did in a few minutes, he was strengthened in his surmise, which later events proved to be correct,

As he looked out over the lake the fog lifted, and about a mile away he could see the great ship which he quickly concluded was the Montreal; but not one of all the boats in Captain Woolsey's flotilla was in sight. What had become of them? Were they, too, prisoners? He had no means of knowing; and sick at heart he turned just as the lieutenant said, "Take these men below, and give them some dry clothes. They're as wet as drowned rats. We

must treat them decently while they're our prisoners."

David started to follow the men as they went below; but some one touched him upon the arm, and, turning about, he saw standing before him his old friend Heman.

"Why, Heman Chubb! where did you come from?"

"I was in your boat all the time, David; but it was so dark when we started, I didn't know you were there too. Again we are companions in misery, my young friend. *Selah!* First Chronicles was nothing to this, and but little is in the second book to compare with it. I do recall that chapter seven, verse six"—

"Yes, we're in misery, that's so; but the only miserable one is Captain Reid. I'd like to shove him into the lake—the miserable scoundrel!"

"Nay, David. Don't you remember the song,—

"Let William Hull be counted null,
A coward and a traitor;
For British gold his army sold
To Brock the speculator."

"Let us quote the Psalms, the imprecatory Psalms. I agree with David"—

"Come along, you lubbers!" called one of the sailors. "Don't ye want a dry kit?"

"That we do," said Heman, quickly obeying the sharp command. "All thy billows and waves have

gone over me. I have been plucked out of the horrible pit and the miry clay. I" —

"We'll get plucked in good earnest," interrupted David, "if we don't hurry up;" and both men disappeared in the hold.

It was a motley appearance the men presented when once more they came on deck. They had been fitted out in the uniforms of the sailors; but few, however, had found garments that had been made for men of their size. The shorter ones seemed to have had given them the clothing of the taller men, while those who were tall, by some fate had had assigned them the uniforms of those who were short and stout.

"I never expected to see myself dressed up like a British tar," said David ruefully, glancing down at the garments he wore, when he and Heman were on deck again.

"Never mind," replied Heman soothingly; "they don't become you very well."

"Well, if I look as you do, I don't believe they do," replied David, laughing in spite of himself as he saw the strange garb of Heman. "The scarecrow up in the ten-acre lot can't beat you, Heman; that's a fact. Your legs stick out like drumsticks."

"The Lord taketh not delight in the legs of a man," murmured Heman in reply; but any further conversation for the moment was interrupted by the approach of the lieutenant in command, who said, —

"Now, I want to say to you men, you are to have the liberty of the deck just as long as you behave yourselves. If any of you attempt to escape you'll not only get into trouble yourselves, but it'll mean that all your mates will be shut up in the hold. As for Captain Reid, I'll take him into my own quarters, and try to treat him as his rank deserves. Now you understand just how matters are. If you're disposed to be quiet and do the fair thing, there'll be no trouble; but if you aren't, then look out for squalls. I'm to take you to Kingston, and leave Sir James here to look after this little venture of Captain Woolsey's."

As he turned on his heel, David could not help contrasting his conduct with that of Captain Reid. The lieutenant must be several years the younger, but he was much more of a gentleman, and far more of a man. And David had a feeling of confidence in him too. He evidently would do just as he had said; and while he knew that he himself would not neglect any good opportunity of escaping that presented itself, he resolved to take the lieutenant at his word. He was a prisoner, there could be no disguising that fact. But then his condition might have been much worse; and taking such comfort as he could out of the reflection, he gave himself freely to the work in hand, an action in which all his fellow-prisoners joined. They worked with the British sailors, and many were the bantering words spoken

by each side. From his own observation and experience, he never had expected to receive such good treatment as was afforded them on the *Netty*.

For several days they cruised about, now going in one direction, and now in another; but at last the *Netty* made for the lake, and David was convinced that they now had started for Kingston. He had been there before, but under what different circumstances! He was the prisoner now, and Andrew was free; or had his brother, too, fallen into the hands of the British? Not a word had been heard on board the *Netty* of the success or failure of Captain Woolsey's expedition; but David was too young to borrow unnecessary trouble, and, when late one afternoon the schooner came to anchor near an island not far from the Canadian shore, he wondered what it meant.

His suspense was increased when he saw three boats manned, and he, along with three or four of the prisoners, were bidden to follow the men as they took their places in them. A brief row brought them to the shore; and leaping out they drew the boats up on the beach of pebbles, and started inland. A walk of a few minutes brought them to the other shore of the island, and then the men halted. Were they expecting some one? Certainly they acted as if they were; but after watching them for a brief time, David turned, and began to walk up the shore.

"Don't go far away, young man," called the one who was in command.

David laughed as he replied, "I don't think I'll go ashore just yet." But it was a delight to feel the earth beneath his feet once more. The island was covered with fresh green grass, and the birds were singing in the trees overhead. They appeared to be almost without fear of men; and perhaps they had never been disturbed in their nesting there, and did not know that enemies were near.

David walked along the shore for some distance; and as he turned to rejoin his companions he saw that their attention was fixed upon some object on the lake. Following the direction of their gaze, he saw what it was that interested them. A little boat was approaching from the main shore, and he, too, became interested at once. As it came nearer, he saw that there was but one occupant, and the young soldier almost laughed as he saw his movements.

"He doesn't know how to row," he thought; but he was becoming more and more interested.

The oarsman ceased from his efforts before the boat came to the shore, and standing up, turned and gazed at the company on the beach. As soon as he saw him, David was doubly interested. He was a strange little man, with long arms and a short little body. Surely he knew who it was; and starting up once more, he began to run towards the place where his companions were waiting.

CHAPTER VIII

DAME GURLEY'S CLOSET

MEANWHILE, what had become of the flotilla of eighteen boats, from which David and Heman had parted company? The thick darkness and heavy fog of that night when they started from Oswego had rested like a pall over all. More than one of the boats had wandered from the course, but none had been so unfortunate as that in which the young corporal had been the pilot. Nor was it entirely his fault that his men had fallen into the hands of the enemy: for, as we know, he had not felt certain of his own knowledge and ability to guide the boat, and the perversity of Captain Reid had sadly interfered with his actions.

However, none of the other boats knew of the loss until the sun had burned away the fog on the following morning, when the eighteen boats arrived at the mouth of the Big Salmon. The men had been rowing all night, and were nearly worn out when a brief rest was had within the shelter of the little river. There a new interest sprang up; for one hundred and fifty of the Oneida Indians, under the command of Lieutenant Hill, were waiting for them.

"Has anything been heard of David or his boat?" inquired Captain Woolsey of Andrew.

"Not a word. I'm beginning to feel alarmed about him."

"It's a trifle early yet, and he may join us before long. We can't wait here, however, as we must push on for Sandy Creek. My plan is to run up there, and transport the stuff overland to Henderson Harbor, and we can make Sackett's easily from there."

"What are the Indians to do?" inquired Andrew.

"Oh! they're going to keep along the shore within hailing distance, so that if we should have a brush with the British, they can have a hand in it too. And I'm afraid we may have trouble. Sir James can't be far away, and he knows as well as we do how important it is that we should get these stores to Sackett's Harbor. If we don't, it simply means that the British will have control of the lake all summer, without a hindrance."

If Captain Woolsey had only known it, at that very time three gunboats, three cutters, and a gig, all filled with armed and determined men, had been sent by Sir James for the very purpose of cutting off the little fleet of Woolsey's, and of preventing the American commodore at Sackett's Harbor from fitting out his fleet. The British leader had received the message which, to the shame and disgust of every one of his men, the cowardly American captain had

given after his capture; but for some strange reason, his words concerning the force of Major Appling and of the Oneida Indians had not been reported: as a consequence, the men in the searching-party were in ignorance of the true condition of affairs. But they were all disciplined men, and unencumbered by any heavy ordnance or stores, and an engagement had far less possibility of loss for them. Even if they should be captured, the fleet of Sir James would not be seriously affected, while the capture of the Americans would mean an end of all immediate hostilities on the lake, and the British would be free to come and go as they chose.

Captain Woolsey did not long delay at the Big Salmon, for he knew the importance of speedy action. His men were weary; but the need was immediate, and delays were dangerous. The word was soon given, and the little fleet started on again. Along the shore tramped the body of Indians. The fog had lifted, and the view of the lake was almost unobstructed. It was Sunday morning too; and Andrew Field had had from his earliest years a reverence for the day, and for those who observed it. His feelings were bitter on that beautiful morning as the boats moved on together near the shore. What a terrible thing war was! How many of his neighbors already had laid down their lives for their country! To think of it! great lines of men standing up, and with a grim determination striving to shoot each other

down, as the boys tried to shoot the squirrels and woodchucks. Homes ruined, fathers slain, orphans, young and helpless, left to struggle on as best they could, and even churches and sacred days held as of no account. Surely war was a terrible thing! But then he was doing right to try to take his little part in protecting his home and the homes of others. He thought of his mother and of his young wife Charity, and his courage returned. But there was David too. What had become of him? He tried to believe the words Captain Woolsey had spoken, that David probably had been driven out of the course, or lost his way for a time in the fog, and that he soon would overtake them; but somehow, try as he would, his faith was not strong, and he was sadly troubled by his forebodings.

The fleet, however, kept steadily on its way. Not a sail had yet appeared in sight, and by noontime the mouth of Sandy Creek had been gained. What a cheer the men gave! They thought their troubles were almost at an end then, little dreaming that they had but just begun.

"We aren't out of the woods by any means yet, men," said Captain Woolsey. But his followers were not inclined to believe his words. The long night had passed, and they had gained the mouth of the creek without being discovered. What more could he want?

A long, low ridge of sand-hills borders on the shore

where this creek enters the lake, and trees which for years had been whipped by the winter winds as they swept across the lake covered their summits. Behind these ridges were marshes with occasional open ponds in them; and through these marshes the two branches of Sandy Creek flow, uniting a few yards from the mouth. On the little promontory a house of logs was standing, and the family that dwelt there were about the doorway, watching the approaching fleet; but as they did not offer to run away, it was evident that they felt no fear as soon as they saw who the approaching men were.

"Andrew," said Captain Woolsey, "are you familiar with this region?"

"Yes, sir. I've been down here a good many times fishing and camping."

"How far up the creek do you think we can run these boats?"

"I should say a mile and a half or two miles, with the water as high as it is now. I've seen the time when you could almost walk across the marsh."

"Do you suppose any of the British could have entered the creek, and be lying for us now behind those sand-hills?"

"I don't know. I hadn't thought of that," replied Andrew, startled by the question. "I'll tell you how I can find out," he added after a silence of a moment.

"How?"

"I'll ask the people in that house. I know them well, for I've stopped there almost every time I have been down here."

"Do you think their word is to be depended upon? The British may have bribed them."

Andrew laughed heartily at the captain's words. Bribe Mistress Gurley and her husband! — for it was as his wife's husband the head of the house was known. Captain Woolsey would not talk in that way if he knew them as Andrew did.

The men were standing about the shore, waiting for further instructions. They were continually casting glances out over the lake, for the fear of pursuit was not yet gone; but the lake was still free from sails, and not one of them as yet had thought of the danger which had suggested itself to the captain's mind.

Andrew Field hastened towards the house, where he was at once recognized by the family, and accorded a cordial welcome. He did not stop, however, to reply to their questions, for he had far more important ones of his own. Apparently he was soon satisfied; for he turned and ran back to rejoin the captain, who had remained waiting for him where the conversation had taken place.

"It's all right, Captain," said Andrew. "They say there hasn't been a soul near here for more than a day, and they haven't even seen a sail on the lake."

"And you think they can be depended upon?" said the captain, hesitating.

"I know they can."

"All right, then; we'll move on up the creek. I'd like to have your boat go ahead; for you've been here before, and know something about the way."

The men quickly resumed their places at the oars; and although every one was thoroughly tired, a new animation was quickly manifested in the thought that the end of the voyage now was not far away. The south branch of the creek was selected by Andrew, and at his word the procession started.

Captain Woolsey was still watchful. He had not felt entirely assured by Andrew's report, although he had all confidence in the young soldier himself. Behind every low hill he was afraid a band of the enemy might spring up; in every little clump of bushes an ambush might lie. But as the men slowly made their way up the winding stream, which fortunately was well filled now, his fear subsided somewhat; and when at last, about two miles from the lake, the boats were aground, he leaped ashore, and made arrangements for his men to pass the night.

Early on the following morning Captain Woolsey was awake, and his energy at once began to display itself. Elijah and Henry Spicer were sent with others to summon the men from the surrounding country to come and assist in the transportation of the stores. How to unload the heavy cannon and cables was a

great problem, now that they had succeeded in bringing them safely thus far. The men were all busy, however; but it was not long before Captain Woolsey again sought out Andrew.

"David's boat hasn't reported yet," said the captain.

"I know it; and, what's more, I'm beginning to fear it never will," replied Andrew gloomily.

"We won't give up hope. It was an easy thing for them to lose their way in such a night as we had. We've been very fortunate, though. Just think how we've brought the men through."

"All but one boat."

"All but one boat," repeated the captain. "Now what I want you to do is this. You had better take your boat and men, and go back again to the mouth of the creek, and keep a lookout there. It may be you'll spy David's boat passing; and it may be," added the captain, his voice becoming lower, "that you'll see some other boats too. If Sir James gets wind of what we're trying, he won't leave us alone. I'm sure of that. We aren't out of the woods yet, if we have crawled out of the lake."

It was because of these directions of the leader that Andrew summoned his men to return with him to the lake. With great difficulty they succeeded in unloading their boat of the heavy cannon it carried, and pushed it out into the creek again.

The row back to the lake was an easy one, for the

current was almost sufficient to carry them on of itself. It was not yet sunrise, although it had been light for some time, when they arrived at the shore. Andrew stationed his men among the bushes about a quarter of a mile below the mouth of the creek, and then turned to go to the Gurleys' house again, to learn whether they had heard or seen anything of the enemy since the night before.

The young sergeant received a cordial welcome and a hearty invitation to take a seat with them at the breakfast-table. The food looked so tempting, and as it had been several days now since he had had what the soldiers of the day called a "house breakfast," he yielded. The conversation naturally turned upon the expedition from which he was just returning, and Andrew was kept busy in replying to the many questions of his host and hostess.

"But I'm troubled most of all about David just now. His boat hasn't shown up yet, and I don't know just what to make of it," said Andrew after a time.

"Mebbe he lost his way in the fog," suggested Mrs. Gurley.

"Mebbe the boat was too heavily loaded, and wasn't real seaworthy," said her husband. "I've known of sech things. I had a boat once, and she was a good one too. She had a bit too much on board; and the fust thing I knew she kind a cracked and split, and there I was a-flounderin' in the water

afore I know'd it. Now, mebbe that's the way it is with David" —

"Dan'l Gurley, you don't know nuthin'!" exclaimed his wife sharply. "Ye just keep quiet. Don't ye open that mouth o' yours again. If ye opened it like that when yer boat was in the water, I should 'a' thought it would 'a' taken in the whole of Lake Ontario."

Daniel Gurley subsided. He might face the British; but Dame Gurley — why not even Commodore Chauncey could stand before her, or at least so thought the subdued Daniel.

Conversation ceased, and Andrew gave his undivided attention to his breakfast. When at last that was ended, he pushed back the old-fashioned wooden chair in which he had been seated, and started towards the door. He glanced out of the window, and, uttering an exclamation of surprise, approached, and looked out over the lake. "Look there! See that, will you? Just see that!" he called.

Dame Gurley and her husband quickly joined him; and they, too, were as startled as Andrew had been. Not more than a mile away three gunboats, three cutters, and a gig were seen approaching. They were filled with men, and Andrew knew at once what it meant. The British had heard where Woolsey and his men were, and were on their way now to attack them.

Just as he turned, there came a loud knock at the

door. Andrew looked in alarm from the dame to her husband. What could it mean? Had they already landed?

"Here! in here!" said Mrs. Gurley in a quick, low tone; and following her direction Andrew stepped quickly into a closet adjoining the kitchen. He leaned back against the wall, striving to conceal himself behind "Dan's" coats which were hanging from the pegs. He could see out into the room, and was about to start from his hiding-place, to close the door of the closet, which in his haste he had left open.

But the woman was already at the outside door, and he had just regained his place of concealment when the stranger entered the room.

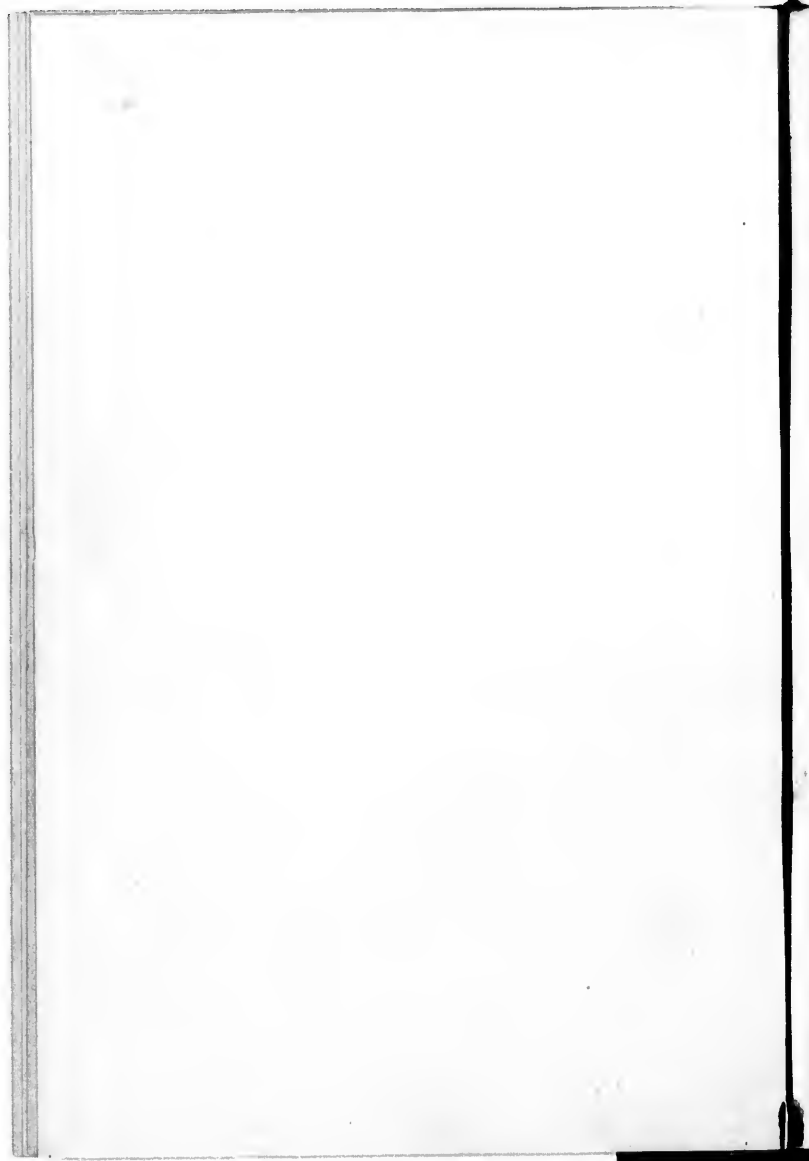
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"Andrew stepped quickly into the closet." Page 106.



CHAPTER IX

THE BREAKFAST UP THE CREEK

"I'M wondering, my good woman, whether we can't get breakfast here," Andrew heard the man say as soon as he entered the room.

"Who are 'we' ? There's only one of you that I see," replied Dame Gurley.

"If you look out of the window you can see more ;" and the stranger pointed towards the lake.

Dame Gurley advanced to the window as if she had not already seen the boats. She remained silent for a moment, and then turned and said, "What are those boats? What are they coming here for?"

"They're a band Sir James Yeo has sent to look after some Yankees hereabouts."

"But who are they?" persisted Mistress Gurley.

"How do I know they're all right?"

"Why, the way of it is just this: Sir James smashed the fort at Oswego; but the Yankees got away with their stores, and have gone up the creek here. The cominadore had word of it, for he's lain out here beyond the Galloupe Islands waiting for them to come. We were lucky enough to capture

one of the boats which had lost its way in the fog yesterday morning, and we heard all about it from the prisoners. He's sent a pretty good body of fellows under command of Captain Popham of the Montreal, and Captain Spilsbury, who's of the Royal Navy too; and we're right on the track of the fellows. We've run them to cover here at the mouth of this creek, and we'll just follow them up and bag the game now in an hour or two."

Andrew was listening intently, and could hear all the conversation from his hiding-place. Then one of the boats had been captured. He felt positive that it must be the one in which David had been; and his absence was now explained. In spite of the sinking of heart which came as he heard the words of the stranger, there was a feeling of relief also; for it was better that his younger brother should be a prisoner among the British than that his boat should have been sunk in Lake Ontario. He must hear the conversation, however; and he began to listen intently again.

"I haven't stuff enough in the house to feed such a crowd, and I don't know that I should do it if I had. Still, I don't mind telling you that you'll have no difficulty in getting all the breakfast you want up the creek. I guess Captain Woolsey's been getting provisions together, and if you can get him you'll get his breakfast too."

The stranger hesitated, as if he were undecided

whether to believe the woman or not. Turning to her husband, he said, "Is that the truth? Can't you feed us this morning? The men won't be able to land for an hour or two, and that would give you time enough to get ready for us."

"Dan'l don't know nothing about it," interrupted Mrs. Gurley, giving her husband no time in which to reply. "Dan'l Gurley don't do the cookin' in this house, not as long as I'm alive and can use this rolling-pin." And she shook that implement as if she could make quite a formidable weapon of it if the occasion demanded.

Evidently the stranger was of the same opinion, as he replied, "All right, then, my good woman; I'll take your word for it. Then, you think we can get breakfast up the creek, do you?"

"No, I don't think anything about it; I know you can," said Mrs. Gurley, resuming her work as if the interview was ended so far as she was concerned. The stranger did not delay, and, without any further reply, at once left the house.

Mrs. Gurley stepped to the window, and watched him until he had gone up the beach several hundred yards, where he stopped to wait for the coming of his companions.

"Now, Andrew Field, now's your chance," she said, as he came out of the closet. "You just cut across lots, and start for Captain Woolsey. I wouldn't have him disappoint these men for the world. I told

him they could get a good breakfast up the creek, and I want Woolsey to be the chief cook."

"But what'll I do about my men?" said Andrew. "It won't do to leave them here. They'll fall into the hands of this gang if I don't warn them."

"I suspect they've started up the creek already," said the energetic woman. "You left the boat back there, and there isn't a man in sight now."

"Probably they've gone, for this fellow would have seen them if they hadn't," said Andrew.

"Yes, yes," said Mrs. Gurley impatiently. "But you must go too."

"Go up the cattle-path," said Mr. Gurley, "and you'll beat the boat. It isn't more'n half as far that way as it is to row up the creek; and if you run you can beat them, I know."

Andrew darted out of the back door, and started up the path as he had been directed. He ran rapidly, and had not gone half the distance before he saw the boat, and the men who had been with him, in the creek. They were rowing hard, and it was plain that they were in a great hurry. He at once concluded that they must have discovered the approach of the British, and, without waiting for him to join them, had started to return with the information. Perhaps, too, they would report him as having been careless; and he was well aware that more than one would be willing to have him fall into disgrace, in the hope that his position might fall to one of them.

The thought stirred the young soldier's heart afresh, and he increased his speed. It would never do to have such a thing happen; and if, on the other hand, he could outstrip them, and be the first to bring the news to the captain, the advantage would all be on his side. In his eagerness he gave little heed to the path, and more than once was thrown headlong as he stepped into some uneven place. The ground was marshy in many places too; and soon he was splashed with mud, and presented a sorry spectacle, and one far different from the neat and tidy dress upon which he prided himself.

He had the satisfaction of seeing the boat far down the winding creek when at last he stood before Captain Woolsey and delivered his message. The captain was a man of quick decision and prompt action; and Andrew scarcely had ended his words before the leader had despatched men to summon aid from the surrounding country. In less than a half-hour the new men began to report in the camp.

His plans were quickly formed and executed. Major Appling and his men were stationed near the creek in a thick woods in an ambush. Flanking parties were formed, in one of which Andrew Field had a place; and then the men waited in silence for the enemy to appear.

The minutes dragged on, and an hour had gone, and still there was no sign of the advancing enemy. A half-hour more passed, and the silence was still

unbroken. The men began to murmur. The young man either must have been deceived himself, or was deceiving them. Another half-hour came and went, and still there was no enemy to be seen. The farmers and minute-men were responding to the summons, and as soon as they arrived were assigned places in some of the flanking parties or among the forces of Major Appling.

It was now between nine and ten o'clock. The sun was climbing higher, and the day promised to be unusually warm for the time of the year. The men were decidedly uneasy, and their officers had all they could do to restrain them. Even Andrew was beginning to think that the British had abandoned the project, and that the directions of Dame Gurley would not be followed. He was conscious that the men near him were muttering, and the frequent glances cast at him made him understand that they were talking about him in no pleasing way.

He could see a considerable distance down the creek from his position; and, just as he was beginning to despair, suddenly he saw the boats of the British appear. There could be no doubt about it now. The British were coming for the breakfast which Dame Gurley had promised them.

"Look there! See that!" he said in a low voice; and in a moment all the men were watching the approaching boats, which now were not more than a quarter of a mile away.

Some of the men who had been loudest in their complaints were very pale now. Indeed, there was a suppressed excitement among them all, and with breathless interest they were watching to see what the approaching men would do first.

"They're landing there on the south side," said Elijah, who was near to Andrew. The three gunboats, the three cutters, and the gig were close together; and their men were landing, as Elijah said.

"They won't go far that way," replied Andrew. "That's all a marsh, and it's slippery as ice."

Andrew's words proved to be true, and in a brief time the oncoming British abandoned the slippery marsh and again took to their boats. Slowly they resumed their progress up the creek, without knowing that the eyes of the Americans were following their every movement, and were ready at any time to receive their attack, or to advance upon them as their leaders should deem best.

"They're within twenty rods of the woods," said Elijah excitedly. "Why doesn't Major Appling do something?"

"Hush! there'll be something done soon enough. There! just hear that, will you?"

A puff of smoke had risen from one of the boats as Andrew spoke, and the heavy roar of the cannon followed. Another and another followed, and the crash of the balls as they went tearing their way on among the trees could be clearly heard.

"They can see the masts of our boats," said Henry. "They stick up there beyond the trees. That's what they're firing at."

"That won't do them any good, if they can see them," replied Andrew. "They'll have to shoot through trees to hit them, and some of those trees are more'n two feet in diameter. I believe in timbered land now, if I never did before."

Apparently the British soon arrived at the same conclusion, for the firing ceased.

"What are they up to now?" whispered Henry. He was so excited that he could hardly speak. The knowledge that Major Appling's men lay concealed among the trees not twenty yards away, and were waiting to receive the enemy, increased his suspense. But why did they still keep silent? Surely now, if ever, was the time for action.

"They're landing; that's what they're doing," said Elijah.

The British had found a place where the ground was solid on the north shore of the creek, and, as Elijah said, were landing there. They leaped ashore as if they were confident of speedily making their way through the woods and gaining possession of the boats whose masts they could plainly see beyond. They soon formed, and advanced towards the woods, all unconscious of the presence of the soldiers there.

It was a moment of intense suspense. Not a word was spoken by our boys now; and every one, with

breathless interest, was following the movements of the advancing column. Would the end never come? They were moving together, and with the precision of machinery. Why did not Major Appling do something? Had his men fled? The British had covered half the distance between them and the woods, and not a movement had yet been made by the concealed Americans; but when they had come within ten rods of them the scene suddenly changed. With a shout the Americans arose from their hiding-places; and at the sharp, quick command of the young major, their shots rang out together, and a volley was poured almost into the very faces of the advancing men.

Instantly there was confusion on every side. The startled British, not knowing what to make of the sudden work of the riflemen, broke ranks. Their leaders rallied them for a moment, and the fire was returned.

"Come on, boys!" shouted the leader of the forces to which the boys belonged. "They need us over there;" and the men began to run to the aid of their companions. The Indians, too, were ready to join in the fray now, and their yells rang out on every side. But Appling's men had no mind to wait for the coming of their companions; and at the command of the young major, they broke from their cover, and with loud cheers, ran forward to charge bayonets upon the British, who knew not what to make of the enemy which now appeared on every side.

"Hurrah!" shouted Henry; "they've surrendered. They've given up."

The boys were running at their highest speed; but they could already see that the British had indeed surrendered, and thrown down their rifles.

The field in a moment was covered with the men. British and Americans were mingled in the strange confusion. The bewildered redcoats were looking wildly about them, as if seeking some place of safety.

Suddenly a shout rang out, "Look at the Indians! Look at the Indians!" The Oneidas, who had taken no part in the battle up to this time, as soon as the British had surrendered rushed upon the field, and with yells that startled even their allies, began to fall upon the defenceless men. Tomahawks were raised in the air, scalps were torn from the heads of the dead; and the savages, like demons, were rushing about over the field as if they were beside themselves with excitement.

"Oh, it's horrible, horrible!" said Andrew, almost sick at the sight. "That's what comes from using Indians. We've heard enough of their doings before this to have kept them out."

But he was quickly recalled to himself when he saw a young officer running swiftly towards him, and close behind was an Indian horrible in his paint, and with an almost fiendish expression upon his face.

"Save me, save me!" called the wretched man; and without hesitating a moment Andrew threw him-

self upon the savage, and together they fell to the ground. Robbed of his prey, the brave turned upon the man who had interfered with his efforts, and together they rolled over and over upon the ground. How the contest would have ended cannot be told, if Elijah and Henry had not rushed to his aid, and in a moment the savage was helpless in their hands.

"It's Garangula," said Henry quickly, as he recognized the face of the young Indian.

"What do you mean by such work?" said Andrew, as almost breathless he rose from the ground; but the young Indian made no reply except to scowl malignantly at the boys. Captain Woolsey's men had all rushed in now, and held the frantic savages back at the point of the bayonet, and in a few moments order was restored and quiet returned.

"I sha'n't forget you, young man," said the young officer whom Andrew had rescued. "You've done me a favor that has saved my life."

"I'm glad of it," replied Andrew, who now had recovered somewhat from his exertion. "That's what comes of using Indians in the war. I have never believed in it."

"Neither have I," replied the prisoner. "And some day I may be able to do as much for you." He little dreamed how true his words were, or how soon his opportunity was to come.

The results of the struggle were soon learned. The Americans had had one white man wounded,

and one Indian killed; while of the British, nineteen had been killed, fifty wounded, and one hundred and thirty-three were prisoners.

"Look at that darkey," said Henry quickly, pointing to a negro who was endeavoring to throw overboard the cannon and small arms on one of the gunboats.

"Stop that! Stop that!" shouted Captain Woolsey; but as the negro paid no attention to his hail, a volley was fired, and the poor man fell. He never would obey or disobey again.

Not one of the British had escaped. It was a sad day for them.

"Dame Gurley spake truly," said Andrew. "The British have had a breakfast up the creek with a vengeance. It hasn't been Sandy Creek, but Salt River for them."

CHAPTER X

THE DEPARTURE OF THE NETTY

WHEN the dwarf, for it was none other than our old friend, approached within a few yards of the shore he rested on his oars, and, holding the boat in position there, curiously scanned the faces before him. As yet he had not spoken; and as his bright little eyes turned from one man to another he noticed David, who had just joined the group. There was no apparent recognition on his part, however, although his glance at the young prisoner was longer than any he bestowed on the others.

"Come, little man, come ashore. We've been waiting for you a long time," said the lieutenant who was in command.

The dwarf did not even look at him by way of a reply, but turning about, fixed his gaze upon the main shore, which was about three miles away.

"Is he deaf?" inquired the lieutenant, turning to one of his men.

"When he wants to be, I guess," replied the man, laughing.

"Come ashore, you little rascal!" called the lieutenant. "Didn't you come to see me?"

The dwarf slowly turned his face at the speaker's words, but still made no reply.

"Come, come!" repeated the lieutenant. "I'll have to send some one after you if you don't do what I tell you quicker than this. Come ashore. I want to talk with you."

But the dwarf still sat motionless in his little skiff, apparently unmindful of the words of the leader.

"He's the most exasperating little bunch of humanity I ever saw," said the lieutenant impatiently. "I'll have to try another tack. Here, you!" he added, calling again to the dwarf. "Who sent you here? Where'd you come from?"

"Jim Nairne sent me," replied the dwarf at last.

"Oh! you have a tongue, have you? Well, I'll tell you what I want you to do. You row straight back to the shore, and tell Jim Nairne to come here himself. When we make an appointment with him, I don't want him to send a blockhead in his place. You pull straight for the shore, and tell the brave Jim to come himself."

"It's three miles to the shore," said the dwarf slowly. "Wings is the things; but I haven't any wings, and my arms are too short to row with. Send somebody with me."

"That's not a bad idea," replied the lieutenant.

"If you go alone I don't know that you'll ever come back, and I want to see Jim. That's what we came for."

"Send him," said the dwarf, pointing to David.

"Send him? That's a good one!" laughed the lieutenant. "I'd almost as soon send the axe in after the wedge. Here, you go," he added, calling one of his men.

The dwarf brought his skiff near the shore; and the man quickly leaped on board, and taking up the oars, with long and steady strokes sent it rapidly over the water. The dwarf, who was seated in the stern, turned as the boat was headed towards the Canadian shore, and went through some strange motions, lifting his fat little hands to his shoulders, and then waving them in the air. None of those who were watching understood what he meant, and laughed as they would have done at the antics of a monkey; but David thought he understood it. The dwarf was trying to encourage him; and although he could not quote his favorite expression, he was doing his best to let his friend know that he had not forgotten him.

"Well, wings are perhaps the things," said David to himself when the boat had gone some distance out into the lake; "but as I haven't any, I'll have to try and do without them. Hello! what's that?" he added suddenly. "It's the Netty, as I live!"

There was the schooner under full sail at least

a mile away from the island, and apparently headed up the lake. What did it mean? Had she gone and left them purposely? Heman and all the other prisoners were on board; but what could be her purpose in leaving so many of her crew behind? Thoroughly puzzled, he turned to one of the men, and said, "There goes the schooner. And she's headed up the lake too? What does it mean? and where is she bound?"

"It's all right, young man, never you fear. You'll be taken care of just the same as though you were on board. But you'll have more fun along with us than you ever could on the schooner. There's something to interest you;" and the lieutenant pointed towards the shore, from which they could see the little skiff returning.

David was perplexed; but it was evident that his companion did not intend to enlighten him. Perhaps he was ignorant also, but he seemed to be content; and soon concluding that he, too, might as well try to reconcile himself to the existing state of affairs, David joined the other men, and stood with them, watching the skiff, which was rapidly returning.

Soon he could make out the three persons in her. In the bow was the dwarf, and the man in the stern he saw was Jim Nairne, while the sailor held the oars, rowing as if he were in a great hurry to rejoin his companions. The boat was soon grounded; and

leaping quickly out of the boat, Jim Nairne went off with the lieutenant, and left the others on the shore.

David had shrunk back among the men as soon as he recognized Nairne. He had no cause to fear him; but knowing as he did how thoroughly unreliable and treacherous the man was, he had no desire to be seen by him in his present predicament. But he did want to see the dwarf; and as soon as Nairne had departed with the lieutenant he turned to beckon his friend to follow him. But the dwarf was not free to go. The rough men had seized him, and were tossing him from one to another as if he were a football. The little man uttered no complaint, but David could see an expression of suffering on his face. He was indignant, but what could he do? Any protest on his part would doubtless increase the troubles of his little friend, and he was powerless among so many to assist him by any act.

"Let the little monkey go," said one of the men at last.

"All right," replied the others, giving the dwarf an extra toss into the air, so that when he fell, instead of being caught by the outstretched hands, he struck upon the ground. He bounded up as if he were a rubber ball, and ran as rapidly as his short little legs could carry him toward the trees.

Indignant as David was, he knew it would not be wise to follow the dwarf immediately; so restraining his feelings, he remained for several minutes among

the men, who were still laughing over the sport they had enjoyed. As soon as he deemed it prudent, he withdrew, and taking a circuit through the woods, started for the place where he thought he would find his little friend.

When he came down to the shore, the dwarf was nowhere in sight. Afraid that he had lost him, he was about to retrace his steps, when he suddenly stopped as he thought he caught the sound of a sob. It was repeated several times; and, following the direction from which the sounds came, he soon saw the dwarf behind a large rock, lying upon his face, and sobbing as if his heart was breaking.

"Why, what's the trouble now?" said David as he approached.

The dwarf raised his head from the ground, and, recognizing David, smiled, though his little frame was still shaking with sobs, and said, "O David, I can't bear it! I can't bear it! Why does the Lord let me live? And why," he added suddenly, "does he let such men knock me around as they've been doing? It isn't fair! It isn't right!" and he struck his little fist against the ground in his impotent wrath.

"I don't know; I can't explain it," replied David; "but it's the way of the world, and I don't know but the best way is to take it as we find it."

"You don't know anything about it. You're big and strong, and they don't treat you so."

"I know it; but I never yet hurt anything weaker than I, if I could help it. Why, when mother wants a hen killed, I make the cook do it."

"But you go into the war. That's worse than killing hens."

"I know it; but I can't help that: I just have to go. I used to think," and David spoke as if years of wisdom and experience lay behind him, "it would be fun to go off with the men, but I've learned better. Just see the scrape I'm in now. It's a good deal worse than yours."

"That's so," said the dwarf, quickly leaping to his feet, and looking up into his companion's face. "I hadn't thought to ask you how you happened to be here. I thought I got you wings once down the St. Lawrence, but you must have pulled all the feathers out. I can't understand it."

David briefly related the story of his capture, to which the dwarf listened attentively. As soon as it was ended, he said, "That explains it. When Jim and I left you at the dock that morning, we sailed straight for the Galloupe Islands. We waited there a day or two; and then a gunboat came, and Jim had a long talk with the captain. I didn't know what it was about then, but now I see it all. I guess Jim was giving 'em some pointers on the plans for fixing up the fleet at Sackett's Harbor."

"The double-dyed rascal!" said David angrily. "What do you stay with such a man for? You

know Andrew told you you could stay with us. We treated you fairly well, didn't we?"

"Yes, you did, David, and no mistake," said the dwarf soberly. "Do you know what Jim Nairne is?" he added, looking up into David's face.

"No; what is he?"

"He's my mother," said the dwarf.

"He's your what?"

"Mother. M-u-t-h-e-r. Can't ye understand the English language? Jim Nairne's my mother. You wouldn't have me go back on my own mother, would ye?"

It was useless to argue with the little man. David recalled the efforts they had made at the Field home to care for the dwarf; but in spite of all their efforts, he had slipped away one night and rejoined his master, for such, in fact, Jim Nairne was. They knew the freebooter was brutal, and perhaps cruel, to the helpless little being; but there was some strange infatuation which moved him, and the Field boys could not understand it. The cook had explained it by saying that "he knew, he knew all about it. The dwarf wasn't just right in the upper story;" by which expression he meant to say that his mind was not just right. The strange information which he had just imparted as to his relationship with Jim Nairne brought back to David's mind the remark of the cook, and he did not pursue the subject farther.

"Tell me," he said, "what's going on here."

What's the schooner gone for, and why have these men been left here?"

The dwarf glanced quickly about him, to see if any one was within hearing. Then reaching up, he grasped his friend's ear, and pulling his head down to his level he whispered, "Will ye promise never to tell?"

"Yes."

"Honor bright? Cross your heart? Hope to die if you do?"

"Yes."

"Cross your heart, then. Let me see you do it. Jim said he'd cut mine out if I ever told; but I don't believe I've got a heart, and he wouldn't cut it out if I had, would he? Jim's my mother, and mothers don't do such things. Yours never did, did she, David?"

"No, she never did," replied David soberly. "Now tell me about it."

"Well," replied the dwarf, once more glancing about him like some frightened animal, "there's a lot of stuff coming up the river in gunboats that they want to land at Kingston, and carry overland to Toronto. It's valuable stuff too; and lots of it comes from England, and they're afraid the Yankees will find out about it."

"Oh! that's it, is it?" replied David thoughtfully.

"What's Jim Nairne got to do with the project?"

"Jim? Oh! he's a kind of a pilot. There isn't a man in the world knows the rocks and shoals and

channels in the St. Lawrence as he does, unless it's Smith." The mention of the last man caused a shudder to pass over the frame of the dwarf. "David," he whispered, "did you know Smith's brother is a-helping him?"

"No; I didn't even know he had a brother. Who is he?"

"The devil." The dwarf spoke solemnly, and David could see that he was in earnest. "Yes," continued the dwarf, "Smith's first brother to Satan. That's why he does so much."

"I wish Commodore Chauncey knew what was going on," said David.

"Chauncey? Oh! he'll know it pretty quick; and I know how he'll hear of it too."

"How?"

"Smith!" said the dwarf briefly.

"Why are we left here?" said David, striving to turn the conversation back to its starting-point.

"Oh! these fellows are going down the river to help bring the gunboats up."

"Why did they leave me here? All the other prisoners are on the schooner."

"I heard the man that rowed us over tell Jim you was to be taken along to help. They've an idea that you know something about the river too."

The story of the dwarf seemed to David to be very plausible, and he had no cause to doubt its truthfulness. He remained silent for several minutes, think-

ing over the strange information he had received. It was quite probable that Smith would do as the dwarf had said; and while he worked for the time being on the American side, his companion in arms, Jim Nairne, would aid the British, and between them they would reap the advantages of both sides.

"David!" whispered the dwarf again, drawing his friend's head down, "I wouldn't stay here if I were you."

"How can I get away?" David was listening, but he had little interest in what his companion was likely to say. But as he heard his words, his interest increased; and when the dwarf released his hold upon his ear, he was strongly impressed.

"I don't know," he replied thoughtfully; "I'm pretty sure to be exchanged if I behave myself. But then I would give almost anything to get away and go back home. I don't want to go down the river with these fellows. It's a big risk; but I've half a mind to try it."

"Here you are, are you, you little imp of darkness? I've been scouring the island for you. I didn't know but yer wings at last had sprouted, and ye'd started through the air."

It was the voice of Jim Nairne, and the dwarf was at once alarmed. David had no desire to meet him, but it was too late now to retreat. The lieutenant of the guerilla Smith approached, and David once more was face to face with Jim Nairne.

CHAPTER XI

A SEARCHING-PARTY

"PLOTTING again, are you?" said Nairne as soon as he recognized the young man. As David made no reply, he added, "Oh! I know all about you, and I'm sorry you can't keep out of a scrape. You don't seem to have any good luck. Perhaps this little imp's wings will help you, though," and he laughed brutally. "Come on," he said, turning to the dwarf. "We've too much to do to be standing here."

David watched them as they started towards their boat; and soon they were out on the lake, Jim Nairne pulling with long, steady strokes for the Canadian shore. When at last he could see them no longer, David slowly walked back to rejoin the men. He was thinking of the project the dwarf had suggested; and the more he thought of it, the more it commended itself to his judgment. The time, however, was not yet ripe for the attempt, and meanwhile he must do nothing to arouse the suspicions of his companions.

As has been said, David now was given large lib-

erty. The dwarf had explained to him the reason why he had been detained when the other prisoners had been sent on to Kingston. He was to be made a member of the crew, and virtually was to be "pressed" into service, as his brother Andrew had been two years before.

David, however, knew that while they might keep him with them, and to a certain extent compel him to share in their labors, his own consent was necessary to make their plans a complete success. He was young and strong, and doubtless his captors had thought there would be little trouble in bending him to their own wishes. "It takes two to make a bargain," said David to himself. "You can lead a horse to water, but it's another thing entirely to make him drink after you've done that. However, it won't do for me to show that I know what their plans are, and the best thing I can do just at present is to go in with them as if I never had thought of anything else."

The men all slept that night on the ground; for the air was now mild, and the nights of the early summer were almost always clear and pleasant. It was not a new experience to the young prisoner, for many times he had been with his brother and Elijah on expeditions when they had camped over night. It was long after the others were asleep, however, before David could close his eyes. He was thinking of the plan he had formed, and trying to devise

measures by which it could be made an assured success. The sounds of the breeze through the tops of the trees, and the ripple of the waters on the shore of the lake, combined soon to soothe his feelings, and it was after sunrise when he was awake again.

A breakfast was prepared, and the fish which some of the men had caught in the early morning before their companions were awake were cooked, and David's courage and determination both were soon stronger.

About ten o'clock a little gunboat appeared in sight. This was as the dwarf had prophesied; and when she came to anchor within a few yards of the shore he began to hope that the time for which he had been waiting had come. The men were interested in the arrival; and in the conversation which followed, David had no difficulty in learning that what the dwarf had told him was true. The men were to form the crew of the boat, and she was to start on a cruise down the St. Lawrence, to serve as a guard for the boats which were bringing the stores up the river.

The start, however, he found was not to be made at once. They were waiting for some word which Jim Nairne was to bring them, and meanwhile they were free to amuse themselves as they saw fit.

As we have said, David was allowed large liberty; and while nothing had been said to him directly of the part which was expected of him, they all seemed

to take it for granted that he was now one of the crew; and as he said nothing to arouse their suspicions, their watchfulness relaxed, and he was permitted to come and go almost at his will. They all knew that he could not leave the island without their knowledge, and so on the boat and on the island he was as free as his companions.

Two days passed in this manner, and David could not find out when the start was to be made. On the morning of the third day, however, something the lieutenant said led the young prisoner to believe that they would leave the island before sunset. The men, too, seemed to be aware that the time for their departure was near; and as if to make the most of their opportunities on land, the most of them remained on the shore all day. A lookout was stationed at each end of the island, and the general air of expectation became more and more manifest.

All this was as David desired. There were two yawls and a gig attached to the gunboat, and the men used them in passing from the boat to the shore.

For some reason, this morning but one yawl had been used, and David noticed that the other yawl and the gig had been left by the stern of the gunboat. There was but one man on board besides the prisoner when the noontime came; all the others having gone ashore to prepare their dinner there, and share in the lookout for the coming of Jim Nairne, who now was expected at any time.

David noticed that the man on board had stretched himself on the deck for a nap. Concluding that his time had at last arrived, he drew the yawl close up to the boat, and stepping on board as noiselessly as possible, seated himself in the bow. He glanced towards the shore, but not a man was in sight. The one on board was silent. There was a stillness over all that promised well for his undertaking.

Before the dwarf had gone, on the day when he had had the conversation with David, he had presented his friend with a huge jackknife. This David now drew from his pocket, and opened the large blade. Its edge was almost as keen as a razor's, and its point was sharp and strong. He selected a place in the side of the yawl about four inches above the water-mark, and pressed the point against the side of the boat, but he could not drive it through. Seizing a belaying-pin, he struck the knife three sharp blows, and the blade came through on the other side.

He arose in his place, and peered over the side of the gunboat at his companion. He was still asleep, and plainly had not heard the sound of the blows. Again grasping the handle of the knife, he worked the blade back and forth; and when he withdrew it, he knew that a good-sized hole had been made in the side of the yawl.

Leaning against the side, he partially tipped the boat over, and a little stream of water made its way

through the opening. Holding to his position for several minutes, he was gratified soon to see that three or four inches of water were in the boat, and that it was settling, so that the hole he had made was below the water-mark.

Again he arose, and glanced keenly at his companion; but he had not moved from his position. He looked towards the island, but still no one was to be seen. Silently he climbed on board the gun-boat, and picking up one of the heavy cannon-balls, noiselessly returned with it to the yawl, and placed it carefully on the bottom. Four times more he made similar trips, each time depositing the heavy twelve-pound ball in the bottom of the yawl, which now was almost filled with water.

Then David took a seat in the stern of the gun-boat, close to the place where the rope which held the yawl was fast. He was highly excited, but was still silent and watchful. Success depended upon the next few minutes. The man on deck was still sleeping, and no one on the island had approached the shore. David trembled as he thought of what was likely to occur if the men should return now; but he had begun, and was determined to succeed if success lay within his power.

The yawl was now deep in the water, and pulling on her rope. Glancing once more quickly about him, and satisfied that still he was not observed, he took his knife, and with one strong, quick movement

severed the taut rope, and the yawl quickly sank. Carefully noting the exact spot in its relation to the shore, he arose, and approached his sleeping companion.

Should he disturb him? At first he was inclined to do so; but when he saw the man was still sleeping soundly, he turned again to the stern, and casting off the painter leaped lightly into the gig, and started for the shore of the island. Once there he soon landed, and drawing the gig up on the beach, turned towards the interior of the island.

He did not know where the other men were now, but his one desire was to keep out of their way. His plan was to seek a spot he well knew; and without having been seen he soon arrived there. It was a clump of bushes and trees not many yards from the shore. High in the centre of the cluster three trees arose, with branches far from the ground. Selecting one of these, the hardy young prisoner began to ascend it, tightly clasping the trunk with his arms and legs. Up and up he went with the agility to be gained only by long practice. The lowest branch must have been at least forty feet from the ground; but many times he had made ascents higher than that in his search for the nests of the thieving crows and hawks. He never once glanced behind him to observe whether he was seen or not; but putting forth all his strength, he climbed on and on, and soon gained the lowest branch. Not even

pausing to rest, although he was almost breathless from his exertions, he grasped the next limb, and did not stop until he found himself high in the tree, and concealed among the branches and leaves.

In a brief time he had regained his breath, and then began to look about him. He could see far out over the lake, and could discern the houses on the shore of Canada, which lay about three miles away. He could see the men who had been his recent companions. They were seated on the shore, and the smoke was still rising from the fire by means of which they had cooked the dinner they were then eating. The gunboat could be clearly seen too; and David watched the man who had been asleep when he had departed, but who now was moving about the deck, apparently wondering why he had been left there alone.

For the first time David realized that he was hungry and thirsty; but there was no way of satisfying either feeling, and he settled himself upon the branch to wait for the time to pass. Suppose he should be compelled to remain there all night! And he was not even certain that the gunboat would depart on the following day. Well, he must do the best he could, and patience was the first virtue to be cultivated; and so he tried to prepare himself for what might prove to be a long waiting.

When two hours had passed, he saw the men as they took their yawl and the gig and started back to

the gunboat. He watched them closely now; and when they had leaped on board, one man took the painter, and was about to make the boats fast, when suddenly he discovered the cut rope. David could not hear what was said, but he could perceive the immediate confusion which followed. The men gathered about the stern of the gunboat, and it was evident that they were discussing the meaning of it. Some were pointing excitedly towards the Canadian shore, and others were just as excitedly pointing to the island. He saw the lieutenant as he approached the group and listen to the words of the excited men. Something would be done now David felt positive; nor was he mistaken.

In a moment several men leaped into the gig, while others took their places in the yawl. "They're going to look me up," said David to himself. "Well, all I can say is, I hope they don't find me."

The men in the gig soon landed, but they were hidden from his sight by the foliage and trees. He could see the yawl, however, and watched her as the men pulled out beyond the head of the island. There they rested upon their oars, and evidently were scanning the lake. They plainly were excited, and David smiled as he saw the motions the men were making with their hands. They were evidently puzzled; but as in a few moments they took up their oars again, and began to row back to the gunboat, he knew they had decided that he was not to be found on the lake.

He smiled as he thought of their anger, but he was recalled to himself by another danger. He could hear the voices of men calling to one another on the island beneath him. "They're making a sweep of it," he thought. "They've divided, and one party has begun at one end of the island and the other at the other. I hope I didn't leave any tracks or anything else behind me to show what I did."

The sound of the voices was coming nearer. Peering down from his hiding-place, he could see four of the men approaching. The frightened boy almost lost his grasp on the branch when he saw the men together leave the path they had been following, and come directly to the base of the tree among the branches of which he was concealed.

CHAPTER XII

THE LIEUTENANT'S REPLY

THE victory which the Americans had won near Sandy Creek was almost a bloodless one; and though the battle was not great, it still was important, for it meant the safety of the stores and the fittings of the boats which yet were on the stocks at Sackett's Harbor.

The re-enforcements from that place did not arrive until the action was ended; nor did many of the minute-men whom Woolsey had summoned by his couriers from the vicinity come any sooner. The prisoners were formed in line, and marched twenty miles across the county to the garrison; but the stores and captured cannon were left for a few days where the battle had taken place. Sir James had received word of the loss of his men, and for ten days kept cruising on and off, hoping to intercept the passage which he thought might be attempted; but at length, having concluded that his waiting was useless, he raised the blockade and sailed away.

The moment it was known that he was gone, the transportation was begun, and everything except one

huge cable was safely brought to Sackett's Harbor. How to carry this cable now became the problem. It was too heavy to make a quick transportation by boat practicable; and at last it was suggested that a body of citizens should form in line, and carry it across the country upon their shoulders. One hundred and fifty men volunteered their services; and after having been arranged in order according to their stature, the long procession started, moving slowly, and like a huge serpent winding its way over the hills and down through the valleys. Nearly two days were consumed in the journey of twenty miles; and when they drew near to Sackett's Harbor, the soldiers and sailors came forth to meet them, and with shouts and songs welcomed them into the village. The equipment of the fleet was now safe, and the campaign on Lake Ontario was assured.

Meanwhile, recruits from the seaboard poured steadily into the village, and the numbers of the soldiers daily increased. Everything was in readiness except the great frigate and the brigs which still stood on the stocks. The men were becoming restless and impatient. Daily brawls and quarrels occurred; and Commodore Chauncey was himself ill, and almost in despair. Something must be done, and done soon, or the men would lose heart. And something was done, and to that we must now give our attention.

One afternoon, nearly two weeks after the return

from Oswego, young Lieutenant Francis H. Gregory stood talking with Andrew Field. The expression upon their faces was one of deep interest, and an observer at once would have known that some project was in their minds.

"The commodore is sure of it," said the lieutenant, "and he wants us to go. We may do something, and we can cheer up the men if we don't accomplish anything else."

"How did he get word?" inquired Andrew.

"Oh! this man Smith was here last night, and told him all about it. They have a gunboat or a watch stationed every six miles, for they're afraid we'll do something; and he says they're sending up the river every day from Montreal some supplies and stores. If we could cut off some one or more of the supply boats, we'd do something worth talking about."

"Then, as I understand it, your plan is to take three gigs and about eighteen men, and put out from here to-night, and then hide to-morrow somewhere on the St. Lawrence, and pounce upon some one of the supply boats when it passes. Is that it?"

"That's just it. Sailing-master Vaughn is going, and so is Bill Dixon. Each of them will command one gig, and I'll take the third. Now, I want you and the boys to go with me in my gig."

"David's not here," said Andrew soberly. "We know well enough he's a prisoner, and probably will be all right; but mother is terribly worried."

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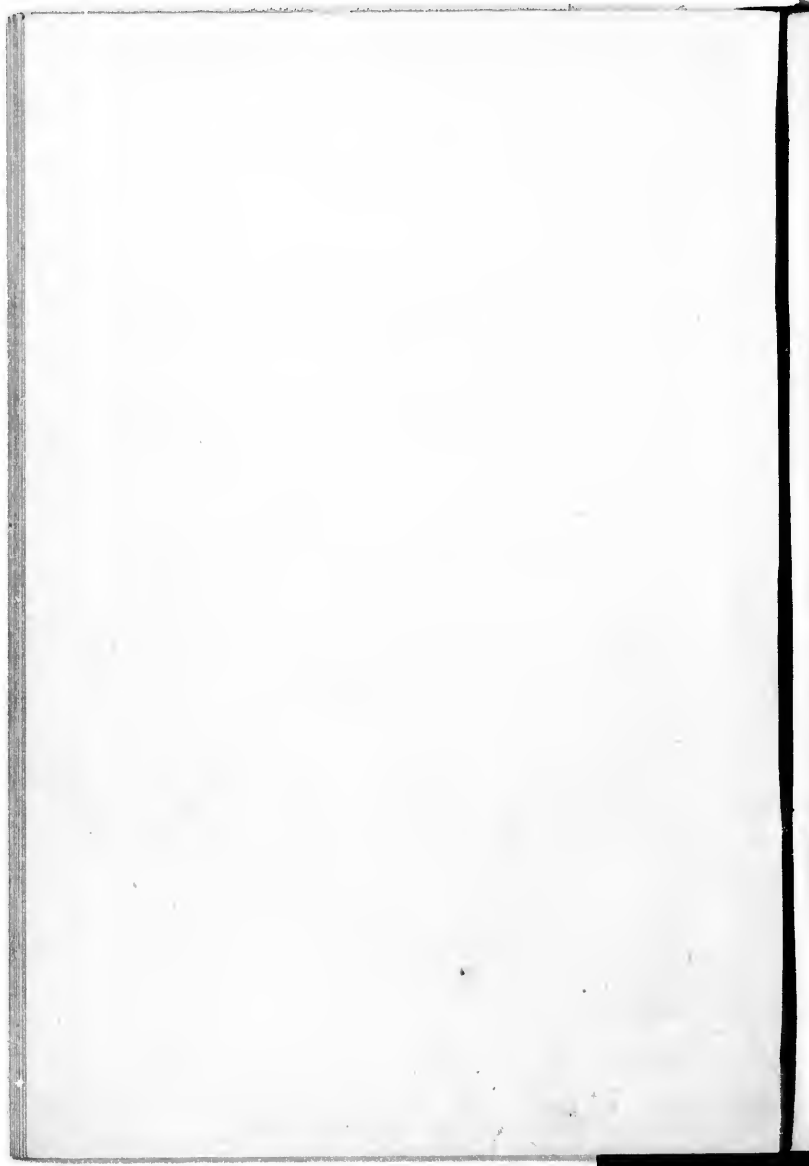
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"The long procession, like a huge serpent." Page 141.



However, I think we'll go. What time do you start?"

"Six o'clock, sharp. Don't fail to be on hand."

Accordingly, at six o'clock Andrew, together with Elijah and Henry, were seated in the gig which Lieutenant Gregory commanded; and when the word was given all three boats started from the harbor. Great was the curiosity of the sailors who were left behind; but not a word was spoken to explain the departure of the gigs.

There was the promise of a fair night; and soon the sails were hoisted, and the three little boats were sweeping rapidly over the surface of the lake. Long before daylight came they had arrived at the borders of the St. Lawrence. Their boats were well supplied with rifles, pistols, and cutlasses; and there was a firm determination to do something before they returned.

They swept on down the river, the wind and swift current uniting to give them speed. They kept well together, for their safety might depend largely upon that.

Just at daybreak, when they were among the Thousand Islands, and now realized that the serious part of their labor was at hand, they landed on one of the smaller islands, and were about to prepare their breakfast, when Henry Spicer, who had been stationed as a lookout, came hurrying into the camp, saying, "There's a whole fleet of boats out here coming up the river."

In a moment the men rushed to the shore, and were peering out from behind the trees. Yes, there was a brigade, as it was called, of six boats, slowly making their way up the river against the wind and current.

"Just look at the redcoats!" whispered Henry. "There must be fifty of them."

"They're too strong for us," replied Elijah, watching the passing boats. "I only hope they don't see us."

The lieutenant kept his men carefully concealed, and the brigade passed without seeing them. The men were all excited as they returned to their breakfast; but the meal had not been finished before the young lookout again rushed into their presence with the startling information that another brigade was in sight.

Again the men rushed down to the shore, and watched the second fleet as it passed. It contained two more boats than the previous one, and the little party of Americans were glad to remain concealed.

"This is great business," said Henry, when he was relieved of his guard, and was eating his breakfast. "The river is just full of redcoats. I don't know what we ever came down here with such a handful of men for. We don't stand any show at all."

"Never mind, Henry," replied Andrew. "We're running a big risk, there's no mistake about that; but it's worth it. The lieutenant is careful, and Vaughn

and Bill Dixon know the river as well as they do their own dooryards."

"It isn't much like our last trip down here," said Elijah. "Dave was along then."

No one replied to his words, for the absence of David was keenly felt. There were fears in the heart of each of the boys, but no one spoke of them; and the young soldiers waited in silence for Henry to finish his breakfast.

He was scarcely done before there was another fleet of three boats seen, and again the men all took their positions by the shore and watched. This time, however, the little brigade was coming down the stream, and only a few men were on board.

"We might try that," said the lieutenant thoughtfully, as the boats came nearer. "They don't seem to be loaded, though, and the risk's too great. When we do make a try, we must make it for something worth while."

The situation was not a pleasant one. Between the hour of sunrise and nine o'clock in the morning three fleets had passed them. There must be many more men on the river than the commodore had thought. Plainly the British were active, and must be preparing for some movement of importance. Perhaps, too, Smith's word was not to be trusted, and he had decoyed them down the St. Lawrence only to lead them into the hands of the British.

All of the eighteen men were somewhat dis-

mayed by what they had seen, and the caution of the young leader increased. He sent Vaughn and Dixon in one of the gigs down the river to find out, if they could, the condition of the region below. In the course of three hours they returned with the information that they had met Smith, as had been agreed, and that his words and their own observation led them to believe that gunboats had been stationed at intervals down the river, and that a system of signals had been arranged upon the heights, so that the approach of danger could be quickly seen in either direction. They advised that the place where they then were should be abandoned, and that they should go farther over towards the Canadian shore, and then proceed farther down the stream, and lie in wait for some straggler there.

The plan was hazardous, but all agreed; and soon with muffled oars the three gigs moved out from the island, and sought the portion of the river lying beyond the channels. They moved slowly and cautiously, and for an hour not a man or boat was seen. Then changing their direction, they drifted with the current, and moved on down the stream.

Every moment was one of peril. Whenever they came out beyond the head of one of the little islands, they half expected to see another brigade of boats, or a gunboat, directly before them. There was no inclination for conversation now, and every man was watchful. All the glamour of the expedition was

gone. They were in peril; and the little handful of men at any moment might become the prey of some gunboat, or of some party of soldiers who were being carried up the river to join their comrades at Kingston or Toronto.

Three hours now passed, and no one had yet been seen since they had abandoned their former position. They kept well out of the channel, but no one knew from what direction the British might appear at any moment. Besides, they might be discovered by some of the lookouts; and then they would become the pursued, instead of being what they hoped to be, — the pursuers.

"Lieutenant," said Vaughn, who had brought his gig near to Lieutenant Gregory's, "Bald Island's only about a quarter of a mile below. I rather think we'd better make in there a bit and wait. We're close under the Canadian shore now, and there's no telling what'll turn up."

"All right," replied the lieutenant. "That's good advice, and we'll do as you say."

Accordingly the course was slightly changed, and in a few minutes all three of the gigs had gained the shore of Bald Island.

"So far, so good," said Elijah as he leaped ashore. "Now what's to be done?"

"We'll soon see," replied Andrew.

"Look there! Just see that, will you?" said Henry quickly. He pointed towards a gunboat they

could see coming down the river under easy sail. She had a little skiff in tow, and the light wind was just sufficient to give her easy headway. In a moment the men assembled in a group on the shore, and watched the approaching gunboat. She had discovered the presence of the gigs, and already had come about and changed her course. An officer and two men stepped into a little skiff, and started towards our party.

"Hold steady, men," said Lieutenant Gregory to his followers. He spoke hardly above a whisper, but his words were distinctly heard. "Be ready for anything, but don't move till I give the word."

The eyes of all were now fixed upon the approaching skiff. The men who were rowing were apparently unsuspecting of danger. Probably they thought the party before them were Canadians, and they were stopping to make inquiries. The gunboat, however, had swung round into position, and her one gun was now in line with the party on shore. They could see her name distinctly as the streamer fluttered in the wind, and all had heard of her before. She was the Black Snake, one of the eleven vessels of her class which the British had, each carrying eighteen or twenty men, and each having one long cannon in the bow.

The little skiff came steadily on. "Perhaps they'll land," said Elijah. "If they do, there'll be so much taken in, anyway."

The men in the skiff, however, did not come close to the shore. At a distance of fifty feet they ceased rowing; and the officer called out, "Who are you? Canadians?"

"Who are you?" replied the lieutenant, in true Yankee fashion.

"We're from the Black Snake, on our way to Montreal."

"Oh, no, you're not!" replied the lieutenant.

"Oh! we're not? Well, what are we, then?"

"You're my prisoners. Don't touch your gun! Just come ashore quietly! My men are all ready for you."

The astonished officer glanced quickly at the men on shore. They stood behind the lieutenant, each with a rifle aimed at the men in the luckless little skiff. Too late he had perceived his mistake.

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CHAPTER XIII

SCUTTLED

THERE was a moment of hesitation on the part of the three men in the skiff. The summons was so sudden that they had no time to call for aid from the Black Snake; and meanwhile, there were the terrible Yankees directly in front of them, and their rifles were aimed in a direction of which the officer and his men did not in the least approve. The boyish face of Lieutenant Gregory, who was only twenty-three years of age, showed his intense earnestness; and the men in the skiff hastily concluded that his invitation to join them was not to be lightly considered.

The officer in a low voice spoke to the men, and they slowly began to row towards the shore. The scene had been watched by the men on board the Black Snake, and they were by no means disposed to be idle.

"Look out, men!" called the lieutenant sharply; and just as he spoke, the one long cannon on the gunboat, having come into direct range, was fired, and the loud report rang out, waking the echoes

among the islands. The ball struck the edge of the river within a few yards of the place where they were standing, and the spray dashed over them all.

"That's all they can do now. Watch the cannon, and don't let a man on the Black Snake go near it!" shouted the lieutenant; then turning to the men in the skiff, he said, "There, none of that! Come straight ashore;" for, in the moment of confusion, they had turned as if they were about to attempt to make their way back. The words of the young officer were not to be misunderstood, and in a few minutes the boat grated on the beach.

Sailing-master Vaughn and four of his followers had kept their attention fixed upon the cannon; and the moment the men started to reload, their rifles rang out together, causing a perceptible retreat from the bow of the gunboat.

"Now, men, we must board her. Keep close together. We'll take these three men along for a kind of protection," said the lieutenant; and at his words his followers leaped quickly into the gigs, and together began to pull for the Black Snake. There were white faces and set teeth among the men in the gigs; but there was only one thought, and that was to carry out the orders of their young leader. Exerting all their strength, they kept well together, and the presence of their prisoners served as a shield; for their companions did not dare to fire for fear of hitting their own friends.

The three boats swept over the water with the speed of the wind. The men were terribly in earnest, fully realizing that what they did they must do quickly; for perhaps the cannon-shot already had been heard by other passing boats. The gigs were run in alongside the Black Snake, and in a moment the men leaped on board.

None of our boys could tell just what occurred then. There were shoutings and curses, and a desperate hand-to-hand conflict. The sturdy farmer lads found their muscles, trained by the labor on the farms, standing them in good stead now.

Andrew was more than a match for the man with whom he grappled, and Elijah was holding his own against his antagonist. Henry, however, had fallen to the deck, and his brother was about to release his hold and come to his assistance, when they heard the voice of Captain Landon, the commander of the gunboat, calling, "I surrender! I surrender!" and in a moment the conflict ceased, and the Black Snake was taken.

What should be done with the prize? Eighteen royal marines were on board; and she was well loaded with small arms, besides the one long cannon whose voice they already had heard.

"We'd better start for home, I think," said the lieutenant. "We've done enough for one day, and if we can get this prize out of the river we shall be lucky."

"That's right, Lieutenant," said Dixon. "We'd better start now." The advice was promptly followed; and after the prisoners had been separated, a few having been consigned to each gig, and the remainder safely shut in the hold of the Black Snake, they started up the river with the captive gunboat in tow.

The faces of the men were glowing. Henry Spicer wanted to sing, but was sternly told by his brother to be silent. "We've just begun," said Elijah. "Here we are fifteen miles from the lake, with the current against us, and the river full of British. We don't want to crow yet."

"That's always the way," said Henry. "I was too scared to speak when we started for the gunboat; but now we've got her, and you act as if you were going to a funeral."

"I hope not," said Andrew; "but our biggest danger is ahead."

This feeling was soon shared by all the men. Not a word was spoken by any save the officers. The boats were kept well together, but the gunboat and the swift current combined to render their progress slow. If they only could gain the open lake they knew their chances would be better; but before an enemy now, hampered as they were by the heavy load and the prisoners, the advantage would all be on the other side.

The men rowed on and on, never halting when

great blisters appeared on their hands. It was a struggle for life itself, and everything depended upon whether they fell in with any other gunboats or not. They had seen so many since they entered the river, that they knew there was danger on every side. Behind any of the little islands a boat might be lurking and at every bend in the river; they peered carefully ahead, half expecting to see some of the enemy appear.

For two hours they rowed on, and no British were seen. The distance to the lake had been more than half covered, and the hopes of the men were beginning to revive. Suddenly every one in the gigs was startled by a shrill call of one of the prisoners. He had risen in his place, and bending forward in his eagerness, had called twice before he was roughly pulled back, and stretched upon the bottom of the boat.

The mischief, however, had been done. Not far away, and coming directly towards them, was a gunboat much larger than the Black Snake, and evidently well manned, for the deck seemed to be covered with men. There was no time for consultation; and the eager young lieutenant called to Vaughn, "You lead the way, Vaughn. Pull to the right; and if you know the way, dodge in among the islands. They'll be after us. Yes, just hear that!" he added as a shot was fired, and the ball went skipping over the river not far from them. "Pull, men! pull!"

His men needed no urging. The muscles on their bare arms stood out in great bunches. The perspiration rolled down their faces. The officers were pulling at the oars with the men. The last desperate chase had begun.

"They're gaining," groaned the young lieutenant as they swept out from the head of an island. "They're gaining as sure as fate. Pull, men! pull!"

Once more the men bent to their work. The long oars were dipped deep into the river, and every man was doing his best. Safety, and even life itself, depended upon their exertions now, and no words of encouragement were needed.

On and on swept the gigs, the Black Snake swiftly following. But the next turn showed the pursuing gunboat still nearer. "What shall we do, Vaughn?" groaned the lieutenant, breathing hard. He had been working with the men at the oars, and was almost worn out.

"Scuttle the gunboat," replied Vaughn.

"Never! Pull, men! Can't we get away? Pull! pull!" and he bent again to his task. In spite of all their efforts the next view of the pursuers showed them to be steadily gaining. Shots were fired now, but they still fell short of the gigs.

"We'll have to do it. We'll have to," groaned the young officer. "Hold on!" he shouted; and in a moment the gigs were close together, and the men were resting on their oars. "Board her, men! Take

out all the prisoners and all the small arms. Then scuttle her. It's too bad, but it can't be helped," said Gregory.

The men from one of the gigs leaped quickly on board the Black Snake, and began to hand to their companions the small arms with which she was loaded. The prisoners were pressed into service also, and almost in a frenzy of excitement the work went on. They were drifting down the river now, directly in the path of their pursuers, who had not relaxed any of their efforts; but few even glanced towards her in their desperation. In an incredibly brief time the small arms were transferred, the prisoners were taken on board the gigs, and they were ready to start on.

"Now scuttle her, Vaughn!" said the excited leader.

"She's scuttled," replied the sailing-master briefly. "Make for the gigs."

The pursuing gunboat was nearer now; and the desperate men in the boats, compelling the prisoners to assist them, renewed their struggle to get away. On and on they went, the shots of the gunboat thus far having gone wide of their mark.

The chief hope in Lieutenant Gregory's heart was that when the British reached the Black Snake they would give over their pursuit, and attempt to save her. He was watching them closely now, and the Black Snake was settling lower and lower into the water.

"There she goes!" he almost shouted in his excitement as he saw the gunboat which so recently had been in his possession give one or two heavy lurches and then suddenly sink just as the others drew near.

"They haven't stopped! They're after us yet!" he fairly shouted, as he saw that the pursuers did not pause. "Try once more, men! Now all together!"

Again the desperate men tried to respond to the call of their young leader. Their breathing was almost like the panting of dogs. They bit their lips and tried to dig their heels into the boats as they pulled at the oars. They did not glance at the pursuers now; all of their thought and energy was put into the work at hand.

"That's better! We've gained a bit," said the lieutenant. "Now once more! Give way, all!"

He glanced towards the western sky. The sun had almost disappeared from sight, and his one hope now lay in the oncoming darkness. If the men could hold out a half-hour longer, they might escape. Before them was Grenadier Island, and beyond it was Lake Ontario and Sackett's Harbor and safety.

"It's the last chance, men," he called again. "They're close after us. If we can gain Grenadier, we'll have a fighting chance. Try it again. Now once more, lads!"

In sheer desperation the men once more tried to respond. The boys felt as if every pull at the oars

must be the last. Their throats were parched, their eyes were blurred, and their bodies felt almost numb; but still they pulled and pulled at the oars, and the gigs swept steadily onward. The darkness deepened. The lieutenant could scarcely see the boat of the pursuers, but he knew it was not far behind. The low-flying swallows uttered their cries, and swept near the boats as if they were curious as to the meaning of it all. The bats dashed almost into their faces. There was a weird appearance on river and island; but the struggling men heeded none of these things.

Suddenly the low outlines of an island arose almost before them in the darkness.

"It's Grenadier!" gasped Vaughn.

"Make to the right!" replied the lieutenant; and the three gigs, sharply changing their course, swept on in the darkness close to the shore of Grenadier Island.

CHAPTER XIV

A HELPLESS SAILOR

WHEN David Field looked down from his hiding-place upon the men about the base of the tree, his first thought was that he must have been seen. He drew back, and clung closely to the great trunk, expecting to hear a summons to descend; but when several minutes elapsed and no hail was heard, he peered forth from the tree, and again looked down at the men. They were engaged in an earnest conversation; but with all his efforts David could not hear a word that was spoken. He had no difficulty, however, in understanding what they were talking about, for at frequent intervals two of the men pointed eagerly towards the lake; but their companions shook their heads, and pointed just as eagerly about the island. It was plain that the men were discussing the escape of the prisoner, and were sharply divided in their opinions as to where he then was.

Once one of the men glanced upward, and David quickly drew back his head, alarmed lest he should be discovered; but as no summons followed, he was

relieved, as he became certain that his presence thus far had not been detected.

The men did not long delay, and passed on in their search. David looked again towards the lake, to see what the men in the yawl were doing. His first glance showed that they were resting on their oars. Had they abandoned the search? He soon saw that a skiff was approaching from the Canadian shore, and the men were waiting for it to come nearer. He had no difficulty in recognizing the dwarf and his master when the boats were together, and he knew that some message had been brought.

The yawl and skiff soon turned and made for the gunboat. A sharp call soon after the men were on board brought those who were searching on the island to the shore; and David watched them curiously as they also went back to the boat. Perhaps the gunboat would soon be leaving now. The thought renewed the courage of the prisoner in the tree-top, for that would mean that he had succeeded in his attempt.

"That's just what they're going to do," he said to himself, as he watched the men hauling away at the anchor. The sail was soon spread, and the Black Snake, for that was the name of the gunboat, sailed away, headed down the river, with Jim Nairne and the dwarf on board, and their little skiff in tow.

"I've done it; I've done it," thought David joyfully. Perhaps his rejoicings would not have been

so keen if he could have looked ahead and seen what the fortune of the crew of the Black Snake was to be. But he knew nothing of that at the time; and the one thought uppermost in his mind was that he had succeeded in his attempt, and had been left behind by his captors.

He remained in the tree for a half-hour more, watching the departing Black Snake, to see whether she would change her course or return. Satisfied at last that she had departed in earnest, he crept out from his hiding-place, and began to descend the tree. He soon stood upon the ground again, and then realized that only the first of his problems had been solved. He was many miles from home, and near the Canadian border. No American vessels of importance were on the lake; while the fleet of Sir James Yeo was cruising about, and there was not only a possibility, but a serious danger, that he might fall in with some of them. His only means of escape was the yawl, and she lay on the bottom of the river; but he was not worried over that, for he would have no difficulty in raising her. Perhaps that had better be done at once; and with this thought in his mind, David hastened to the shore.

He had carefully marked in his mind the exact location of the boat, and he soon arrived at the place where the two trees and the sharp rock on the shore were which he had noticed when he was sinking the yawl.

"It's just about fifty feet out from shore," said David, "and I don't think I'll have any trouble. If I do, it's all up with me. I've just got to find the spot."

He hastily threw aside his clothing, and plunging into the river swam out to the place where he thought the boat ought to be. The water was almost as clear as glass, and he could see the bottom beneath him.

It was some time, however, before he could discover the sunken boat. He had begun to feel a little alarmed lest there had been some mistake, but his fears were relieved when he caught sight of the yawl. She had not changed her position, and was directly beneath him.

"Now for it," thought David. "The water must be ten or twelve feet deep here, but I'm good for it." With a sudden plunge, and after drawing an extra long breath, he turned and started head foremost for the bottom. He succeeded in grasping the side of the yawl; but before he could do anything he was compelled to let go his hold, and rise to the surface for breath.

"This will never do," thought the young diver, when he came spluttering to the surface again. "I shall have to save my breath better than that, or I'll never start her."

He was thoroughly at home in the water; and after swimming slowly about, and treading water and float-

ing by turns, he again turned and started for the sunken yawl, sending himself downward with swift and powerful strokes. This time he succeeded in throwing overboard one of the cannon-balls before he rose to the surface once more. Again and again he repeated his efforts, sometimes failing to grasp the ball, which rolled from his hands, and sometimes carried beyond the boat in his struggles. After some eight or ten efforts the most of the heavy balls were rolled over the edge of the boat, and the load was so materially lightened that David felt the end had almost come. Nor was he sorry. He was almost exhausted by his labors, and was thoroughly chilled from remaining so long a time in the water. But his work was of such a character as to admit of no delay, for the boat might float now, and be carried away; and in such an event he would be left a captive on the island, and in a far worse condition than he had been in the company of the men who now made up the crew of the Black Snake.

Once more the tired boy turned, after a brief rest, and swam under the water. He grasped the bow of the yawl with his hands, and tried to move it. It was fast, and he could see that it was held in between two stones. The weight of the cannon-balls must have forced it into its present position. He pulled desperately and as long as he could hold in his breath, but soon in sheer desperation was compelled to release his grasp, and rise again to the surface.

What should he do? The night would soon be at hand, and he could not work in the darkness. Perhaps the boat would remain in its present position, as it seemed to be wedged in between the stones. At first David was inclined to leave his task until morning; but the fear that the yawl might work itself loose in the night and drift away, made him resolve to try once more. He swam ashore, and selecting a stout stick, returned to his task. His teeth were chattering with the cold now, and he realized that if this attempt failed he would be compelled to abandon his project for the present. He was a resolute boy, however, and not easily turned from a problem by its difficulties; and drawing in a deep breath he again started for the yawl. He slipped the stick under the bow, and giving it one hard lift, was rejoiced when the yawl started. He had freed it from the rocks, and giving it one more strong pull, he let go his hold, and quickly regained the surface.

He waited a minute, and the boat did not appear. Another passed, and still there were no signs of the yawl. He was almost despairing now; but glancing down the stream he saw a floating mass not far away, and swimming hastily towards it, found it to be the yawl itself. Freed from its position, it had risen to the surface; but the current had carried it below his waiting-place, and, if he had not accidentally discovered it, it would have drifted away without his knowledge. He swam towards the shore, pushing

before him the yawl, which only came to the surface of the river. He succeeded in drawing it partially up on the shore, and then the shivering boy turned to dress himself.

"There, I'm no better off than I was before! Was there ever such a fool? I haven't an oar on the island." In his eagerness to secure the boat, the lad had forgotten that which was almost as important, — the oars. "I'll fix it somehow," he added. "I've got her ashore, and I'll find some way out of it now. But what an idiot! If it had been Elijah, I should have expected it — but to do it myself! Well, if I ever live to get out of this, no one will ever hear this part of the story."

He was feeling hungry now; but at first there was nothing he could think of on the island to eat but some unripe strawberries. Suddenly he thought of the gulls' nests he had passed on the other shore. There was an abundance of them, and he ran hastily towards the place. He soon filled his hat with them, but he was not yet hungry enough to eat them raw. He thought of the fire the men had made not far away; and carrying his hat full of the eggs, he hurried to the place. Some smoke was still rising from the pile of ashes, but was there enough fire left to enable him to kindle a new one? "Where there's smoke there's fire," he said to himself; "and we'll soon see."

He swept away the ashes, and was rejoiced to find

a few faintly glowing coals. He placed over them some dry leaves and branches, and in a few moments had a rousing fire. And it was thoroughly grateful too; for David had not yet recovered from his prolonged exertions in the river, and the water of the St. Lawrence is not warm, even in midsummer.

He arranged the gulls' eggs, and stood by the fire, chafing his hands, and striving to warm himself. The sun had disappeared, and the chill of the evening had come. He made a supper of the roasted eggs, and felt better. Without oars it would be useless to attempt to make his way in the night from the island. He must find some sheltered place in which to sleep. He hesitated about the fire at first. The smoke might arouse the attention of some passing boat or of the people on the shore. He soon concluded that this danger was not very imminent, and made arrangements to keep the fire until morning if possible.

He found a sheltered spot, and, in spite of the danger, was soon asleep. Several times he arose in the night, and replenished the fire, and in the early morning made another meal of gulls' eggs.

Then he gave his attention to the yawl. It was not water-logged, and the knife which the dwarf had given him came into good use. He made a plug for the hole he had cut in her side, and was satisfied that she would not leak. Next he cut a little sappling which would serve as a rude mast, and then, after the labor of an hour, fashioned from a limb

something which might serve as a rudder. His plan was to rig his jacket as a sail, and then make for the Canadian shore. The uniform he wore was that of the British sailor, as we know; and he trusted that if once he was safely on the land, somehow he might contrive to regain the American shore.

He soon pushed the yawl into the water, and found that she floated as well as ever. His jacket was a poor apology for a sail, but it was better than nothing. The wind was not blowing towards the shore, but his rudder would be sufficient to hold her in the course; and with high hopes the young soldier set sail. The yawl moved slowly but steadily on; and, as he had hoped, his rudder served its purpose.

"Hello!" he said, when he had left the island about a mile behind him, "my sail's unbuttoned. I'll fix that." He quickly started from his seat in the stern; but as he moved, the rude rudder slipped from his hands, and fell into the water. He made a quick effort to regain it, but in a moment it was beyond his reach. And he had nothing to help him now. The rudder was gone, and in a moment he saw that the wind was driving him towards the waters of the open lake.

CHAPTER XV

DAVID'S STRUGGLE

AT first David did not fully realize his danger. He made a quick movement to adjust his sail; but before he could reach it, a sudden gust of wind tore his coat from the mast, and it also fell into the lake. He leaned far over the side of the boat, but in a moment it was beyond his reach. Then it was that he began to feel alarmed. His rudder gone, his coat swept beyond his grasp into the water, the fresh breeze sweeping him on away from the shore which he had planned to gain, he now realized that he was helpless in an open boat, and was drifting rapidly away before the wind towards the open lake.

Almost dazed, he seated himself again, and watched the wake the yawl left behind her. Little white-caps appeared here and there on the waves, and the wind was freshening every moment. He had heard of men who had been swept out into the lake, and were never heard of again. This very spring, one of his own neighbors had been carried away in this manner; and the thought of him did not tend to soothe his feelings.

He was a resolute boy, however, and one who never easily gave way to his feelings. He soon roused himself, and began to think of what could be done. His knife was still in his pocket; and with this he began to fashion the little mast, which he slipped out of its place, into a rudder. It was so small that under the strong breeze the yawl apparently gave no heed to it. With all his efforts he could but slightly change her course, and soon saw that she still kept headed towards the open lake.

And he must be going quite swiftly too. The little island which he had left was now only a speck on the waters, and the Canadian shore was far away.

On the other side no land could be seen, and before him stretched the vast extent of the blue waters of Lake Ontario. It was not a cheering prospect before him. Hatless and coatless, with nothing he could use to control the course of the yawl, with the wind blowing stronger every moment, he was becoming thoroughly frightened now. The sun was warm; but the wind was cold, and he soon was shivering. If he felt that now, what would his condition be when the night shut down? And the waves were rising too; and the yawl, without a rudder or a sail, was rolling and tossing in a manner that increased his alarm every moment.

The island and the shore soon disappeared from sight, and he had no compass to indicate in which direction he was going.

The sun climbed higher into the heavens, and when noontime came he began to feel hungry. But there was not a mouthful of food on board. Even the gulls' eggs would be good now, he thought; but he had felt so confident in his ability to gain the Canadian shore that he had brought none with him. Thirst was something of which he had no fear, for the water of the lake would quench that; but the prospect of something to eat was not cheering. If the wind should drive him towards the shore, he knew that he soon could satisfy his wants; but that hope had long since disappeared. He was not positive in which direction he was moving; but as far as he could judge from the sun, he was not likely to see either shore again very soon. He was headed up the lake, and help was not to be found there. Then, too, the wind at any time might change; and as he had nothing with which to steer his craft, he might lose any advantage he had gained.

Meanwhile, the wind did not abate, and the yawl was driven steadily on before it. As nearly as he could judge, he must be moving at about the rate of two or three miles an hour. At that rate it would not be long before he would be beyond the course which the fleet of Sir James was following; and in his despair a British gunboat seemed to him almost like a haven of rest.

What would the young soldier have thought if he could have known of the fate of the crew of the Black

Snake from whom he had so recently escaped? That the gunboat should have become the prize of a party of American soldiers on the St. Lawrence was something of which he never even dreamed; but more than once he bitterly regretted his escape. If he had only waited a little longer he might have found a much better opportunity, and the only danger he would have had to face would have been that of a recapture.

Now to be taken prisoner again seemed a joy compared with the danger which threatened him. Hunger was making itself felt, and there was no prospect of aid. Perhaps he would drift on for a few days, and then the end would come; or the yawl might be overturned in the lake, and he go down, with no one near to hear his last call for help. David in his despair even pictured the drowning man and the overturned boat, and somehow it did not terrify him as it might have done at other times.

The long afternoon slowly passed, and the wind steadily held from the one direction. The rolling yawl was swept onward, and the monotony of it all became almost unendurable to him. He was helpless on the open lake, far from shore, and farther still from home and friends.

"Perhaps the wind will die down at sunset," thought David; although there was a fear that the very opposite would be true, for he had known many times when the wind, after blowing steadily

all day, had increased at night instead of dying away.

His fears proved to be true this time. As the sun sank lower, he saw great banks of clouds looming up in the sky. The waves were higher, and the wind was even stronger than before. Tired and hungry as he was, a feeling of despair came over him as he noted all these signs which he understood so well.

"There! It's just as I feared," he said when he felt a raindrop dash against his face. "It's going to storm, and from present appearances it's no light shower, either."

The sun had disappeared, and the darkness was becoming intense.

"What's that?" he said suddenly. His feet were wet, and he could hear the wash of the water inside the boat. "It's leaking, as I live! It's all over with me," he groaned.

Suddenly he thought of the plug he had made. Perhaps it had worked loose. He felt along the side until his hand came to the hole he had cut when he had sunk the yawl back by the island. Yes; it was as he had feared. The plug was gone, and the water at every roll of the boat made its way in. Was the plug inside the boat? He knew he had driven it from that side; and if it could be found, there might be hope for him yet.

He crept along on the bottom, groping with his

hands, all unmindful of the fact that he was kneeling in several inches of water. He was delighted when in a few moments his hand touched the plug, which was floating about, having worked loose and fallen inside. He quickly grasped it, and with his heavy knife drove it into the cut with all the strength he could exert.

Then kneeling once more, he began to bail out the water with his hands. The pitching boat again and again threw him from one side to the other, but still he worked on. The rain was falling steadily now, and the danger was increased by the water which the yawl shipped at frequent intervals. He worked on, stopping occasionally to rest; but soon some wave would break over the side, and the boy and boat would be almost deluged. Then he would resume his labors in sheer desperation, and strive to free the boat of a portion of its burden by dipping out the water with his hands. His back ached, his arms were stiff and sore, and his body, thoroughly drenched now, was trembling with the cold. Still he worked on. The storm did not abate; and although the wind had fallen somewhat, the rain continued to fall.

It was a night of terror. More than once he thought the yawl would be capsized; but each time she righted herself, and the peril passed. She was stanch and strong, and the desperate lad took what little comfort he could from that fact. How the

night ever passed he never could tell. He bailed until his aching body compelled him to stop for rest, and then resumed his labors. It was a struggle for life. Sometimes, almost in utter despair, he would feel like giving up. What could he hope to gain in a struggle of that kind? But each time his courage and determination came back, and he would take up his task again.

He had no means by which to measure the passing of the hours. Indeed, he scarcely thought of time at all. It was merely one long desperate struggle in the darkness to keep the little yawl afloat.

At last when the morning drew near, though David had no thought of that at the time, the rain ceased. The wind also died away; and although the darkness was as thick as ever, somehow he felt that his labors were at an end. Sleep was out of the question; but he seated himself in the stern, and almost in a dazed condition waited.

Sometimes he counted what he thought must be the seconds as they passed. Sometimes he thought of his home; and the vision of his mother, and the knowledge of her sorrow if anything should happen to him, served to nerve his heart for a stronger endurance. He had been gone from home now a long time; but he was still in the land of the living, and he must make the most of that. Sometimes he sat motionless, his head dropping forward on his chest, not thinking at all, and hardly conscious of what

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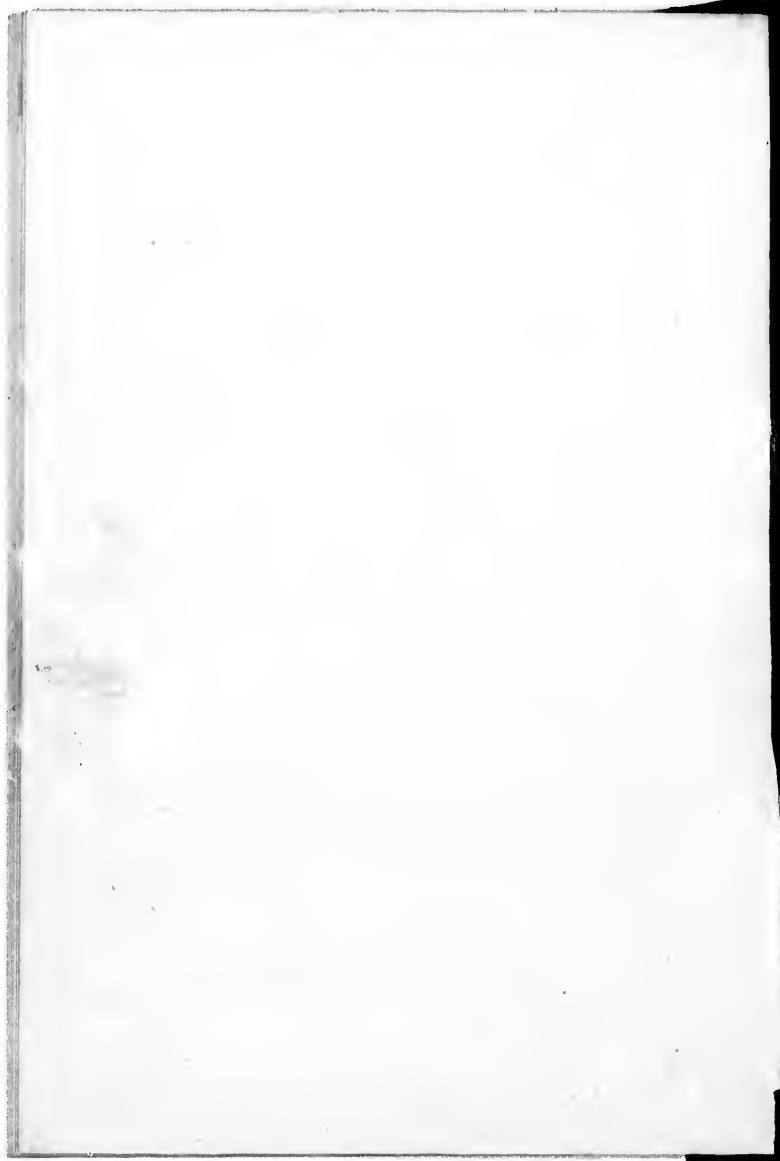
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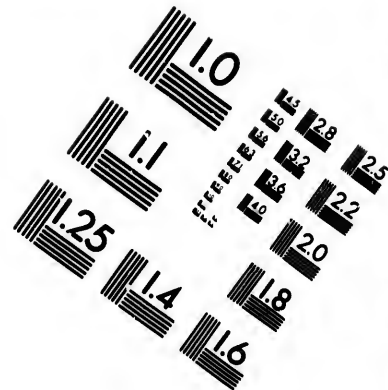
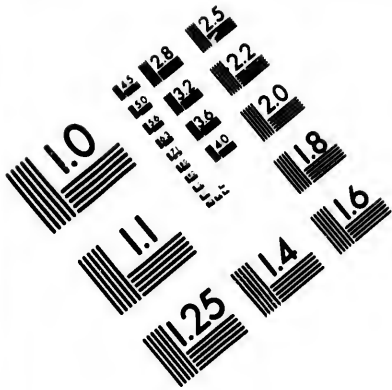
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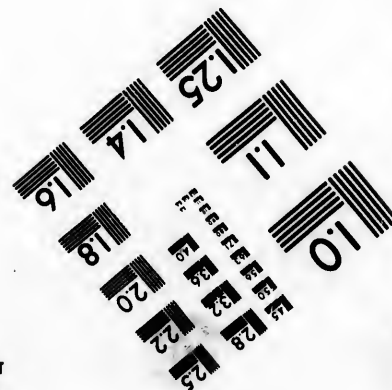
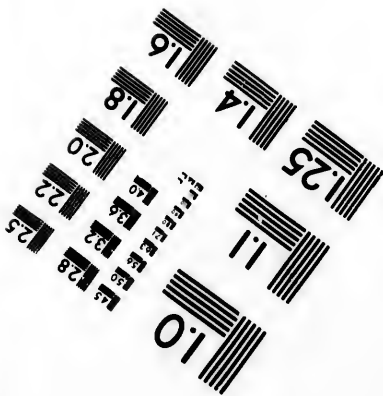
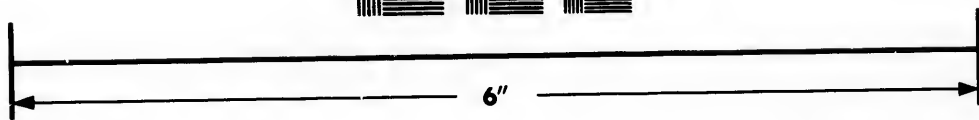
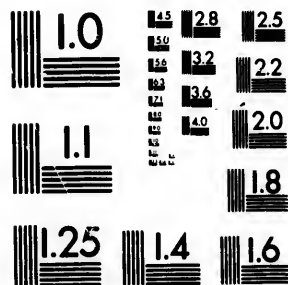
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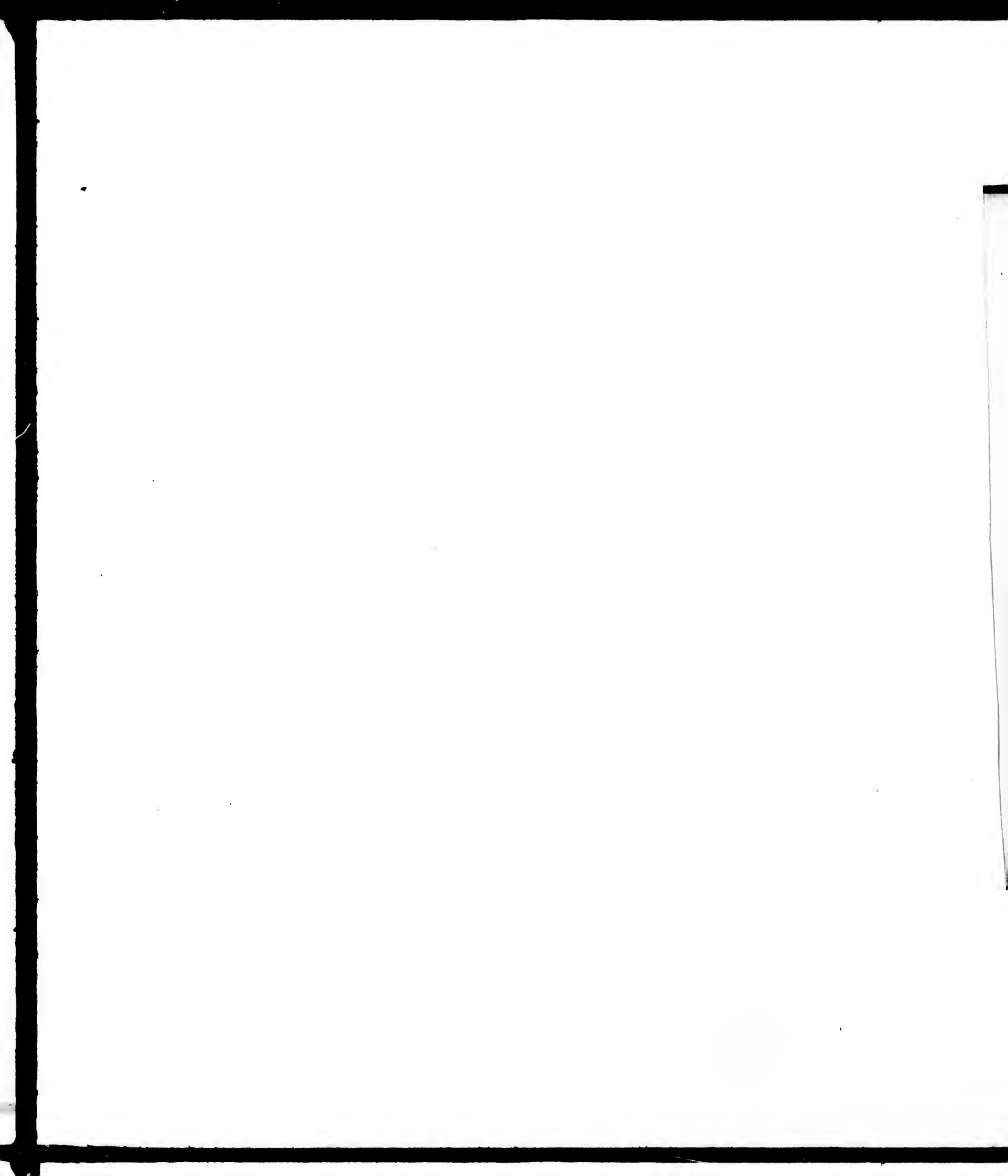
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was occurring about him. Now that the waves had fallen somewhat, the monotonous sounds of the water lapping the sides of the yawl seemed to soothe his feelings for a time; but he would be recalled to himself with a start when some wave larger than the others would give the boat a sudden lurch, and almost throw him from his seat.

What was that? He could see a streak of light low in the sky. It must be the morning, and there was the east. He could perceive a little now of the direction in which he was moving, and he must retain that in his mind. For the time even his hunger was forgotten, and he was unmindful of the danger in his eagerness for the fuller light to come and reveal his situation to him. There was a hope in his heart that he might see land somewhere; and if he did, he somehow thought he would be able to gain it.

Eagerly now he waited for the sun to appear, his impatience increasing every moment. Slowly but steadily the light crept up the sky. Now he could see about him, but it was not yet clear enough to enable him to look far away. The streaks of light spread, and the dawn soon passed into day.

Then David arose in the yawl, and looked about him. He gazed intently in every direction, and then with something that sounded very like a sob sank into his seat again, and buried his face in his hands. Not a sign of land could be seen! Nothing but the

waste of waters far as the eye could see on every side. With the dying away of the wind the waves had fallen, and the surface of the lake was as smooth as that of a pond in summer. But in all the vision, there was not one ray of hope for the weary boy. He was drifting on the lake, beyond the sight of land, without an oar or sail, and with nothing to satisfy his hunger, which now was becoming intense. In utter despair he slid from his seat to the bottom of the boat, and in his complete exhaustion was soon asleep.

How long he slept he had no means of knowing. He awakened with a start, and when he opened his eyes, saw the rough-looking face of a stranger peering down into his own.

CHAPTER XVI

A NEW PROJECT

LIEUTENANT GREGORY'S party rowed but a short distance along the shore before they sought the shelter of a little cove, and hastily drew the gigs up on the land. In spite of the danger threatening them, the most of the exhausted men threw themselves upon the ground; and in a few minutes many of them were sleeping as only worn-out men can.

The young lieutenant, however, had no thought of resting. Calling Andrew Field to him, they hastened to the shore along by which they thought the gunboat would pass, and in a brief time had the satisfaction of seeing their pursuers go past them.

Returning to the place where they had left the men, a hurried consultation among the leaders followed. "They'll go up to the head of Grenadier," said Vaughn; "and when they find they don't overhaul us, my opinion is that they'll conclude that we've gone up the other side of the island, and they'll come back on this side."

"Then, they'll be likely to find us here if we wait," said the lieutenant.

"Not necessarily," replied Vaughn. "The gigs are high up on shore, and it's so dark they can't see them. They'll keep a pretty sharp lookout, though."

"That's the very thing I'm afraid of," said the lieutenant. "I've no mind to stay here, and wait for them to come and take us."

"The men are so exhausted they can't do much," said Andrew.

"I know it," replied the lieutenant; "but we'd better strain a point now than fall into the hands of the British. Now, my plan is this: I'll station a guard on each side of the island about a quarter of a mile up, and they can give us word if the gunboat comes back on either side. If it doesn't come back at all, we'll be in a worse box still."

"But they never can bring us word in time," interrupted Vaughn. "Suppose they do get sight of the gunboat, what good will it do? They can't get back in time to give us a start."

"I won't have them come back," said the lieutenant.

"How will you fix it, then?"

"I'll have the men hoot like an owl. If the gunboat comes back the way it went up, the lookout can hoot twice. If they come on this side, he can hoot three times. We can then put out at once, and start up the other side; and he can cut across the island, and we can pick him up on the way out."

The proposal was agreed to; and Andrew was sta-

tioned as one guard, and Elijah as the other. The lieutenant remained on guard at the camp, for in his anxiety he was not willing to intrust the task to any one else.

The cords that bound the prisoners' hands were looked to carefully, and then the other leaders lay down with the men.

Lieutenant Gregory walked slowly back and forth along the shore. It was a trying time for him. Success beyond his highest expectations had followed his efforts thus far; and now if only he could succeed in bringing the captured arms and prisoners safely to Sackett's Harbor, he felt that his own name would be safe, and a new impetus given the cause.

When two hours had passed, and the silence was still unbroken, he began to feel alarmed. "I know the boys are tired out, but I hope they haven't fallen asleep," he said to himself.

Another hour passed, and still another. Not a sound had been heard except that made by the river and the wind. The gunboat must have passed out into the lake. This would greatly complicate matters, and they could not make an attempt to return to Chauncey's fleet for some time yet.

He was becoming impatient. It was after midnight now, and the men were sleeping soundly. That was good, he thought, as in the event of quick action being demanded they could respond to it, for they would in a measure be rested.

Suddenly the hoot of an owl sounded. Three times it was heard, and then after a brief silence the three weird sounds were heard again. "That means the gunboat is coming back on this side," he thought; and in a moment he roused the sleeping men, the gigs were pushed into the river, the prisoners were all placed on board, and the men began to row with long and silent strokes. Back around the point they moved, then started up the river by the other shore of the island.

Lieutenant Gregory kept his own gig close in shore, and soon, attracted by the hooting of an owl, rested, when he saw two figures on the shore, who he hastily concluded must be Andrew and Elijah. They were at once taken on board, and then the men resumed their work at the oars.

It was just daybreak when the gigs came out into the lake. Not a boat was in sight; and then spreading their sails, they sped away for Sackett's Harbor, where they arrived safely in the afternoon.

Great was the rejoicing there when the party arrived with their prisoners and stores. For a time the restlessness of the men at the post ceased; and the story of the expedition was told and retold, and furnished a theme of conversation better than that offered by the delay of their leaders. News travelled slowly in those days, and it was almost exactly twenty years later when Congress voted Lieutenant Gregory and his men three thousand dollars as a

reward for their success in capturing the Black Snake!

Meanwhile, the men at Sackett's Harbor soon ceased to talk of the expedition, and returned to their complaints at the delay of their leaders. The ship-builders were working day and night; but the new war-vessels were not yet ready to put to sea, and without them there would be little use in attempting to contend with the powerful and well-equipped fleet of Sir James Yeo. The rebellion among the men grew worse; and as if to add to the confusion, Commodore Chauncey fell sick, and was unable to attend to his duties.

A few days after the return to Sackett's Harbor, Lieutenant Gregory again sought out Andrew Field, and a long conversation followed.

"It's my humble opinion," said the lieutenant, "that what ails the commodore is the grumbling of the men. He's afraid of trouble ahead."

"Probably you're right," replied Andrew; "but I don't see that it can be helped. We can't do anything till the frigate and brigs are ready."

"Oh, yes, we can!" answered the lieutenant; "and that's just what I wanted to talk with you about. The commodore's just been telling me how he has had word that there's a schooner on the stocks over near Kingston; and he says this scuttling of the Black Snake has put the British on nettles. Now, if we could manage to get over there and set fire

to that schooner, he says we'd do a double duty. We'd hurt the British; and if we could only succeed, we'd give our men something more to talk about, and then in a few days now he'll be all ready to put to sea, and the music will begin."

The young officer then went on to explain the details of the proposed expedition; and the very next day the same party which had made the voyage down the St. Lawrence left Sackett's Harbor to try to carry out the plan of the young lieutenant concerning the new schooner. The utmost secrecy was used, and no one save a few of the leaders at the post knew anything of the plan or project. Smith, who had given the information concerning the new schooner to the commodore, was one of the men in the gigs now, and he became both pilot and guide.

It was late in the afternoon when the party landed on a little island not far from the Canadian shore. Although Andrew Field was in entire ignorance of the fact, it was the very island where his brother David had been, and from which he had made his escape in the manner we already know.

The gigs were drawn up on shore, and concealed among the bushes. The few little houses which composed the hamlet they were seeking could be dimly seen when they looked across the water to the shores of Canada. No one knew just where the schooner was, but Smith assured them that it was on the shore near this little settlement. Nothing could be done

until the darkness came, and the men meanwhile were free to move about on the island as they chose.

Our three boys had left their companions, and were wandering over the island, picking some of the strawberries, which were ripe now. Henry was kneeling on the ground, busily engaged in this occupation, when his eye fell upon a small piece of bright-colored linen, half concealed in the grass. He drew it forth, saying to himself, "Somebody's been here before. I wonder who it was?" Suddenly he held up the neckerchief, and examined it more closely. In a moment he ran to join the other boys, who were not far away; and as he drew near he shouted, "Andrew! Andrew Field! Look at this, will you?" at the same time holding forth to view the bright-colored piece of linen he had found.

"I don't see anything very remarkable about that," replied Andrew coolly, taking the neckerchief.

"You don't? Well, look again, will you?"

Suddenly Andrew gave a start. "It looks like the one David wore," he said slowly; "but it can't be. The men we took down the St. Lawrence said all the prisoners had been sent on to Kingston."

"That doesn't make any difference," replied Henry. "That's Dave's neckerchief I know; for it's one I traded with him. I know the mark I made on it."

"It can't be," replied Andrew slowly. "What would he be doing here?"

"I don't know anything about that," said Henry. "All I know is that that neckerchief belonged to Dave Field. Now, where is he?"

"I only wish I knew," replied Andrew sadly, as they turned and sought the other men.

No fire was kindled when evening came, as they wished nothing to be done to attract attention on the main shore. Soon after supper they noticed a fire burning in the woods at a distance of a half-mile from the hamlet, as nearly as they could judge.

Smith insisted that it must be some one burning brush, but the lieutenant was fearful that it might be a signal of some kind. "Andrew," said he, "can't you and the boys go over and find out what that fire means? We don't want to make any false moves, or fall into any trap. Take your guns along with you."

"We'll try and find out for you," replied Andrew; and in a few minutes he and the two boys were rowing towards the light. They decided not to approach it directly, but landing a little below, drew the boat up on shore, and started through the woods.

They moved cautiously; for they did not know how many might be about the fire, and they had no desire to incur any unnecessary risks. They soon arrived at a place from which they could look down upon the fire without being seen themselves.

"Huh!" whispered Henry, "it's just as I thought. It's only a boy burning logs for potash. Many's the

time I've done that myself. They fetch a good price, too, now."

"Keep still!" replied Andrew in a low voice. "You two boys stay right here where you are. Keep your guns ready, and if I call, you come, and come quick too."

Andrew advanced cautiously; and as he drew near the fire, he stepped upon a fallen branch, which snapped beneath his feet.

"Get out o' that," shouted the boy. "Be ye a wolf or a hedgehog?"

"It's neither," said Andrew in reply, as he stepped forth into the light. The startled boy turned as if to run, but waited a moment as Andrew called to him.

"Who be ye?" said the boy. "I thought ye was a wolf. There's been one prowlin' round."

"I just stopped here to talk with you," replied Andrew. "What are you doing?"

"Makin' potash; can't ye see?" answered the lad, now somewhat reassured, and turning to throw some fresh logs on the fire. "Whar'd ye come from?"

"Oh! from over here to see the schooner. Where is she?"

"She's up on the stocks," replied the boy, eying the stranger suspiciously.

"They say she's a beauty."

"That's jest what she is. I don't know what Sir James wants o' her, though. They say as how the

Yankees have crawled into a hole, and are a-tryin' to pull the hole in after 'em now?"

"Can you take me to her?"

"That's what I can, but I won't. I've got to tend the potash, or my uncle'll make it hotter than this fire fer me. He said he would."

"I can't help that; you'll have to go with me. Come on, boys!" His companions stepped quickly from behind the trees as he spoke, and advanced towards the fire. The startled boy gave one quick glance at them, then placing his fingers in his mouth, whistled shrilly, and turned to run towards the forest.

CHAPTER XVII

A NIGHT OF TERROR

THE frightened lad had taken but a few steps before the three boys overtook him, and he was a prisoner. Sternly bidding him to be silent, Andrew said to his companions, "Come on; we'll make for the gig. It won't do to go back to the fire. Some one must be near here, or this fellow wouldn't have whistled."

The boys ran along the shore, compelling their young prisoner to keep pace with them, and soon arrived at the place where their boat had been left. Hastily embarking, they did not breathe freely until a good half-mile had been placed between them and the shore. As yet the shrill call of the boy had received no reply. They could see that the fire was still burning, and no one was in pursuit of them.

In a few minutes they arrived with their prisoner at the island, and a hurried consultation followed. The lad was trembling with fear when he was taken before the lieutenant; but the young officer soon contrived to calm him enough to compel him to listen to his questions, and to make intelligent replies.

"We've found the place, men," said Lieutenant Gregory, when he had finished his conversation with the boy. "The schooner's here, and almost ready for the launching. If the lad tells the truth, most of the men have gone to Kingston for supplies, and we've come just in the nick of time. We'll make ready and start at once."

Only a few minutes passed before the gigs were manned, and the party was rowing over the lake towards the hamlet where the unfinished schooner lay on the stocks. Not a word was spoken during the passage. There was no moon, but there was sufficient light to enable them to see some distance before them. The surface of the lake was ruffled by a slight breeze, and the few clouds overhead indicated that more might soon be expected.

They were a determined body of men, and the success which had attended their efforts in their expedition down the St. Lawrence furnished an inspiration for their present task. They all realized their danger; for they were trusting largely to the information the lad had given, and who now was in Lieutenant Gregory's boat. If he had spoken falsely, they might be facing a peril greater than any they had met. There was nothing to be done except to go on, however; and the three boats, near together, kept on their way towards the shore.

They soon arrived at the place indicated by the young prisoner, and all could plainly see the outlines

of the schooner resting on the stocks. She was larger than they had thought, and the possibility of destroying her increased the eagerness of all the men.

The first thing to be done was to ascertain whether any guards had been stationed near her or not. The young lieutenant took this duty upon himself; and soon returning to the men he had left by the shore, he said, "Not a guard is there, men. They've felt so sure of themselves that the schooner's all alone. Now, this boy says there are five houses here. I am going to detail ten men to look after them. I want a guard of two stationed before each house. Don't make any noise, and take your places at once. If any one comes out of the houses, stop him; and if he doesn't obey, shoot him at once. But don't shoot if you can help it, for the quieter we can keep, the better. Then I want two men to stand as a guard on the shore, one a little way above the schooner and one a little below, to give us warning if any one approaches from there."

The assignments were soon made, and each knew just what was to be expected of him. Elijah and Henry were to be the guards in front of one of the houses; while Andrew was to accompany the lieutenant, and attempt to set fire to the schooner.

"Now, then," said the leader in a low voice; and the men silently moved up from the shore. The night was dark, but they had no difficulty in making their way; and Elijah and Henry were soon left in

the positions they had taken before one of the small log houses that made up the hamlet. They did not know whether any one was inside or not, as there was no light within, nor anything to indicate the presence of men; but the lieutenant had determined to avoid all possible risks, and their vigil must be kept.

The time slowly passed, the boys keeping their eyes fixed upon the place where they knew the schooner was, hoping each moment to see the blaze appear. They were impatient young soldiers, and this waiting was the most difficult of tasks. Occasionally they glanced about them, but the great silent trees and the little house were all that could be seen.

"What's the trouble with those men?" whispered Henry at last. "They're waiting for sunrise, I guess, so they can see to strike a spark."

"Hush!" whispered Elijah in reply. "They're doing the best they can."

And the young guard was right. The men were doing their best. They had stealthily approached the silent schooner, and once more tried to satisfy themselves that no guards were on board before they began their work. None were found; and then they turned into the little house near by, which the builders plainly used as a shop. They could find nothing there but the ship carpenters' tools, and these were scarcely worth the taking. Going on board the schooner, they soon began their labors. They col-

lected a pile of shavings and small pieces of the scattered timbers in the hold. When a quantity sufficient to suit the lieutenant had been gathered, bidding the men to stand back, he bent low over the mass, and soon a spark fell from his hands. A little tongue of flame appeared, and the men hastily made their way up on deck. They waited for the flames to appear, but none came. Uttering an impatient exclamation, the lieutenant again went below. The fire was out!

Once more, and with greater pains, he started a fire, and waited until the smoke compelled him to seek the deck above. This time there was no failure. Great volumes of smoke began to pour forth through the hatchway. The flames soon appeared through the seams in the deck. They began to creep along the rail, and to climb the masts. They crackled and snapped and roared, and the schooner was soon a mass of flames that threw their light in fantastic forms far out over the water.

The party were standing on the shore watching the burning vessel, and congratulating themselves upon the success which had attended their efforts. Not a disturbance had been made, nor thus far had a man appeared to interfere with them in their labor.

"It's time we were getting out of this," said the lieutenant, watching the flames, which now had crept up to the tops of the masts, and were darting as if in frantic efforts to climb even higher. "We've done

our work, and we'd better go." - He was speaking confidently now, and lingered, even as he spoke, to look again at the blaze before him. It was a sight to hold any one. The great roaring flames and vast clouds of smoke came forth together. In the flickering light, the forms of the men took on fantastic shapes, and the entire scene was weird and wild.

"We must go," said the lieutenant again; and placing his fingers in his mouth, he whistled the signal which had been agreed upon as a summons for his band. In a moment the men came running through the darkness from the houses where they had been stationed as guards, eager to be near the fire and witness the great conflagration.

"Here comes Vaughn," said the lieutenant as the sailing-master came running down the shore almost breathless. "What's the hurry, Mr. Vaughn?" he said, laughing, as the man approached. "You're in as great a pucker as Henry here, or Elijah." He was feeling so elated over his success that he was disposed to be easy and familiar with all the men.

"I am in a hurry," gasped Vaughn, "and I've need to be. Just look out on the lake, will you?"

The men quickly turned, and looked in the direction he indicated. They leaped upon the bank and looked again. Not a word was spoken for a moment; and then Lieutenant Gregory sharply called, "Man the gigs! Every man to his place! Pull for your lives!"

In the light of the burning schooner he could see a gunboat swiftly approaching. It was under full sail, and there could be no doubt about her intentions. She was coming to avenge the loss of the schooner.

In their desperation the men were in their places in a moment, and began to row with all their strength along by the shore. They hoped by making their way out in that manner that possibly in the darkness their presence might not be discovered by the gunboat. "That's always my luck," groaned the young leader. "Just to get things in good shape, and then have them all knocked over." He was pulling with the men, and spoke in low tones to Andrew, who was seated next to him.

"Maybe they won't see us," replied Andrew. "They may make for the shore, anyway, in hopes of putting out the fire." But just then, as if in mockery of his words, one of the tall masts of the burning schooner fell with a great crash, and the sparks and flames flew high in the air.

"Not much doubt about their intentions now," said the lieutenant. They could see the gunboat, which had come farther up into the light as she changed her course and headed directly towards them. A moment later and her great gun spoke, and the ball came skipping over the water not far away from the gigs.

"She's sighted us," called the lieutenant to the

men in the other boats. "She's after us too. Now do your prettiest, men! Don't get caught by the Britisher!"

The men gave way with a will. As they left behind them the burning schooner, they saw that the light of the fire was sufficient to enable them to look some distance in every direction. And there, not more than a half-mile away, was the gunboat, in hot pursuit of them. Her white sails gave her almost a ghostly appearance, and the stiff breeze swept her swiftly onward.

"It was that boy," groaned Andrew. "He knew some men were near, and made off for them."

"That's just it," replied the lieutenant. "The little rascal! I wish I had him here now! I don't know what I ever let him go for when we landed. He's had a good hour to work his mischief in. He's done damage enough for one night."

There was now, however, no time for conversation. Behind them they could see the gunboat, and Andrew's heart sank when he perceived that she was gaining upon them. The wind was all in her favor, and what chance would they have in such a contest? And it did seem hard too. Here, after they had crossed the lake in safety, and just accomplished the purpose of the expedition, to find themselves close under the gun of a pursuing boat, and everything in her favor too. There was one comforting thought, however, and that was that the

new schooner was ruined. She, at least, would never be a menace to Chauncey's fleet.

Far away in the distance he could see the dull and heavy glow of the fire, and an occasional darting of the flames showed that the end had almost come. Meanwhile the men in desperation rowed on. This being chased by British gunboats was becoming monotonous, but the present pursuit was a stern reality. The men were breathing hard. Their bodies were dripping with perspiration, and their hands soon were raw and bleeding. Still, on and on they rowed, pulling desperately at the oars, determined to escape if it lay within their power.

"If the wind doesn't die down soon, we're lost," groaned Lieutenant Gregory. Andrew made no reply. All his breath and strength were needed now in his labor, and he could not reply to the lieutenant's words.

On and on the men rowed, never complaining, nor even stopping for rest. They had escaped in a previous chase, and what had been done could be done again. Their leader knew, however, that their strength could not last long if the present desperate efforts were maintained. But what could he do? Behind them was the British gunboat, holding to her course with the persistence of fate itself.

"The wind's dying out, Andrew," the lieutenant hoarsely whispered a little later; but Andrew still did not heed his words. His arms ached, and his

hands were bleeding; but he still was working as if he were a machine.

The lieutenant's words were true, however. The wind had fallen, and the surface of the lake soon became smoother. Still on and on rowed the men. They had headed for the open lake, taking no heed of direction, the one thought in the minds of all being to escape by any means whatsoever from their immediate pursuers.

For an hour their efforts were not relaxed, but then the gunboat could no longer be seen. Then a rest was had, the sails were set, and rowing by turns and sailing all the time, the long night at last passed. They did not know where they were, but followed the directions of the compass, and headed for the place where they supposed the American shore must lie. It was a night of struggle and terror; but the resolute men kept on, for life itself depended upon their immediate efforts.

It was upon an almost exhausted band of men that the morning sun looked down when it first appeared. Their faces were haggard, and marked with suffering. But what did that matter when far off to their left they saw a low-lying shore which, although it was unfamiliar, must be, so every one thought, that of home.

"There's the shore," said Andrew, rubbing his aching head; "but there's something else too. Look out on the lake."

They all turned as he spoke, and not far away the white sails of a boat of some kind appeared. Not a word was spoken for a moment, as all gazed at the object. Was she friend or foe? Upon the solution of that question all their immediate hopes depended.

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CHAPTER XVIII

A VISITOR

SEVERAL minutes elapsed before David could fully realize where he was. The rough face peering into his own seemed to have a kindly expression, and he was conscious of a sense of sympathy in the words he heard; but just what it all meant, at first he could not determine.

The summer sun was high in the heavens. The calm was still on the waters; and there had been just motion enough in the little waves to rock his boat gently, as a mother might the cradle of her babe. He had slept long and hard, and the awakening had been so sudden that when he sat upright in the boat he could find no words with which to reply to the hail of the stranger.

"Come, my hearty," said the man again, speaking in a rough, deep tone that was not in the least displeasing, "give an account o' yerself. This is no place to swing yer hammock. It's high noon, and no man has a right to sleep then. Leastwise, that's the way I feel about it. I told the cap'in this here yawl might have a cargo aboard."

Still David made no reply. He was awake now, and glancing over the lake he saw not far away a little schooner. It was plain that she was a war-vessel of some kind; and when he made out her name, the Magnet, he recalled at once the fact that she was one of the fleet of Sir James Yeo, and that he had frequently heard of her.

"What boat's that?" he at last managed to say.

"She's the Magnet, though I don't like to call her that. Last year she was the Sydney Smith; but these boats on the lake have a trick of changin' their names most as often as Tom Spilbury's widow; that's about once a year or so. But who are you? and how'd ye come to be out here alone?"

David glanced again carefully at the man before he replied. He wore the uniform of the British sailor, and doubtless was one of the crew of the Magnet. He himself was without a coat or jacket, and yet such clothing as he had on was that which belonged to a sailor of the same navy. He had been one of the crew of the Black Snake, or had been selected for that work; and although he had escaped from her, here he was again in the power of the British sailors. Perhaps his best plan would be to remain silent, and apparently enter into the company of the men as if he belonged there.

"I've been in this yawl for a day and a half now, and I've had nothing to eat. Can't you take me on board the Magnet?"

"I'll take ye aboard the Sydney Smith. Nuffin' to eat fer two days? Ye must be hungry-like. I'd be, if I was in that fix."

"I am; and the sooner I'm aboard the Magnet, or Smith, or whatever you call her, the better."

"I'll have ye there in a wink," replied the sailor, as he made fast the painter of David's boat, and began to row towards the schooner. Even then his propensity for conversation apparently could not be controlled, and soon he began to talk again.

"I see ye wear a part o' the right dress, but what ye doin' without a jacket? Ye wasn't out in that storm last night, was ye? My! it blew great guns! And ye hain't had nothin' to eat, ye say?"

"No," replied David, heeding only the last question, and glad to be able to leave the others unanswered for the present; "I've had nothing to eat, and I didn't have a sail, or an oar either."

"Ye don't say so!" replied the sailor in astonishment. "I shall want to hear all about it as soon as ye have a talk with the cap'n." The boats were alongside the schooner now, and a crowd of men were near the rail, curiously observing them.

In a moment David and his companion were on board, and the captain was listening to the sailor's story. "That's all I know about it, Captain," he said, when he had told the few facts he had gained. "The lad says as how he hasn't had a mouthful to eat in most two days."

"Take him below," said the captain; "and as soon as he's been fed, bring him to me."

"Be keerful, be keerful," said the sailor to David after he had been ravenously eating for a few minutes; "ye don't want too much aboard afore yer ballast's fixed."

David knew he ought to heed the warning, but it required a strong effort of his will to leave the food which the cook had set before him in the galley. "I'll go and see the captain now," he said as he arose.

"Not afore yer fixed out with a jacket. Ye don't look a bit purty now; besides, it's agin orders to stand up afore the captain in your shirt-sleeves. I'll fix ye out if ye'll come with me."

The kind-hearted sailor soon had his young charge dressed up as a British sailor lad ought to be according to his standard, and then together they sought the captain's cabin.

"That will do, Jack," said the captain when he saw that the sailor was minded to remain and listen to the conversation. "He's as full of curiosity as any old granny," he added, turning to David, when the sailor had left the cabin. "Now, my lad, tell me about yourself."

"There isn't very much to tell. I was driven out upon the open lake yesterday, from down near the St. Lawrence, or at least over by the Canadian shore, not far from Kingston."

"Why, lad, that's fifty or sixty miles from here!" said the captain suspiciously. "You don't mean to say you were out in the storm last night?"

"Yes, sir; and without a sail or oar or rudder," and David went on to give an outline of his adventures on the lake.

"And you say you were one of the crew of one of our gunboats?" inquired the captain, when David's story was ended. "What was her name? and who was her commander?"

There was a ring of suspicion in the captain's tones that was not very reassuring to David.

"She was the Black Snake, and Captain Landon was in command of her."

"That's right. Now, how large a crew had she? and where was she bound?"

"Counting me, there were nineteen. She was bound on a trip down the St. Lawrence, to help some of the supply-boats up the river from Montreal."

"Right again. But how came you to leave her? That's what I don't understand."

"I'd started for the Canadian shore; but a squall struck me, and the oar I was using as a rudder slipped out of my hands, and the wind tore my sail away."

"Why didn't they help you out? They were close by."

"No; they were on the other side of the island, and couldn't see me."

David felt that what he said was true, although it was not the whole truth about himself; but he strove to justify himself for his words by the dangerous predicament in which he was. War was an evil at best, and he must take things as he found them.

The captain of the Magnet plied him with many questions more; but David managed somehow to satisfy him, in a measure at least, and finally he said, "Well, go and report to Jack again, and he'll assign you to a mess. Young man," he added sternly, "if I thought there was any trick in all this, I'd blow you into flinders, if I had to use every one of the Magnet's twelve guns." He stopped, and looked keenly at David; but the lad bore the scrutiny well, and soon saluted, and left the cabin to find again his friend Jack. He was suspiciously near the cabin door, and David smiled when he thought of the possibility of his having been trying to overhear the conversation between himself and the captain; but whether that had been true or not, he soon found himself compelled to go over the story again for the benefit of Jack. The sailor listened with many expressions of astonishment, and as soon as the story was ended immediately began to rehearse it to his companions. David had contrived to keep near enough to the exact facts in the case to make his story plausible, and he received many expressions of praise for the manner in which he had contrived

to remain afloat during the storm of the preceding night.

His position certainly was better than it had been in a little yawl, without sail, rudder, or food, and adrift on the open lake. He was not regarded as a prisoner, although he could but feel that some of the men were in a measure suspicious of him. But on board the Magnet he had as much liberty as any of the sailors, and was looked upon as one of the crew. But what a place for an ardent young American to be in! — a member of the crew of the Magnet, one of the most active of Yeo's fleet, and now cruising about the lake, and soon to start for Niagara!

More than once in the following week David almost let slip some word that would have betrayed him. When the conversation of the sailors turned upon the Yankee fleet, and they all laughed at what they called the cowardice of Commodore Chauncey in remaining within the shelter of Sackett's Harbor, he several times nearly uttered the angry exclamation that rose upon his lips, but somehow he managed to restrain himself just in time.

Meanwhile he entered heartily into the work on board, and his willing spirit and cheerful manner soon won for him the friendship of the men and the confidence of the officers; so that when a week had gone by, and the Magnet started on her voyage towards Niagara, he somehow felt that no one was then suspicious of him.

He had, however, abandoned none of his intentions to escape, and was resolved that when the right occasion presented itself he would be quick to seize it. As the days passed, he began to fear that none would soon come. Still, he had hopes that come it would, some time, and meanwhile tried to possess his soul in patience.

"We're off Sodus now," said Jack to him late one afternoon, when the Magnet came to anchor about a half-mile off from the shore. "I hear as how we're going to lay by here for the night. I wish we could go ashore."

"So do I," said David eagerly. "I wonder if the captain wouldn't let us. Not that I'm so very anxious to go myself," he added, for fear that his eagerness might be misinterpreted, "but some garden stuff would taste good."

"That's what it would," replied Jack. "But look there. Some one's coming out from the shore."

David turned at the words of companion, and could see a little canoe between the schooner and the shore. There was only one man in it, but under his skilful strokes the light little craft sped rapidly on. And it was making for the Magnet; there could be no doubt about that. More of the sailors came and stood by their side, and were watching the swiftly moving canoe. There were wild thoughts in David's mind. If he could only get that canoe, and make for the shore, he would be free. He realized soon

how worse than foolish were all such projects, and turned again to watch the stranger.

"Perhaps that canoe's what the cap'n's waiting here for," said one of the sailors.

"Like as not," growled another. "'This boat stops at Podunk,' I almost expected to hear some one call out when the Magnet came to anchor here. Mebbe this is the boat we connect with."

The men laughed, but made no reply. "It's an Indian, a live Indian," said one of the men suddenly.

"Yes, and he's red too. Didn't ye ever see one afore?" replied Jack.

David was giving no heed to the conversation, for he was eagerly following the movements of the canoe now. He, too, had recognized the occupant as an Indian, but there were other thoughts in his mind as well.

Meanwhile, the Indian, apparently unconscious of all the interest he was arousing, had paddled in near the schooner. In a moment he climbed on board, and drew the light little canoe up after him. As he turned, David Field found himself face to face with his old acquaintance Garangula.

CHAPTER XIX

HOSTILE FRIENDS

A STARTLED expression came over David's face as soon as he recognized the visitor, and his first feeling was one of alarm. If Garangula should show that he knew the young sailor, his position might become far more dangerous; for while David had striven to do his work on board the schooner well, there were times when he suspected that the captain did not feel at all sure of his latest recruit. It had been long since he had looked upon the face of an old acquaintance; and the sight of the young Indian moved him strongly, bringing back, as it did, the memories of his home, and the days when he was a light-hearted lad, and free to come and go as he chose.

Garangula's face, however, showed no surprise; and in a moment he turned from David, and glanced slowly from one man to another in the crowd which had quickly assembled about him. His dark eyes had a look of mild surprise in them, but gave no tokens that the young warrior recognized any of the men before him. The captain here stepped forward,

and motioned for Garangula to follow him into the cabin; and in a brief time both had left the deck and gone below.

"What's the trouble, Davie, my lad?" said Jack. "You look as if you had seen a ghost. Didn't you ever see a live Indian before?"

"There's no trouble," replied David. "I didn't know I ever looked like a ghost before. Yes; I've seen lots of Indians, but I was wondering what this one could want of us."

"No man on earth knows," said Jack. "They're an uncertain lot, the redskins. We've got word, though, that Red Jacket has gone up to Niagara with about six hundred of his warriors. I thought the Yanks didn't believe in using them, but all they lacked was the chance. They'll use them as quick as anybody if they can only get them."

"No, they won't," said David sharply. "Just look at Tecumseh. Who ever heard of civilized men letting men in as the British did him at Detroit. And we won't get over the River Raisin very soon, either."

"Oh! we won't, won't we?" Jack had a quizzical expression on his face as he spoke, and instantly David realized that he had betrayed himself by his hasty expression. His face flushed, and he could not conceal his alarm; but Jack began to whistle, and apparently paid no attention to David or to the words he had uttered.

David was thoroughly alarmed, however. He had

seen enough of Jack to know that beneath his rough exterior there was a tender heart; but still he was a British sailor, and his own hasty speech had betrayed his sympathies. It was the first time since he had come on board that he had said or done anything which he thought would arouse suspicion. What would Jack do now? If he should look upon him as a spy, or as one who was likely to betray them, he knew that all of Jack's fondness for him, which he had good reason to believe was genuine and strong, would not save him.

His thoughts were interrupted by the return of the captain and Garangula to the deck. The men quickly gathered about them as the captain said, "I can't make out much of what he says. I think he wants some one to go ashore with him; and from all I can learn, there must be some one there who has something to say to me. I don't just like the looks of it; for if any man had anything of importance to give me, he'd come aboard. I think perhaps I'd better let some one go with him, though. We've got enough on board to help him if he needs it;" and he glanced significantly at the long guns on the deck.

"Who'll go?" continued the captain. "Here, Jack, you're the man. You go."

Jack stepped forward obediently; but before anything more could be said, Garangula interrupted the proceedings. "No go—no he go," he said gruffly.

"He go," he added, pointing to David, who was standing farther back in the crowd.

David's heart gave a great throb as he heard the young Indian's words. Perhaps his time had come at last, the time for which he had been waiting. He suspected there was more in the quiet selection which Garangula had made than appeared upon the surface. He stepped forward eagerly, too eagerly perhaps; for the captain glanced at him suspiciously as he said, "Not so fast, not so fast, my man. What do you want him to go for?" he added, turning to Garangula, who was standing quietly by, as if he had no interest in the proceedings.

"He go. He go," was the Indian's reply. "No he go," he added, pointing to Jack. "He go;" and he pointed emphatically again to David, and turned to take up his canoe.

"Very well; 'he go,' then," said the captain; but he glanced again suspiciously at David. "Now, mind you go straight, young man. If you aren't back in double-quick time, we'll send one of the guns after you."

David made no reply; but as he stepped forward, he glanced again at Jack. There was the same quizzical expression on his face he had noted before, and there seemed to be amusement expressed in it also now. He tried to pay no attention to it, and quickly took his place in the canoe along with Garangula. He was striving not to appear too eager; but his hands

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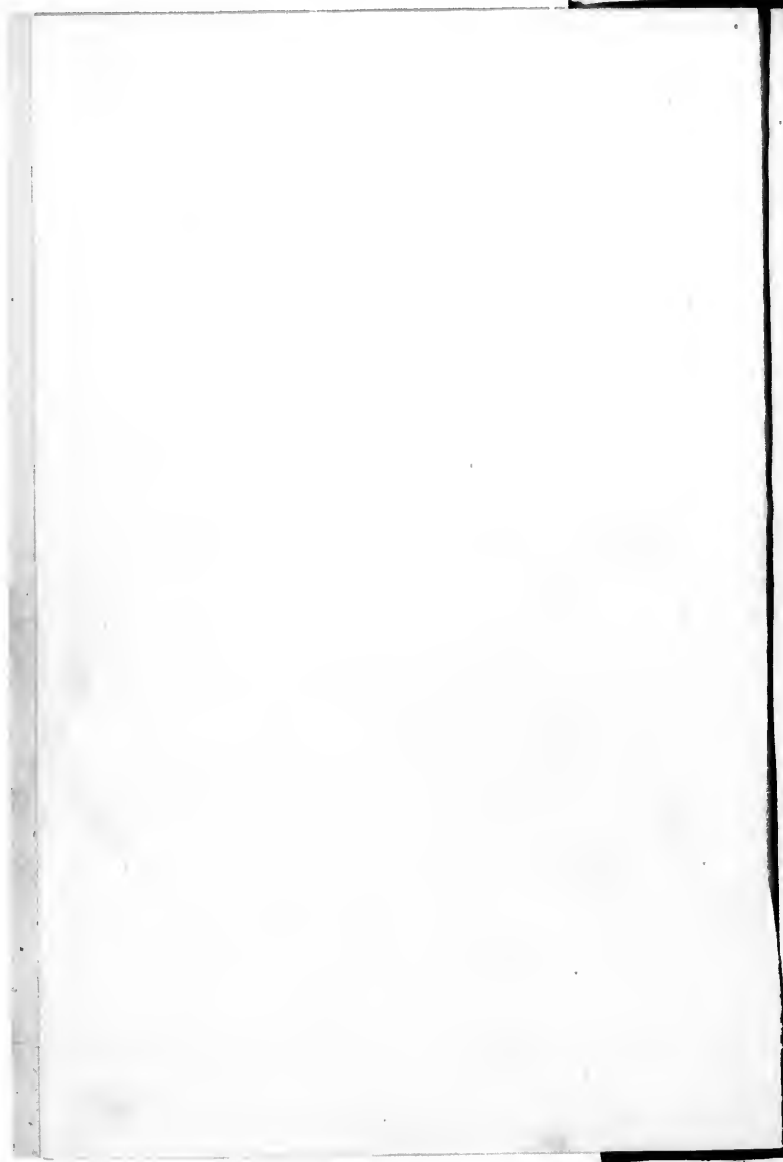
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"He go" "He go"— was the Indian's reply. Page 210.



were trembling, and he was breathing hard in spite of all his endeavors to be calm. The suspense was intense, and he expected every moment to be called back by the sharp voice of the captain. He was disappointed to find there was but one paddle in the canoe; for in his eagerness he had hoped to assist Garangula, and by their united efforts they would the more quickly gain the shore; but concealing his feelings, he took his seat in the stern, and the young Indian began to send the frail little craft forward.

David glanced back at the men on deck; and he was thoroughly alarmed when he saw Jack talking earnestly with the captain, and excitedly pointing to the departing canoe. Doubtless Jack was explaining his own suspicions; and David knew that he had given him a good opportunity to understand his true position. How foolish he had been! And he had found so much fault with Elijah, too, in times past for that very offence.

"Paddle faster, Garangula," he said in a low voice to his companion. "I want to get ashore in a hurry." Garangula made no reply, though he glanced keenly at David; but he did not quicken his movements. He was paddling steadily, and watching the movements on board the *Magnet*.

They had covered about half the distance to the shore when the young Indian uttered a startled exclamation, and without apparently increasing his efforts began to put added strength into his labors;

and David could feel that the speed of the canoe immediately was increased. He glanced quickly behind him, and saw a yawl starting forth from the Magnet, manned by four of the crew.

David connected the movement with the interview he had seen between Jack and the captain. Doubtless the sailor's words had increased the suspicions which David felt certain the captain already had of him; and the yawl had been despatched, either to summon him to return, or to follow and see that no harm was done.

He was trembling now, and the new fear increased his eagerness. If he should be carried back to the Magnet, his condition would be far worse than it had been before; for he would be an object of suspicion, and the crew would be on guard against him, or he would, perhaps, be treated as a prisoner. It seemed to him that the canoe was only crawling over the lake, and yet Garangula was sending it forward with long and steady sweeps of his paddle. There was a light in his dark eyes which showed that he was fully aware of the danger which threatened them; but there was no haste in any of his movements, only an added force in each stroke of his paddle.

There was no race; for the men in the yawl were pulling steadily, and apparently were making no efforts to overtake the canoe. Perhaps they thought the fact of their presence would be sufficient to pre-

vent any irregular actions on the part of David and the Indian.

David and his companion were soon close in-shore; and as Garangula ran the canoe up on the beach, David leaped quickly out. The yawl was about half-way between the shore and the Magnet now, and the sailors had not increased their efforts when they saw that the canoe had been drawn out of the water. The quiet summer day seemed to belie the presence of danger. The air was still, and the heat was intense. David could see the quivering motions of the air over the water beneath the rays of the sun. And yet there was the yawl steadily approaching; and he was standing there as motionless as the trees, and apparently unmindful of any such thing as pursuit.

He quickly roused himself, and was about to dart into the forests, almost forgetful of the presence of his Indian companion, when he was startled by the sight of three men approaching the shore from the woods. They were dressed in the uniform of the United States infantry, and in a moment David realized that he was in the presence of friends.

"What's the other boat for, Garangula?" asked one of the men quickly.

"Heap chase. Come fight," replied the Indian quietly, although his eyes almost flashed fire, and it was with difficulty he suppressed his excitement.

"There are only four of them; we can stand that,"

said one of the men. "You've done the trick well, Garangula; though one was all we wanted, and here you come with four. Come on," he added, grasping David roughly by the arm, and, starting with the others, ran up the shore.

Directly before them, standing on a bluff among the trees, and only a few yards back from the lake, David saw a blockhouse. It was built of logs, and looked strong enough to withstand a siege of several days. Just what it was, and why it had been built there, he could not conjecture; but the men were making their way rapidly towards it, and David, more eager even than they, was moving in their midst.

"Don't hold my arm," he said to the man who still kept a strong grasp on him.

"Keep still! You don't suppose I'm going to let you run back to the other fellows, do you? We wanted a prisoner, and we've got one; and we don't propose to let him get away, either. Come on! Come on!"

For the first time David realized that he was regarded as a prisoner by these men. He was inclined to laugh at first, in spite of the danger; but when he glanced down he saw that he was still dressed in the garb of a British sailor, and the mistake was a natural one. Garangula had not explained, and there was no time for conversation now. They were close to the blockhouse; and soon all but one of the men were inside, and the great door was partially closed,

leaving just room enough for the man to enter hastily if the occasion required.

"Here, you go in there," said one of the men, thrusting David quickly into another room. "We'll look after you later. We've other fish to fry just now." The heavy door was closed behind him, and he was left alone in the room. But he had no mind to remain inactive. The men from the yawl had landed, and were approaching the house. David could look through one of the open port-holes, and both see and hear all that occurred outside the house.

The man by the open door was talking now. "Here, don't you come a step nearer, unless you want to be blown into flinders."

David was watching the little party of four, and saw them halt a moment at the summons. He could recognize Jack among the number, and wondered what he would say if he knew his young friend was a prisoner now among the Americans.

There was a moment's silence; and then he saw Jack draw his great pistol, and, pointing it upward, fire two quick shots. In a moment two shots were fired from the schooner in reply. What could it all mean?

There was a long cannon in the room in which David had been placed, and its muzzle pointed out through a port-hole. He had seen several of these cannon in various parts of the blockhouse when he entered, and wondered that such a place should be so

thoroughly protected. So far as he could see, there was little of value there; and why six or seven of the great guns should have been mounted and left as a protection he could not understand.

"They're coming from the Magnet," he said to himself excitedly. Looking out of the port-hole, he could see another boat putting out from the schooner, manned by six men, who doubtless were coming to the aid of their companions. There was going to be a skirmish, and here he was shut up in a room by the very men whom he wanted to aid. He rattled the door and called, but no heed was given to his hail. He turned back again to the port-hole, to watch the approaching boat. The men were rowing hard, perhaps believing that their companions were in danger, and they were hastening to their aid.

"This is a great piece of business! Here I am shut up like a rat in a trap, and by my friends too," thought David. "I must get out somehow. They'll need every bit of help they can get."

He brought his hand down upon the cannon as he spoke, and started back in amazement. The cannon was of wood, and had been painted to resemble iron! He almost laughed aloud at his discovery, but was quickly recalled to the seriousness of the condition by the shouts of the men outside. The second yawl had landed, and together the men from the two boats had turned, and were now approaching the block-house.

CHAPTER XX

THE COURIER'S STORY

THE white sail which had startled Andrew Field, and the little party of which he and Elijah and Henry were members, soon came near enough to enable them to see that only three men were on board; and after greetings had been exchanged, it was found that they were near Oswego. Lieutenant Gregory decided to land and rest his men; and they soon were on shore, and made their way to the barracks, where hearty congratulations were bestowed upon them for the work they had done.

The exhausted men slept most of the time that day and also throughout the night following; but on the next morning they sailed away for Sackett's Harbor. A careful lookout was maintained, for no one knew just where Yeo's fleet was; but on the 6th of July they arrived safely at their destination, and great was the rejoicing which followed. Unstinted praise was heaped upon the young leader, and the general despondency that pervaded the post, for a time was broken.

But the fleet was not yet ready to put to sea, and

Commodore Chauncey's illness still continued. Two or three weeks more must pass before the new frigate and brigs would be ready for action; and during the interval the men chafed and complained, and waited impatiently for the time to come when they, too, could have a share in the stirring deeds which were being enacted in other places.

A courier had arrived from Niagara; and after he had given his message to the commodore, the men eagerly assembled about him to listen to the story he had to tell of the struggle at Fort Erie. Before his tale is related, it will be necessary for us to relate briefly some of the connecting events.

About the middle of the preceding February, General Brown had marched to Sackett's Harbor with all his men. There late in that month he received a letter from the Secretary of War, a most incapable man, as we already know, informing him that Colonel Winfield Scott, who in spite of his youthfulness was about to be appointed a brigadier-general, had been ordered to the Niagara frontier. The secretary went on to declare that public sentiment would not permit the thought of allowing Fort Niagara to remain in the possession of the British, and that it was also thought a larger force at Niagara would prevent the enemy from making any expeditions farther west, where General Harrison had succeeded in regaining the captured territory.

The secretary expressed his doubts concerning the

ability of Colonel Scott to recapture Fort Niagara, and, by the President's order, directed General Brown to advance with all his forces to Batavia, where he would receive further orders.

On the very same day when this letter came, another message by a different express was received by General Brown from the Secretary of War, directing him to cross over the ice on the lake, and make another attack upon Kingston. Was ever a man more perplexed than General Brown? On the same day to receive two separate orders, that would require his presence in two places far distant from each other, and at the same time! He did not know, because the incompetent secretary did not make it plain, that the movement to Niagara was to be considered a feint, and the true expedition was to be the one against Kingston.

General Brown, with about two thousand men, at once started for Niagara. He had gone a third of the distance when General Gaines convinced him that he had mistaken the wishes of the secretary, and he hastened back to Sackett's Harbor. Small wonder is it that he spoke of himself at the time as "the most unhappy man alive!"

At Sackett's Harbor fresh word had been received from Washington, and *General Brown was to hasten to Niagara*. With his troops he resumed the march again, and by the end of the month they had arrived at Batavia. Another letter from the vacillating

Armstrong, Secretary of War, had been received, meanwhile, by Brown, which read, —

“You have mistaken my meaning. If you hazard anything by this mistake, correct it promptly by returning to your post. If, on the other hand, you left the Harbor with a competent force, go on and prosper. Good consequences are sometimes the result of mistakes.

“Good consequences” certainly came, but in spite of the powers at Washington.

The general alarm was increased by word from General Gaines, who was in command at Sackett's Harbor, and also from Commodore Chauncey. The British were moving as soon as the ice went out of the lake. Again Brown hastened back, leaving Colonel Scott in command of his forces; but it was not long before the patient and brave man hastened again to the Niagara frontier, where at Buffalo, on the 1st of July, he found himself in command of a force which he thought would fully justify him in an attempt to invade Canada. The courier whom Andrew and the boys found at Sackett's Harbor on their return had come with the news of that attempt, and it was his story to which the men were eagerly listening.

“Ye see,” said the courier, glancing about at his eager listeners, and swelling with the importance of his position, “the Injuns and the volunteers were commanded by General Porter. The men all believed

in him; and as for the Injuns, why Red Jacket had stirred 'em up so that all the warriors of the Six Nations was there. My, how that Red Jacket can talk! I don't understand a word of Injun myself, but I tell ye I can understand *him*. When he gets a-goin' he jest makes yer blood boil."

"How many Indians were there?" inquired one of the men.

"How many Injuns? Why, I should say somewhere atween five and six hundred. I don't know as I can tell exac'ly. And the men was well drilled too. Scott had kept his men at it from seven to ten hours every day, and as a matter o' course the others had to follow. It was jest a sight, let me tell ye, to see them men swing round. They'd move jest the way a gate turns on its hinges. That's somethin' new for our soldiers.

"Well, as I was a-sayin', nearly across from Buffalo was Fort Erie. It's right at the foot o' Lake Erie, ye know. They was only about a hundred and seventy men a-guardin' it, and jest so long as it stood there, why it barred out our men from goin' into Canada; so Gen'l Brown, he jest made up his mind as how he'd got to have that fort. There wasn't no use a-talkin', Fort Erie jest had to be his; and that's all there was to be about it.

"So on the 2d—let me see, yes it was the 2d o' July—Gen'l Brown sends out his orders. He'd been along with Scott and Porter himself, and had

a good look at the lay o' the land there, and know then jest what he wanted to do. He didn't have many boats; and the crossin' there is no light matter, let me tell ye. Ye jest ought ter see the water there! It biles in some places worse 'n my old grandmother's tea-kettle.

"Scott was to take his forces over through Black Rock Rapids, and land about a mile below the fort. That young Scott's got all the nerve ye ever heard of; and I s'pose that was the reason why Gen'l Brown chose him to cross there, for it's mighty ticklish crossin' at times, as I was a-tellin' ye. Then Ripley, he was to cross over from Buffalo, and land some distance above the fort. And there they were a-plannin' to squeeze Fort Erie in betwixt 'em, like a piece o' ham in a sandwidge.

"They thought as how they had ev'ry thing all fixed on the night o' the 2d; but the first thing ye knew, Ripley squealed. He claimed as how his men would have to stand the brunt o' the fight, and he 'lowed as how he didn't have men enough for to do it. They say Gen'l Brown had some pretty sharp words with him; for it was too late to change things then, and a delay might upset all the calc'lation. They do say, too, as how Ripley up and resigned right there and then. That's a pretty piece o' work for a great American gen'l, isn't it?"

"What did General Brown do?" inquired one of the men eagerly.

"Do? Why, he didn't do nothin'. He jest said that was no time for a man to resign, and he'd jest have to go on; and that was all there was about it. Well, Scott he crossed over before it was light the next mornin', jest as cool as ye please; and he got a corpse of artillery over too. That's what counts. When ye get a corpse o' artillery, ye've got somethin' as counts ev'ry time. Scott hustled too; and in less than two hours from the time he started, he had his men all drawn up and ready fer the fight on the Canada shore.

"Ripley'd hemmed and hawed, and backed and filled, and never got ready to start till it was after broad daylight. Ye can believe as how Brown was disappointed. The things that man has had to put up with beats all! What with the backin' and fillin' at Washington, one of his best men goin' back on him when he was all ready for the fight, would have made most men quit in despair. But he had no thought o' quittin'. Quittin' wasn't put into his make-up; so he jest told Scott to push on with a battalion up near the fort, and see what they was up to there. That battalion, along with some Injuns, pushed ahead; and the first thing they knew they was a-havin' it hot and heavy with the British pickets. Brown saw as how things was a-movin' pretty well; so he jest made up his mind, Ripley or no Ripley, that he could take that fort with the men Scott had right there. So, as good luck would have it, he laid hands

on one o' the natives what knew all about that part o' the country, and made him show the way. He told Major Gardner to go through the woods to the lake shore above the fort, and to spread out his men till they reached the other corpse.

"Jest then who should come along but Ripley and his gang. He'd screwed his courage up to the stickin'-point at last, or else his men drove him on, I don't know which; and after his men had been arranged all right, Brown began to have the big guns brought over. They planted one big gun up on Snake Hill, and got it all ready to speak its piece.

"Then when Gen'l Brown thought things was about ready, and the time to quit foolin' had come, he jest sent word into the fort that they could take their choice, — they could either give up the place within two hours, or take their chances in a good square fight. Brown was always a little squeamish about fightin'. I guess he doesn't like the sight o' blood, and he jest hoped those fellers would see their way to give in. Ye see, there hadn't been much blood-spillin' as yet. When the pickets was driven in there'd been one o' their men killed, and they'd fired one o' their cannon at us, and had killed four o' us, and wounded two or three more; and that's all the shootin' that had been done up to date.

"Well, Major Buck, — he was in command o' the fort, — he thought things looked pretty blue; and it wasn't but a little while before out come a man with

a white flag, and then ev'rybody knew the British had given up. There was a yell that you might 'a' heard here at Sackett's Harbor, if yo'd listened the way you're a-doin' now. Major Jessup jest took the flag, and that's the end o' the story."

"How many prisoners were taken?" inquired Andrew.

"'Bout two hundred; that is, two hundred if you take in the seven officers."

"What did they do with them?"

"Oh! they hustled 'em across the river, and posted 'em off for the Hudson."

A shout went up from the men when the courier finished his story; and there were cheers for General Brown, whom most of the men at Sackett's Harbor knew personally and deeply loved.

"Don't be too quick about it," said the courier. "Canada isn't whipped yet. General Riall has got a big batch o' men, and he's just achin' for a fight. It won't be long afore there's a big time out there; that is, if you fellows don't stay all summer here at Sackett's Harbor, cooped up like a hen with chickens. They're puttin' in their best work; and there's likely to be music most any day."

"Oh, how I wish we were there!" said Henry, as he and his brother turned away from the crowd.

"This putting off and putting off is all we do here."

"You'll get a start soon enough, and all you want too," replied Elijah. "Hark! what's that?"

Far down the road they could see a horseman. He was riding swiftly, and when he came nearer they could see that his horse was covered with foam. His rider bestrode him awkwardly, grasping the mane with one hand, and leaning far forward over the horse's neck.

He paid no attention to our boys as he passed them; but he had scarcely gone around the corner before the boys were looking into each other's faces, startled and half afraid.

"Who was that, Elijah?" said Henry in a low voice.

"That was Heman Chubb, as I live!" replied Elijah. "I wonder what brought his red head back here in such a hurry. Come on, Henry!" and both boys turned to follow the horseman, who had now disappeared from sight within the village.

CHAPTER XXI

A WORD FROM HEMAN

THE boys waited two hours before Heman returned from the officers' quarters he had entered; but at last they saw his ungainly form as he came out of the house, and prepared to mount his horse again.

"Heman! Heman!" called Elijah. "Where are you going?"

"Bless me! Here are my young warriors. I'm right glad to see you. I am with all my heart;" and he shook the hand of each of the boys, much as if he were trying to wrest them loose. "I'd just started for David's house, and I thought I'd take my horse along with me;" and he proudly patted the restive animal as he spoke.

"Where is David?" inquired Elijah eagerly. "Do you know where he is?"

"David? Why, isn't he home? I supposed of course he would be here when I didn't find him at Niagara."

"No; he hasn't come home, and we haven't heard a word, either."

"You don't say so? Well, I've been redeemed, exchanged I mean; but when we were sent on to Toronto, David was the only man in the boat who wasn't sent on too. We were captured when we were near Sandy Creek, and then sent to Toronto. But somehow I never knew just what became of Davie. We were exchanged about two weeks ago, and I've just come from Niagara. I've been a courier, and have changed horses ten times on my journey. General Brown told me I could keep my last horse if I got here before the 12th; and to-day's the 11th, and the horse is mine." And Heman again proudly patted the horse by his side.

The boys were silent for a moment. David's absence was still unexplained, and their hearts were heavy with a great fear. Not a word had been received from him, and now they knew he had not been sent on to Toronto with the other prisoners. What would his mother say? How could they tell her of the news Heman brought?

Their companion, however, was so elated by his success in securing a horse for himself that he could not long remain silent. "I'll walk along with you, boys. I'm afraid if I stay here I shall have to tell my story too many times; so I'll just lead my steed by the bridle, and give him a rest while I talk with you. 'Every man rode on his own mule and fled,' Second Samuel xiii. 29. Not that I fled, though; and yet let me see. Perhaps I did flee too. But

not from fear, boys; not from fear. 'He smote the Philistines till his hand was weary.' Judges xxiii. 10."

"What are you talking about, Heman?" said Henry. "When you begin to quote Scripture, I know you've something on your mind."

"Nay, verily. It's off my mind now. 'They wearied themselves to find the door.' Genesis xix. 11."

"What is the matter with you? You act clean daft!" replied Henry sharply. His words served to move the spirits of Heman still more; and he began to sing, —

"His music soon forgets to play —
His feet can no more move, sir;
And all his bands now curse the day
They jigg'd to our shore, sir."

"Let me see! Yes — no — yes; this is the climax, —

"That while your hopes are danced away,
'Tis you must pay the piper."

"You roar like the bulls of Bashan, Heman. What's the story? Come, speak up," said Henry.

"I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.' Psalms xxxviii. 8."

The boys looked at each other in despair. It was plain that Heman was highly elated over something which not even the unexplained absence of David

could entirely banish. The great freckles on his face were larger than ever, it seemed to them, and his hair had faded from its bright red color. Heman was almost unmindful of the presence of his companions, and was walking along the road with his face turned towards the sky. A broad smile was on his face; and he soon began to sing again, —

“ ‘War’s rude alarms disturbed last year,
Our country bled and wept around us;
But this, each honest heart shall cheer,
And peace and plenty shall surround us.’ ”

“Come, Heman, wake up,” said Henry, striking him upon the back, a movement which caused the singer suddenly to forget his song, and which made him cringe as if in pain. He looked reproachfully at his assailant, and said, “ ‘Amalek smote thee when thou wast weary.’ Deuteronomy xxv. 18. Ah, my boy! I have one for you now, ‘The people shall weary themselves for vanity.’ Habakkuk ii. 13. No, this is better, ‘And Rebekah said, I am weary of my life.’ Genesis xxvii. 46.”

“Heman Jeduthan Chubb” — began Henry.

“Yes; and the sons of Zerah, Zimri and Ethan and Heman and Calcal” —

But the patience of his young companion was now exhausted; and seizing him by the shoulders, he shook the long and awkward figure until he roared for mercy. “I hope I have a respect for Scripture,” said

Henry; "but if you don't stop this jargon, and talk United States pretty quick, Heman Jeduthan will have to be carried in twelve baskets. Now speak up like a man, and talk to us."

He relaxed his grasp for a moment, and Heman managed to free himself; and then, hesitating a moment, he quickly leaped on the back of his horse, and went speeding down the road before them, and was soon lost to sight.

"Do you know what he makes one think of?" said Henry, after he had recovered from his surprise at the sudden departure of their companion.

"No; what?"

"A spring chicken before its feathers have grown. He's all joints, and they don't work well. His arms flap like the dwarf's 'wings;' but he's got something to say. Let's hurry on, and hear about it. He'll stop at the Fields'."

The boys quickened their pace; and when they arrived at David's home, Heman's horse was tied to the hitching-post. They hurriedly ran up the path, and entered the kitchen. There was Heman, standing in the middle of the room, and talking excitedly, his long arms sawing the air, and his head keeping time to his words as he spoke. Andrew was there also, and his mother and wife showed the traces of tears on their faces. Evidently Heman's word about David had increased the sorrow and suspense in the home.

"He's telling us about the fight," said Andrew, nodding to the boys as they came in.

"We've heard about it already," replied Henry. "There's been a messenger at Sackett's, and he's told all about how Fort Erie was taken."

"Oh, that's ancient history!" replied Heman, with a sniff. "I was talking about something else."

"What?" said Elijah.

"The battle of Chippewa. That was a fight, sir; that was a fight!"

"Did you have a share in it?" inquired Henry.

Heman hemmed before he replied, and then said, "Not exactly. I was there, but I was not called into action. I was ready, but"—

"Oh, yes, I know! You were telling us about how the men fled on their mules. Now, that mule of yours"—

"Keep still, Henry!" said Andrew. "Let's hear what he has to say about Chippewa."

Thus encouraged, Heman resumed his story, which had been interrupted by the entrance of Elijah and Henry. "As I was saying, General Brown found when he had captured Fort Erie that the work had only begun. General Riall, a little Irishman from Tipperary, Ireland"—

"Do Irishmen come from Ireland?" interrupted Henry.

"Be silent!" replied Heman. "This is no place for levity. 'The heathen rage'—"

"Bother the rage of the heathen, Heman!" said Henry. "You'll feel mine if you don't go on; and that's worse than any Irishman's — especially if he comes from Ireland."

"General Riall was on the move towards Erie, for he'd heard of the trouble there. But the first thing he learned was that the fort had surrendered. At first he thought he'd fight right away, but he delayed a bit when he heard that re-enforcements were expected every hour from Toronto.

"Well, General Brown sent Scott — ah, Scott's a goodly youth! He towered, like Saul, above the heads and shoulders of all his fellows. Scott marched down the shore of the river to a place behind Street's Creek, about a mile above Chippewa. He had a kind of a skirmish all the way, for the British thought they were only militia. You see, they were deceived by the uniforms they wore. It seems Scott, when he was at Buffalo, had sent to the quartermaster-general for some new clothing for the regulars. The blockade and embargo had shut out all the blue cloth; but there was enough of gray to fit out the men, so that was used."

Heman, of course, did not know it at the time; but it was in honor of the work of Scott and his men in the battle of Chippewa, and the use of the gray cloth at the time, that that style of dress was adopted for the West Point cadets, and has been used by them ever since.

"Scott, when he found himself close up to the enemy, went into camp for the night; and there the two armies were, with only a little creek between them.

"About noon the next day — that was the 5th of July — up came about three hundred white men and four hundred Indians, and joined Scott, with General Porter in command. The British were re-enforced, too, and for several hours the pickets and scouts kept up a kind of firing. Finally, things got so warm that General Porter, about four o'clock, went to drive them out from the left of Scott; and when they ran before him, and he chased them, pretty quick what should he find but that he was right there within a few yards of the whole British force?

"I wasn't there, but it must have been a surprise party. But they went at it tooth and nail, the Indians on each side doing pretty much as they chose. When he didn't hear anything of Scott, Porter knew he couldn't stand it long there, so he gave out an order to retreat; but it wasn't ten minutes before the retreat turned into a rout. General Brown was off on the left; and when he saw the big cloud of dust, he thought he knew right away what it meant, and he began to send out his orders thick and fast for his men to get ready to meet the whole British army, which was advancing.

"When word came to Scott, he didn't believe the enemy was advancing at all; but he just obeyed the

order like a man, and went ahead. Pretty quick he got a sight of Porter's men running as if for dear life. That left him all exposed on the left; but Ripley was coming up all the time, though Scott didn't know anything about that. He just crossed over the bridge, though the big guns were banging at him, and then he drew up his men as cool as if it were only a parade.

"Porter's flight had been checked, and there was a kind of a fighting going on all along the line then, and some mighty skilful work too; that is, by our side. But Scott saw a weak spot in the British lines, after he'd worked up to within eighty paces of them. Then he turned round, and made a speech. He said, 'The enemy say we are good at a long shot, but can't stand the cold iron. I call on the Eleventh instantly to give the lie to that slander. CHARGE!'

"The men went ahead with a yell; and, as it happened, a charge was made on the right, and the battery was pouring hot shot all the time right into the middle. All moving together, they just started the British off at a lively gait; and they never stopped till they got behind their breastworks below Chippewa Creek, and had torn up the planks of the bridge. At first everybody was for going ahead and finishing up the work; but it began to rain hard just then, and as the bridge was gone, the army came back. Of course they held about the same positions they had

in the morning; but they tell me that the battle's the most important in all the war, at least, up to date."

"Why?" inquired Henry, who was deeply interested in Heman's story.

"Why? Because the Indians are all broken up. It is said they won't help the British any more; and if they don't, it means the end'll come pretty quick."

"What about the losses and prisoners?" said Andrew.

"The Americans lost sixty-one killed, and had two hundred and fifty-five wounded, and nineteen were missing. The British lost two hundred and forty-six killed, three hundred and twenty-two wounded, and forty-six missing. They had seventeen hundred men in the fight, and we had only thirteen hundred; but then, our men had a trick."

"What was that?" asked Elijah.

"Why, when they loaded, after they'd rammed the ball home in the musket, they put in three buckshot on top of the bullet."

"Horrible!" shuddered Mrs. Field. "You don't suppose David was there, do you?"

"No; it's not likely," replied Andrew. "There'll be more fighting there, though," he added as he rose to leave the room.

Heman's story was finished; and as he went out of the house to care for his horse, Elijah and Henry followed him, little thinking how soon they were to

be personally interested in the events which followed those that Heman had been relating.

"Who's that coming down the road?" said Henry quickly, pointing to two men they could see approaching. One of them was a tiny man, who waddled much after the manner in which a duck walks. The other was much larger, and occasionally reached out and took his smaller companion by the hand, fairly lifting him from the ground as he assisted him.

"It's Jim Nairne and the dwarf," said Elijah quickly; and all three of them waited for the men to approach.

CHAPTER XXII

A STRANGE RESCUE

DAVID FIELD watched the men from the schooner as they landed, and cautiously began to advance towards the blockhouse. There were at least twelve of them, while there were only two men, besides the young Indian and himself, to defend the place; and David knew that he was not counted upon as a defender at all.

His dress was that of the British sailor, and the men had at once taken him for what he appeared to be. Not a word of explanation had he been able to utter; and when he had been roughly thrust into the room in which he now was, he had found himself more of a prisoner than he had been before. Indeed, his position was even worse; for now he would be left to himself if the men should be compelled to abandon the place, as he had no doubt they would. The guns were "Quakers," and it would not take the British long to understand that fact.

Meanwhile, what was to become of him? Without doubt the blockhouse would be set on fire, and

if he should attempt to escape he would be shot down by the attacking party, who would not recognize him; and even if they should, David felt somewhat dubious as to their actions, for there had been so many evidences of their suspicions of him, that they might be glad to use the present opportunity to rid themselves of them, and of him also.

His gloomy thoughts were interrupted by the opening of the door into his room. He turned quickly at the sound, and saw that Garangula had entered. The young Indian carefully closed the door behind him, and quickly motioning to David, said in a low voice, "Come."

"Where?" whispered David, unconsciously speaking in low tones, as the Indian had done.

Garangula made no reply; but hastening to a corner of the room, he quickly lifted a trap-door, which had not been seen by David, and disappeared beneath it.

David quickly followed, not understanding the actions of his companion, but realizing that something in which he had a deep interest was in store, and in a moment found himself in a narrow tunnel which led out beyond the walls of the blockhouse. He worked his way carefully on, although he could not see anything before him. The passage was very narrow, and he was compelled to crawl upon his hands and knees. It seemed to the eager boy as if the tunnel was almost endless; and just as he was

about to call out to his friend, the light suddenly streamed in upon his face, and he found himself in the open air by the side of Garangula.

"Come," said the Indian again quickly, first closing the trap-door behind him, and then starting swiftly among the trees. David followed obediently, moving silently, and soon saw that Garangula had started towards the shore of the lake. It seemed to him that they were going directly into danger; but he recalled the confidence his friend had in his canoe, and at once concluded that they were making for that. Doubtless Garangula knew some hiding-place which they could seek, and he surely had escaped from the peril of the blockhouse.

The danger before them could not be greater than the one they had left, and he gave himself eagerly to the task of following his companion.

In a few minutes they gained the beach, and Garangula glanced sharply about him. Something plainly was wrong, but just what it was David could not decide. If he had been left to himself, he would have started in the opposite direction, and made for the interior; but as he had followed Garangula thus far, there was nothing to be done but to await the decision of the Indian.

"Stay here!" said Garangula abruptly, as he turned and started swiftly up the shore, keeping all the time within the shelter of the forest. David took a position behind the trees, and tried to wait

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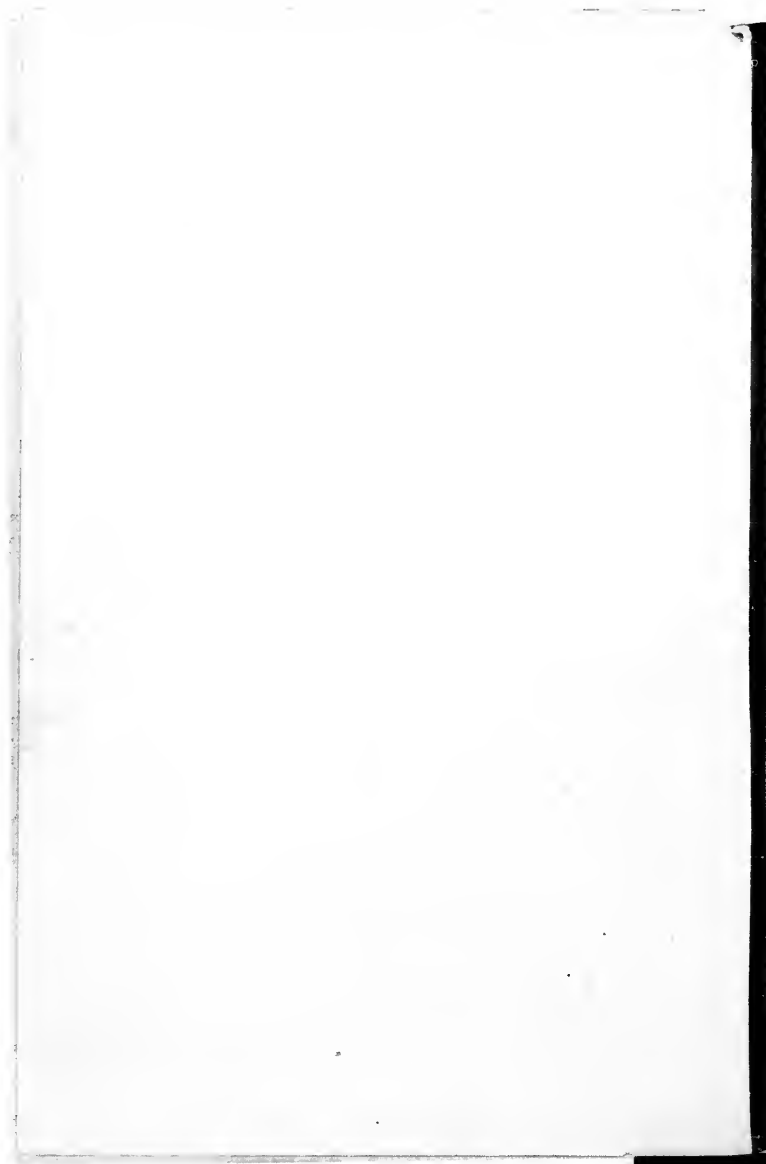
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"Come," said the Indian, closing the trap-door. Page 240.



calmly for the Indian to return. He could see the Magnet plainly off to his right; and the few men on board were all standing by the rail, looking towards the shore. The waters of the lake were wonderfully quiet now, and only little ripples on the shore could be seen. It was a scene of peace and quiet in every direction, and yet he knew near by a tragedy might soon be enacted. Every moment he expected to hear the sounds of the attack on the blockhouse, and he was in a strange excitement. What with his own position, the sight of the schooner, the sudden disappearance of the Indian, and the momentary expectation of the sounds of a conflict, his heart was beating rapidly, and his breath came hard and fast.

Suddenly the silence was broken by the sharp report of guns. He could hear the shouts and calls of men. For a moment or two these were repeated, and then the silence again rested over all. The little waves upon the beach were not interrupted in their music now. The peacefulness of the day had returned, and the sounds of war had all ceased. A shout from the men on the schooner was heard, and that was all.

David was straining his ears, trying to catch some sound which would inform him of the turn which events had taken. Suddenly he heard a quick step in the direction in which Garangula had disappeared; and breathing a sigh of relief, he stepped forth quickly to meet him. What was that which he saw?

Sailor Jack, followed by four or five of his comrades, rushing through the forests directly towards him! For a moment there was a wild thought in David's mind of darting off into the woods; but even as he hesitated, the men were upon him, and there was no escape. "Come on, David! Come on!" said Jack, grasping him by the arm; and David found himself running with his companions along the shore. There was no escape now; and they quickly gained the yawl, and began to row desperately towards the Magnet.

What could be the meaning of it? Surely the men were not running away from the two defenders of the blockhouse! That could not be possible. In the bitterness of his feeling, as he found himself once more among the crew of the schooner, the questions kept coming; but not a word was spoken by the men. They were exerting all their strength to make their way back to the Magnet, and the other yawl was close behind.

In a few minutes the schooner was gained; the men clambered nimbly up on deck; and, at a word from Jack, the captain gave his orders, and the Magnet swung round before the little breeze, and began to make for the open lake.

Then the men began to talk. "That was about the closest shave I ever had," said Jack.

"You're right, mate," said another. "There must 'a' been twenty o' them cannon."

"Twenty? It looked more like forty! I never saw such a place. It seemed jest covered with guns."

"We got out jest in time," said another. "That fellow stood up there with that torch in his hands jest ready to let her go. He said he'd give us till he could count three to clear out. I heard, 'One,' but I didn't wait to hear any more."

"Yes," said Jack, "it was jest like walkin' into the jaws o' death. I didn't know the Yanks had any such place here. They must have a heap o' stores there to keep sech guns to guard 'em. They must 'a' been forty-pounders, ev'ry one on 'em."

"We're lucky dogs to get out as we did. That little redskin 'most got us into a fix. I wish I had the little varmint here. I'd twist his neck fer him," said another.

"Well, we made the Magnet all right; but I was in mortal fear as how they might train some o' their guns on her yet. I wonder why they didn't. She was right in range, and couldn't 'a' teched those fellows. How big a garrison d'ye s'pose they had?"

"Oh, there must 'a' been a gang on 'em!" said the sailor emphatically.

David was listening to the conversation in amazement. What were the men talking about? There were only two defenders in the blockhouse; and to his personal knowledge, the great guns of which they were speaking were only harmless wooden ones, that never would have the smell of gunpowder about

them. Suddenly he saw it all. The men had been frightened away by the "Quaker" guns, and the peril from which they had escaped was all a piece of their imagination. Twenty cannon and forty men to defend the blockhouse, when he knew there were only about six or eight of the "Quakers," and only two men in the house!

In spite of his despondency at being again compelled to take his place on board the Magnet, the utter absurdity of it all came over him, and he laughed aloud. In a moment he realized his folly, as the men turned to him, and Jack said, "What's the matter with you? Just show us the funny part, will ye?"

"I rather guess you'd laugh, too, if you'd been where I have, and then found yourself all right on the Magnet again." He had recovered himself just in time, and quickly decided upon the line he would follow.

"Jest explain yerself, will ye? I think the cap'n may want a word from ye, too, for here he comes;" and David saw the captain approaching the group. "I was just a-sayin' to this lad as how you'd be glad to hear his story, cap'n," resumed the sailor. "He seems mightily tickled about something."

"Maybe he's glad to get back to us," said the captain, looking sharply at David. The young prisoner realized that all were suspicious of him now; but he strove to speak calmly, and not betray his fears.

"The way of it was this. We hadn't got ashore, the Indian and I, before we saw the yawl coming after us."

"You didn't seem to take kindly to it, if it did come," said the captain. "You just crowded on all sail, and made for shore, as if it was the evil one, and not a yawl from the Magnet, that was behind you."

"We saw the men on shore, and didn't know just what was ahead of us. We hadn't fairly landed, though, before they rushed us up to the blockhouse. Then they shoved me into a room, and barred the door; and there I was, shut in and shut up. I couldn't do a thing; and every minute I was expecting that Jack and the men here would blow the blockhouse to pieces, or set it on fire, and then where would I be?"

David looked about at the men, and saw that Jack and his companions were not enjoying his story.

"We might 'a' set the house afire if we'd jest crawled in through the muzzles o' them cannon. They was as thick as bees round a hive," muttered Jack.

"Yes, they did have some cannon, that's a fact," said David, restraining the smile that almost came when he thought of the "Quakers;" "but I never thought the crew of the Magnet would run away before a single shot was fired."

"You never mind the crew of the Magnet, but give us your story," said the captain angrily.

"Well, I found a trap-door in the floor of the room which they shut me in; and when I was so scared for fear Jack and the other fellows would blow up the house, I just crawled through it. It opened into a tunnel, and I crawled on through it on my hands and knees, and got out among the trees; and there I was waiting for Jack when he and the men came tearing through the woods, running as if those cannon were close behind them. The rest you know."

"It's a likely story, and I hope it's true," said the captain. "How many men were in the blockhouse?"

"I don't know that I saw them all," replied David evasively.

"Well, how many did you see?" repeated the captain.

"Two."

"Two!" shouted the men. "There was more'n forty."

"We can't stop now," said the captain, "if there was only a half a man there. We're due off Sackett's Harbor to-morrow night."

"Sackett's Harbor?" said David, speaking before he thought.

"Yes, Sackett's Harbor," replied the captain. "You know something about that place, then, do you?"

"I've been there."

"Well, we'll give you a chance to go again, then."

You'll know the way, I guess. We're going to run in near there, and send three of the yawls up there to-morrow night, and blow up one of Chauncey's pet brigs."

David could not keep back the look of alarm that spread over his face at the captain's words. "Yes," resumed the captain, "you'll be detailed for that especial duty. Jack, put him right on one of the kegs, and if he doesn't go straight, send him higher'n Gilderoy's kite."

The captain then turned on his heel and went below. The men appeared to be partially satisfied with David's story, although he could see that all suspicion was not gone. Jack was as friendly as ever, but David gave little heed to his words. The thought of what was before him was constantly in his mind. He was to be one of a crew which was to blow up one of the brigs at Sackett's Harbor! Perhaps Andrew or Elijah or Henry might be on board. He never would go! And yet how could he prevent it? He thought of scheme after scheme, but abandoned them all; and when on the following night the Magnet dropped her sail, and anchored in the lake not far from Sackett's Harbor, and the preparations began in the yawls, he was almost in despair.

CHAPTER XXIII

A NEW GUNPOWDER PLOT

THREE yawls were soon in readiness for the venture. Two kegs of gunpowder were stowed away in each, the crews were selected, and then the men waited for the hour to come when they were to leave the Magnet, and start on their perilous enterprise.

It was not deemed advisable to make the attempt much before midnight, and that was still two hours away. David had been selected, as we know, to go in one of the yawls; and the agony of mind that came to him was almost more than he could bear. To be a prisoner on board the Magnet, and to have her sail within three or four miles of his home, and yet to feel his helplessness, was bad enough; but to be chosen as one of those who were to attempt to blow up some of the vessels was far worse.

The whole project to him seemed so dastardly that he was divided somewhat in his feelings between a blind and helpless rage at the British and an intense desire to do something to warn the men at the Harbor of their impending peril.

Already in his mind he could hear the report of the explosion, and the sight of maimed men and shattered vessels was ever before him. Plan after plan suggested itself to him as to how he might thwart the attempt, but he was compelled to abandon them all as being worse than useless. He was helpless, and any suspicious movement on his part would bring upon him at once the anger of his companions.

He paced the deck, having little to say to his companions; and, indeed, there seemed to be but slight inclination on the part of any of the men to indulge in conversation, for the peril of the attempt they were about to make drove all other thoughts from their minds.

At times a rash impulse to throw himself into the water seized David; but the Magnet was too far from shore for him to swim to land, and in the present tense condition of the feelings of the men, he would only draw their anger upon himself, and in no way aid his friends. There was nothing for him to do but to conceal his feelings as best he could, and trust for some way to open later by which he might thwart the project of his companions.

At last the hour of midnight came, and the men were ordered to take their places quickly and quietly in the yawls. The oars had been muffled; and when the men began to row away from the schooner, their movements made but little noise, and they passed

over the surface of the lake like some moving shadows.

The moon would not be visible that night, and under the protection of the darkness the men felt a little more safe; but there was a constraint manifested by them all, and there was no disposition for conversation on the part of any. The order to be silent had been needless.

Sailor Jack was in command of the yawl to which David had been assigned; and the young prisoner was pulling the bow oar, while a keg of powder had been placed in the bow behind him. One oar had not been used; and he could not understand the reason for the neglect, for as many men had been left behind on board the Magnet as had been selected for the crews of the yawls.

The men, meanwhile, were rowing steadily; and David knew that no one would suspect their presence if he were not near by. A half-hour brought them around the point which formed one of the projections of the shore that enclosed the harbor; and not more than three miles away lay Chauncey's fleet, all unconscious of the peril which was threatening it. Home was there too, David thought bitterly; and he glanced rapidly along the distant shore that could hardly be distinguished in the darkness. Not a light could be seen. The people were all doubtless in bed long before this time, and before the morning light came what infamous deeds might be wrought!

Chauncey's long-cherished plans might be thwarted, his labors be all in vain, and men who had sought their hammocks without a thought of danger be awakened by the explosion which doubtless would maim or kill many of them.

David was roused from his gloom by a low order of Jack for the men to rest on their oars. They were close in-shore now, and the bushes and low trees could be seen. He obeyed the order with the others, wondering what it meant.

Sailor Jack rose from his seat, and gave a low whistle. This was repeated three times, and then there came a response from the shore.

"That's all right," said Jack, evidently greatly relieved by the sound. "Pull closer in-shore." The men obeyed, and soon David saw the figures of two men approaching from the bushes. He looked closely at them, and his heart gave a great bound as he was certain that he recognized them both. "The traitors! The villains!" he said to himself. "This is what comes of trusting such men. Chauncey might have known that the men he could buy, others could buy too. And now he's going to get the benefit of it all."

"Is it all right, Jim?" inquired the sailor, speaking in a loud whisper.

"I couldn't find a single snag in the way," replied Jim Nairne; for it was none other than the old acquaintance of David, accompanied by his faithful

attendant, the dwarf. "I came from Sackett's not four hours ago, and they haven't a thought of the Magnet being within a hundred miles."

"Good!" replied Jack. "We've got everything in shape here, but I didn't know whether you'd show up or not."

"You might have known; I never went back on you yet."

"That's so, Jim; you've always been true as steel."

"He ought to spell it 'steal,'" thought David, his mind filled with the thought of a new peril now. Here was Jim Nairne, and evidently he was to have a share in the dastardly work. As soon as it was light, if not before, Jim would recognize him; and David did not dare to think of the events that might follow. But he was intensely interested in the conversation, and in spite of his terror was listening intently to what the men were saying.

"How long will it take to row over?" said the sailor.

"We can make it in an hour, easy, such a night as this."

"We can make it," thought David. Then Jim Nairne was to be one of them.

"Have you got enough powder?" continued Nairne.

"We've got two big kegs in each yawl. Six kegs ought to do something. You're sure you know the way?"

Nairne laughed low as he replied, "If I don't it won't be my fault; I've been here often enough. I was talkin' with Chauncey about sundown to-day. He's as innocent as a lamb, and thinks I'm one o' the salt o' the earth. I hope you've got some guns along too."

"Plenty," replied Jack. "We're in for the trick, live or die. I was only afraid you wouldn't show up. We should 'a' gone ahead just the same if you hadn't, but I'm glad you're here."

"Well, where do you want me?"

"Right in this yawl. I've saved an oar for ye."

"I'll come right aboard," said Nairne, preparing to follow out his words.

"Hold on," replied Jack. "What'll you do with that boy with ye? Who is he? and what's he doin' here? We haven't any place for him."

"Ye don't want any. He's jest my body-guard, that's all," laughed Jim. "Here, you imp of Satan," he added, turning to the dwarf, "you jest stay right here. Don't ye move away, not even if ye hear the trump o' Gabriel. I'm comin' back, and you wait for me here. D'ye hear? You wait here till I come, if I don't show up afore the lake's all froze over."

The dwarf made no reply; and Jim Nairne at once took his place in the yawl, all unconscious that David Field was one of the crew. The command to start on was given; and the three yawls, keeping well together, began to move on in the darkness.

The very water itself seemed familiar to David, and he had recognized the shore near which they had just stopped as the place where many a time he and Elijah and Henry had come on their fishing-trips. Would he ever see them again? And what would they think if they knew he was in a British yawl, helping the enemy in an attempt which, if successful, would bring almost incalculable damage to the American cause?

The opportunity for which he had been looking and waiting to leave the yawl had not presented itself, and there was nothing to be done except to keep on as he had begun. Frequent stops were made by the yawls; but nothing was seen to indicate the presence of danger, and in about an hour he could see the tall masts of the fleet looming through the darkness. The men were rowing with great care now, and moving more slowly. They had come near to the place they were seeking, and the time for action was at hand.

A whispered consultation between Nairne and Jack now followed; and in a moment the order was passed from man to man, each whispering the word to the one nearest him, to row a little farther up and out into the lake.

"They're going to take advantage of what little wind there is," thought David, "and drift down upon the brig;" for he had thought he recognized the dim outlines of the vessel nearest them as the Oneida.

He knew that she carried sixteen guns, and that Lieutenant Brown, who was in command of her, was a man thoroughly awake to his duties. "He'll send every one of us to the bottom of the lake if he gets a sight of us. Well, if anything does happen like that, I only hope they will send every one of us there. Just think how Andrew and mother would feel if my body should be found floating around here in the morning as one of the crew which had come over here to blow up the Oneida!

He almost groaned aloud in his despair; but he slowly and carefully pulled at his oar, striving to suppress his excitement. And yet he scarcely could breathe. The fear of discovery, the hope that something would happen to drive them away, the peril of the Oneida, as well as of the men in the yawls, were all combined.

Meanwhile, the yawls had gained the position the leaders desired, and the men rested upon their oars. The light breeze was causing them to drift directly towards the brig. Every moment her outlines could be more clearly discerned, and they were headed directly for her bow.

David's heart was beating so rapidly that he placed his hand upon his side as if to quiet it. He fancied that he could hear the deep breathing of his companions; but they were as motionless as statues, each man retaining his seat, and gazing earnestly towards the brig. They could see the watch on

board now, but apparently he was all unconscious of their presence. Once or twice David felt that he must shout, and warn them of their danger; but his throat was parched and dry, and he did not believe he could utter a sound.

Nearer and nearer the yawl drifted, and now the Oneida was not more than two yards away. The little boat swung round, Jim Nairne grasped the heavy chain which held her anchor, and the yawl was soon directly under the prow. Her presence had not yet been discovered, and so far all things had favored the attacking party.

For several minutes Nairne quietly held the yawl in its place, waiting for the others to approach. David soon saw another yawl slowly drift past them, and take the position on the other side of the bow, and within a few yards of them. He felt almost as if he were in a dream. It was all real, and yet unreal. He could not cry out; he could not move. A kind of blind terror seemed almost to overcome him.

His companions, however, did not seem to be moved by any such feelings. Noiselessly and quickly they lifted one of the kegs from the yawl, fitted it to the contrivance they had brought, by which it was to be brought under the brig, and David knew that the fuse was ready.

Almost fascinated, he watched the men as two of them grasped the second keg; and then for the first

time he glanced upward. The face of the guard appeared directly over them, and was gazing down into the boat.

Then David found his voice, and in a yell which of itself would have terrified his companions, he warned them of the danger. In a moment there was a blinding flash, the report of a musket, and he heard and felt the bullet as it passed through the bottom of the yawl near his feet. In desperation his companions seized their oars, and frantically began to try to row beyond the sight of the crew of the Oneida, who now were running about the deck. In a moment two boats were in swift pursuit, the pursuers as eager as the pursued.

"Now's my time," thought David; and with a sudden movement he turned and plunged head foremost into the lake.

CHAPTER XXIV

HEMAN'S DEPARTURE

N AIRNE and the dwarf soon recognized the party which was awaiting their approach in the road in front of the Field home. Elijah thought he saw a scowl on the leader's face; but it quickly disappeared, and in a gruff manner Nairne said, "How are ye, young men? Ye manage to catch me ev'ry trip I make to Sackett's, don't ye?"

"What are you doing here?" inquired Elijah, ignoring the question.

"Walkin', can't ye see? I didn't know as we had to report here, afore."

Elijah turned as if he were about to leave the road, and have nothing more to say to the man; but a sly movement on the part of the dwarf led him to change his mind. He despised Nairne, and believed he was a thorough traitor; but it was plain that General Gaines and Commodore Chauncey had no such opinion of him, for they both made constant use of him. Restraining himself as he saw the quick, sly movement of the dwarf, he turned, and looking at the man again, said, "What's up now?"

"Nothin' that concerns you," replied Nairne. "I've just made my reg'lar trip to the Harbor. I always leave my boat down here by your dock, and go over from here afoot. It's only a bit of a walk, and saves all stoppin' and explainin'. By the way, boys, I've seen one o' your fellows."

"Where? What do you mean?"

"Jest what I say. Isn't one o' you boys named David?"

"Have you seen him? Where is he?" asked Elijah. He was all eagerness now, and thought he understood the meaning of the dwarf's sly signal.

"Oh! I haven't seen him fer some little time; but when I parted with him he was in good company, though I can't jest say that he seemed to be enjoyin' himself."

Nairne spoke the words slowly, as if he desired to prolong the anxiety; and if he had any such purpose in mind, he succeeded admirably.

"Won't you tell us where he is?" said Henry eagerly. "His mother is most worn out with worryin' about him. He wasn't taken to Toronto; for Heman here was in that gang, and he's been exchanged. He said David wasn't with them."

"He's right. He's jest right. He wasn't in that gang," replied Nairne, looking curiously at Heman as he spoke. "You don't mean to say that fellow was exchanged?" and he pointed his finger at the singer.

"Yea, verily," spoke up Heman, lifting his head and swelling out his chest, all unconscious of the ridicule implied in the words. "'Joseph gave them bread in exchange for horses.' Genesis xlvii. 17."

"O Heman! keep still, will you?" said Elijah angrily. "We want to know where David is. Won't you please tell us?" he added, turning again to Nairne.

"I don't know."

"But you said you saw him."

"I did; but it was some little time ago. But then I don't mind tellin' ye where it was."

"Where? Where?" said Henry, who could not control his excited feelings.

"Well, when I saw him he was one of the crew o' the Black Snake. That was about a fortnight ago, I should think. Let me see"—

"One of the crew of the Black Snake!" said Elijah in astonishment. "That can't be; for I was one of Lieutenant Gregory's party that captured her, and I know David wasn't among her men."

"He wasn't?" It was Nairne's turn to be astonished now. "Well, when I saw him he was, anyway. Wasn't he?" he added, turning to the dwarf.

The dwarf nodded his head emphatically; but, unobserved by Nairne, winked slowly and knowingly at Elijah, as he said, "He had a way of gettin' off, though."

"How? What do you mean?" said Elijah quickly.

"Wings. David had wings," said the dwarf solemnly.

Nairne laughed at the dwarf's words. "He's always a-havin' wings. He has them on his arms, and on his head, and I guess he has 'em on his tongue too. Well, I only wish he'd put some on me, for I've got to be movin'. I've an important engagement I must keep. Sorry I can't help ye more about yer friend; but I've told ye all I know, and that doesn't seem to help ye very much. Good-by," he called out as he and his companion started down the lane that led to the shore of the lake.

The boys little dreamed that his important engagement was to wait out on the point beyond the Harbor for the yawls which were to start with their loads of gunpowder in their dastardly attempt to blow up the Oneida.

Elijah and his companions turned and quickly entered the house to give the information they had received from Nairne. A long consultation followed, and it was late in the evening before Elijah and Henry departed for their home.

"I don't know just what to make of it," said Andrew, as he followed the boys out into the yard, and stood talking with them. The stars were shining clearly in the sky overhead, and the cool breeze from the lake made the air of that summer night soft and balmy. The crickets chirped, and the chorus of frogs in the swamp under the hill added their

share in declaring that they, too, felt the peacefulness of the night; but the troubled boys found little to soothe them, and the strange story Jim Nairne had told only increased their anxiety.

If David had been one of the crew of the Black Snake, why was it they had heard nothing from him? Surely he was not with them at the time of the capture, and not a word had been spoken by any of the prisoners that would lead them to believe that he had ever been among them.

"I don't know just what to think," said Andrew again. "I wouldn't believe Jim Nairne under oath, but he couldn't have had any motive in inventing such a lie as this."

"He didn't lie," said Elijah emphatically. "He told the truth; but that wink the dwarf gave me made me think there's something more to it. Maybe he helped Dave off."

"Then, why hasn't he shown up before this, I'd like to know? I'm afraid if he tried to get away he fell into worse trouble. He may have been shot."

"I don't know," replied Elijah, who was himself troubled by the same thought. "It'll all come out right, though; I know it will. But Henry and I've got to put out of this, or we sha'n't get home in time for breakfast. Good-night, Andrew."

"Good-night," replied Andrew; but he still stood and watched the boys as they walked rapidly down the road in the direction of their home.

He walked back and forth in the yard for a long time, thinking over the report he had heard; but with all his meditation, he could find no satisfactory solution. Once the clouds lifted, and, looking far out over the lake, he was startled as he thought he saw some object moving over the water; but the darkness quickly returned, and he concluded that he had been mistaken. He again entered the house, and soon silence reigned over all the region. Two hours later there was the sound of a gun; but Andrew was sleeping, and did not hear it. Nor did he hear the splash which followed the plunge of a young soldier as he leaped from a yawl near the brig Oneida.

The following morning was beautiful and calm. The lake was unruffled by a breeze, and gave no sign of the adventure of the preceding night, of which Andrew and his friends were all in ignorance.

Soon after breakfast a messenger from General Gaines came for Heman, and the singer hastily departed for Sackett's Harbor.

An hour later he returned with the information that he was to be sent to Niagara again as the bearer of a letter from General Gaines for General Brown. And, furthermore, it was requested that some one should accompany him; and Heman had eagerly suggested Henry's name, and reported that the general had given his consent.

"They're all stirred up at the Harbor," said Heman. "It seems that the British slipped in there last night in the dark, and tried to blow up the Oneida. 'A fire not blown shall consume him.' Job xx. 26."

"What's that you say?" said Andrew eagerly. "'Tried to blow up the Oneida?'"

"Yes. 'I will send a blast on Sennacherib.' Second Kings xix. 7."

"O Heman, don't preach! Tell the story." There were thoughts of Jim Nairne and the dwarf in Andrew's mind, and their visit to Sackett's Harbor the preceding day; and somehow he was connecting the events. He had no ground for his suspicion except his general feeling towards the man and his sly visits; but disasters had somehow followed more than one of them before this.

But Heman did not have much of a story to tell. The men at Sackett's Harbor were all highly excited over the attempt which had been made; but in his haste all he had been able to gain was that three yawls had crept close up to the Oneida in the night, and had been discovered just as they were about to blow the brig into fragments. Their plan had been thwarted, but Heman had not stopped to learn any further particulars.

"I'm going over there right away," said Andrew quickly.

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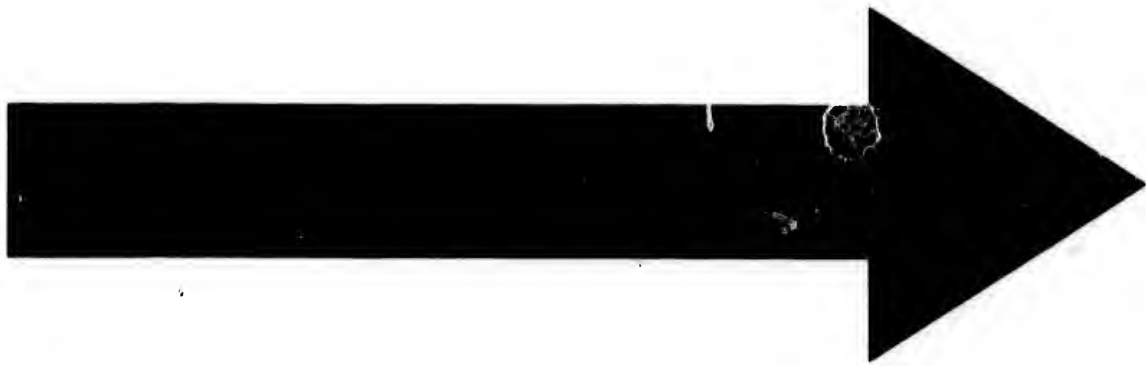
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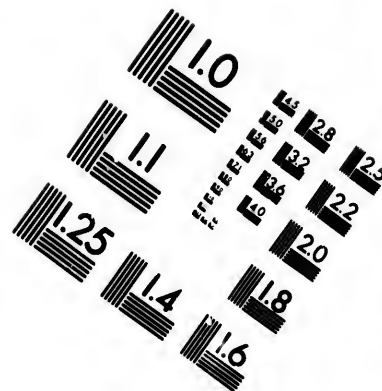
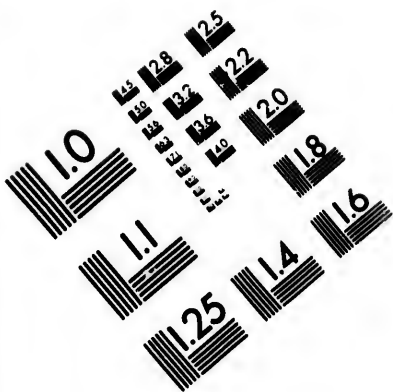
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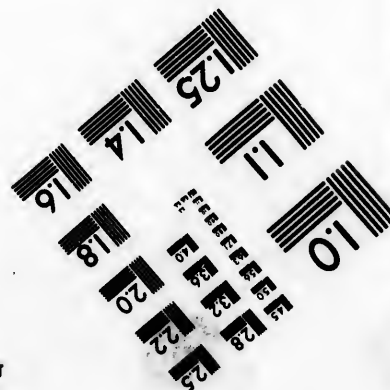
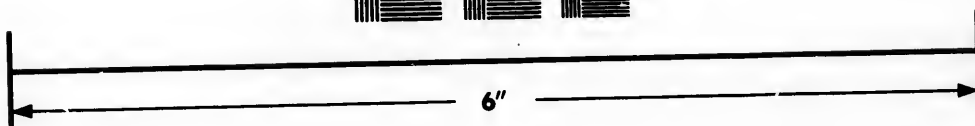
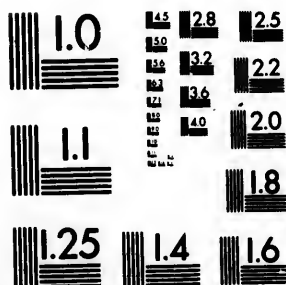
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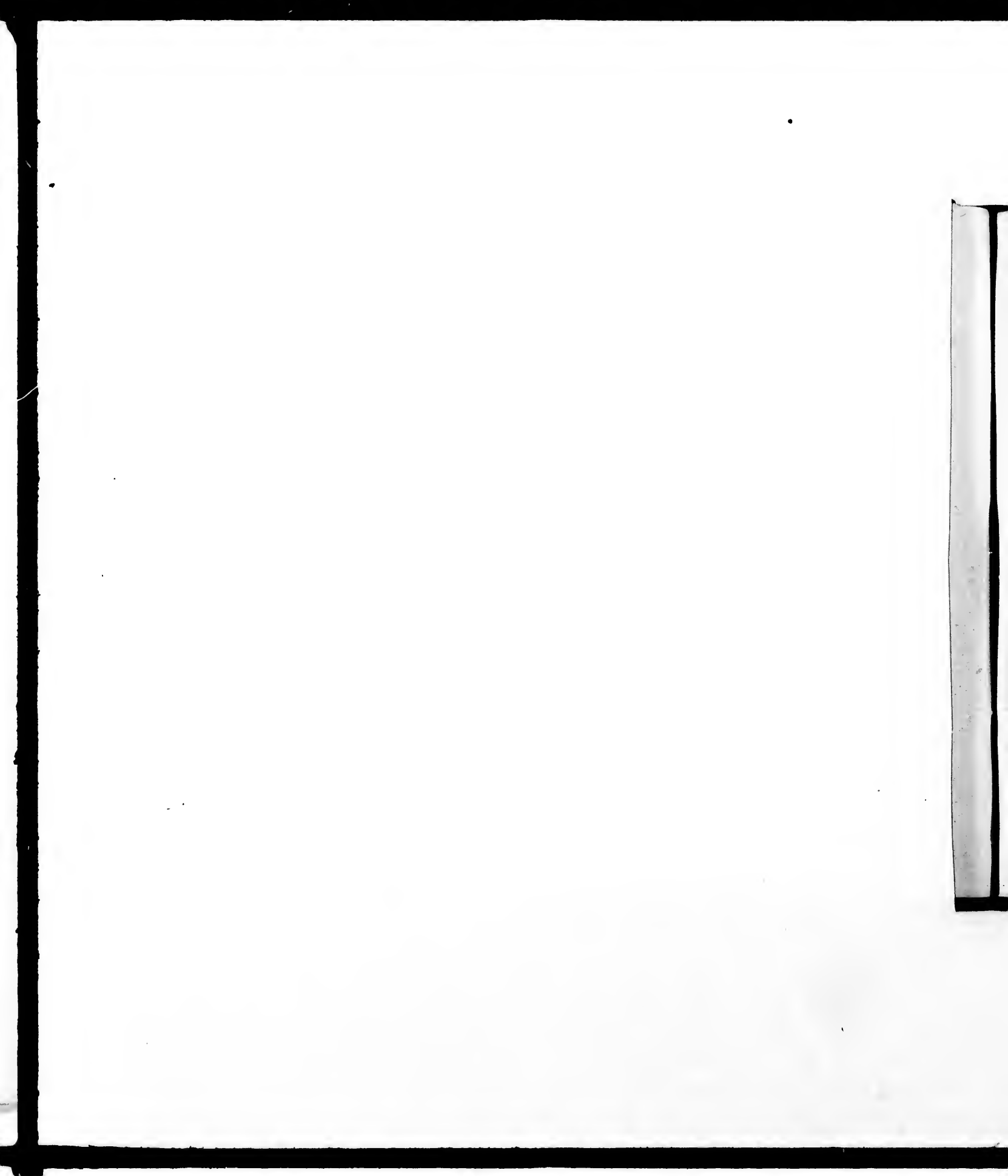
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ara. I've so much to do I can't say good-by even to your mother or your wife, to say nothing of the hermit and the cook. I hope you'll give them my best regards, and explain my great haste. 'The king's business required haste.' First Samuel xxi. 8. Though this isn't the king's business exactly, and yet I don't know but it is too."

"Good-by, Heman," called out Andrew, who already was leading his horse out of the barn. "I'll tell them what you say."

"Good-by," replied Heman, proudly speaking to his own horse, and soon started down the road.

"He's the queerest fellow I ever saw," thought Andrew, as he stopped for a moment to watch the lank and ungainly Heman as he rode away, his arms moving up and down with every motion of his horse. "I don't believe he's very happy on his steed, if the horse does belong to him. Hark! he's singing;" and he could hear the words of Heman's song, which he was pouring forth in his loudest tones, —

"Once on a time old Johnny Bull
Flew in a raging fury,
And swore that Jonathan should have
No trial, sir, by jury.
'And now,' said he, 'I'll tax the tea
Of all his sons and daughters.'
Then down he sat in burly state
And blustered like a grandee;
And in derision made a tune
Called Yankee Doodle Dandy.

Yankee Doodle, these are facts,
 Yankee Doodle Dandy—
 My son of wax, your tea I'll tax,
 Yankee Doodle Dandy.

A long war then they had, in which
 John was at last defeated,
 And 'Yankee Doodle' was the march
 To which his troops retreated.
 Cute Jonathan, to see them fly
 Could not restrain his laughter.
 'That tune,' said he, 'suits to a T;
 I'll sing it ever after.'
 Old Johnny's face, to his disgrace,
 Was flushed with beer and brandy,
 E'en while he swore to sing no more
 The Yankee Doodle Dandy.

Yankee Doodle, ho! ha! he!
 Yankee Doodle Dandy—
 We kept the tune, but not the tea,
 Yankee Doodle Dandy."

Heman now had gone so far that the remainder of the song Andrew could not hear; and he quickly mounted his horse, and started for Sackett's Harbor.

Meanwhile, Heman had gone on to Henry's home, and soon gained Mr. Spicer's consent for Henry to accompany him. The errand was not considered a dangerous one, and perhaps the father was glad to have the boy used as a courier instead of a soldier. However that may have been, Heman and Henry soon departed on their journey, Henry riding his own horse; and as the singer had been over the road before, they lost no time in trying to find the proper direction.

It was near noon of the following day when Henry called the attention of his companion to a man standing by the road not far before them.

"It's an Indian," said Heman. "'Deliver us from the heathen.' First Chronicles xvi. 35."

"It is an Indian," replied Henry, "and I know who it is, too;" and in a moment Garangula stepped forth into the road, and waited for them to approach.

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CHAPTER XXV

THE BATTLE IN THE DARK

AS soon as the young Indian saw that he was recognized, he held up his hands in token of his peaceful intentions, and the horsemen halted beside him.

"Where did you come from, Garangula?" said Henry. "We supposed of course that you were at Niagara, fighting the British, along with Red Jacket?"

Ignoring the question, Garangula asked another, "Where other boy?"

"What boy? Elijah?"

"No 'Lijah. David."

"He isn't home. Do you know anything about him? Where is he? The folks are 'most crazy because he doesn't show up, and his mother begins to think she'll never see him again. What do you know about him? Where is he?"

Garangula looked at the eager boy half contemptuously as he uttered his eager questions, and then said, "Heap tongue. Talk like squaw. Young 'Talk-talk."

Henry, somewhat abashed, made no reply, although his face flushed at the rebuke of the young Indian. Heman, however, who had been impatiently listening to the conversation, here broke in, "I pray you, Mr. Gar-angular, give no heed to this young man. He is indeed somewhat loquacious. 'Should a man full of talk be justified?' Job xi. 2. Nay, verily, it is indeed a fault to give too loose a bridle to the tongue. When I was a youth I was considered as one given over to loquacity, but when I became a man I put away childish things. He is 'Talk-talk,'" he continued, pointing to Henry, and evidently trying to adopt the language of the Indian. "Where David? Heap sorry gone."

Garangula looked at Heman a moment as if he did not know just what to make of him, then turning again to Henry, he briefly told his story. He had been Red Jacket's messenger, and was busily employed in carrying word from him and his six hundred warriors at Niagara to the tribes in the interior of the State. A few days before this time he had stopped at a blockhouse near the lake where supplies were kept for the soldiers on their march to the frontier. The two men there wanted to know something about the movements of Yeo's fleet, and had induced the young Indian to go out in his canoe to a British war schooner which anchored one day off the shore, and try to get some one of the crew to come ashore with him. No supplies were in the

blockhouse at the time, and they were not afraid of an attack, while they hoped to gain some information which might be useful. Garangula had done as the men requested; and to his great surprise he had found David Field on board the schooner, dressed in the uniform of the British sailor, and evidently one of the crew. He had brought David ashore with him; but an attack had followed, and somehow David had disappeared. What had become of him he could not say; and he had taken a few days to go on to Sackett's Harbor, and learn, if possible, what had become of his friend. This story he told in his disjointed manner; but Heman and Henry managed to understand the most of it.

"It's a comfort to know he's alive, anyway; but somebody's mistaken, that's all," said Henry. "Here's Jim Nairne and the dwarf declaring that he was down the St. Lawrence on the Black Snake, and then up comes Garangula, and says he left him out beyond Sodus, and saw him serving on the Magnet. You've had too much firewater, Garangula."

The Indian made no reply, and Heman spoke up. "He hath been worth a double hired servant to thee.' Deuteronomy, xv. 18. I wish we had more men like that on our side who could be in two places at the same time. Now, if Chauncey had his double, and doubles of all his men out at Niagara, we wouldn't mind his being shut up as he is in Sackett's Harbor. Well" —

But Garangula had turned abruptly away, and was rapidly walking up the rough road. Heman and Henry, finding that nothing more was to be learned from the Indian, resumed their journey, and they, too, had soon left the place far behind them.

They were sadly puzzled by the conflicting stories concerning David's whereabouts; but they tried to draw such comfort as they could from the fact that although the men differed in their accounts of where the missing boy was, they coincided in declaring that he was still alive, and that was something anyway.

They now gave their entire energy to the journey before them. It was rough riding, and much of the way lay through a forest that was largely unbroken.

They stopped over night and changed horses, Heman leaving especial directions for the care of his own steed, which he hoped to have again on his return.

It was on the morning of the 23d of July when at last they arrived at their journey's end, and quickly made their way to the quarters of General Brown. The commander hastily opened the letter from General Gaines which they had brought; and as he read, his face could not conceal his disappointment. "I sent word to Chauncey," he said to one of the officers who was standing near him, "that if he would meet me on the lake shore with his fleet north of Fort George, that together we could break

up the enemy in the whole of Upper Canada. I told him that I did not believe Sir James would fight, and Kingston would then be an easy mark."

"What word do you get?" said the officer.

"General Gaines writes me that the commodore is sick, and the fleet isn't ready yet. That changes all our plans, and I think we'd better fall back to Chippewa at once. I don't believe all these stories about the re-enforcements of the British. Perhaps we can draw Riall on after us; or if we don't do that, we can get some provisions from Schlosser across the river; and then without any baggage to bother us, we can march against Riall by the way of Queenston, and fight him wherever we find him."

Heman and Henry were to remain in the army until such a time as General Brown should wish to send word again by them to Sackett's Harbor; and we may be sure they were interested spectators of the events which quickly followed.

The following day the army marched back to the Chippewa, and encamped on the south side of the stream. They planned to make the next day one of entire rest; and as they were on the very place where the previous battle had been fought, they felt reasonably sure of their position.

The next morning dawned clear and hot. The waters of the lake were like glass, and the sky was cloudless. The army was glad of its opportunity to rest; and the men were preparing to pass the day,

which promised to be a hot one, in idleness. About midday a courier hastened into the camp with the word that five of the vessels of Yeo's fleet had arrived during the night, and that boats could be seen moving up the river.

A few minutes later another man, almost breathless from his exertions, arrived with the startling information that a thousand of the British were landing at Lewiston, and that the American baggage and stores at Schlosser would be captured if something were not done at once. These rumors were only partially true, but they called for prompt action; and believing the best method of drawing the attention of the British would be to threaten an attack on the forts at the mouth of the river, the general ordered the ever-ready Scott to march upon these places.

It was between five and six o'clock when Scott and his twelve hundred men crossed Chippewa bridge; but none of them believed many of the British were near, as they thought they all were on the other side of the river.

Down near Table Rock, not far from the Great Falls, dwelt the Widow Wilson; and when the vanguard of Scott's little army drew near her home, what was their surprise to see a number of British officers there, who at the sight of the advancing army quickly mounted their horses, and rode away, leaving a cloud of dust behind them.

The widow expressed her regret at the tardy approach of the men, assuring them that if they had been a little quicker they might have captured the British general Riall and his staff. She also told them that eight hundred of the British regulars, more than three hundred militia, and some pieces of artillery, were all in the woods near by.

Scott, who had just come up, did not believe her; for had they not received word that very day that the British had crossed the Niagara at Lewiston? This could be only a little remnant of the army, and he would quickly scatter it. He sent one of his lieutenants back to General Brown with the word he had just heard, however, and then with his followers started towards the woods to drive out the enemy.

What was that which he saw? The woman's words were true; and there, directly before him, drawn up in battle array in Lundy's Lane, — a road leading from the Niagara River to the head of Lake Ontario, — were Riall and his re-enforcements.

What could he do? It was a moment of great peril. Retreat was almost impossible, and to stand still was even worse. Already the enemy had begun to fire at them, and then the impulsive young officer did what might have been expected of him; he made up his mind to fight then and there, although his troops were greatly outnumbered. Perhaps he could make Riall believe the entire American army was

after him. Before him lay forty-five hundred men, some of whom had fought with Wellington, while he had only twelve hundred to follow at his command.

Nevertheless, he gave the word to advance, and soon found himself within the hollow which the crescent, into which the British had formed themselves, made. Powerful field batteries were before him, and he already was within the range of the canister shot. Suddenly he saw a blank space in the line before him between the British and the river. He ordered Major Jessup to creep cautiously behind the bushes there with his men, and try to turn the enemy's flank.

It was twilight now, and that greatly aided him; and the major succeeded in his attempt, and gained a position where he could keep the re-enforcements from approaching.

And he did still more. "Make room for General Riall!" shouted one of that general's aids, never thinking that the men before him could be other than their own soldiers. "Ay, ay, sir!" shouted an American captain in reply, allowing the aids to pass him, and then with a band of his own men presenting bayonets, he demanded the surrender of all the little party.

Riall was too badly wounded to resist; and in a few moments he had been sent in person to General Scott, who ordered him to be sent to the rear, and

cared for in every way. Scott, meanwhile, had been fighting all the time, and against fearful odds. He had driven back the right, and Jessup had successfully turned the left; but the major, finding he could not hold the position, dashed back through the lines, and rejoined his commander. The centre of the British was, however, still standing like a rock; but it was nine o'clock now, and the pale moon gave all the light there was.

General Brown and fresh troops now arrived. The messenger had brought him word, and the booming of the cannon told the rest of the story. At once a new line was formed to give Scott's troops a rest, and the battle went on.

The battery on the hill must be taken. That was the key to the position; and as soon as he realized it, General Brown turned to Colonel Miller, a veteran of the Revolution, and ordered him to take his regiment and storm the place. "I'll try, sir," replied Miller, as he immediately gave the order for his men to advance.

Not three hundred men were with him, but steadily up the hill the soldiers made their way, concealed by the darkness, and creeping along by an old rail-fence, and through the low bushes. They were within two rods of the battery, when Miller saw the gunners standing with the torches in their hands, waiting for the word to fire.

He whispered his orders to his men to rest their

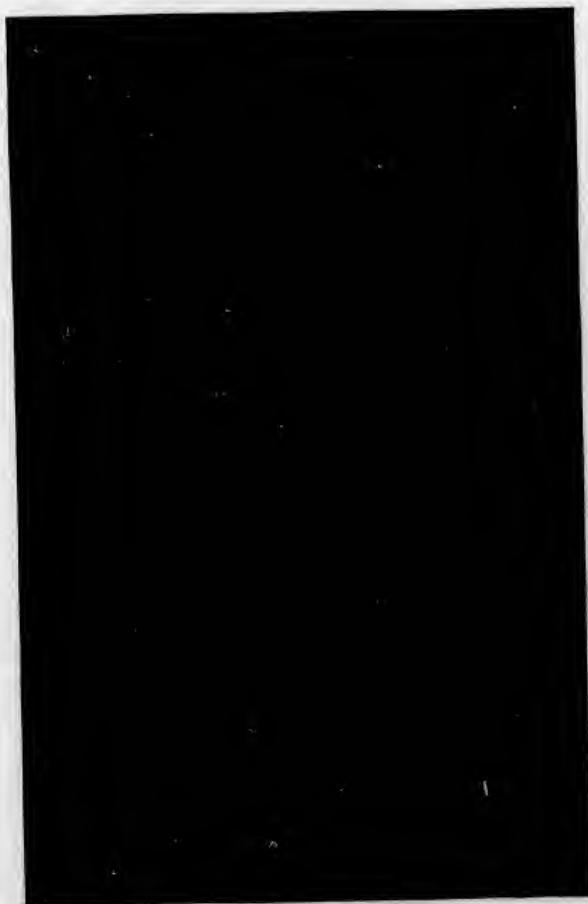
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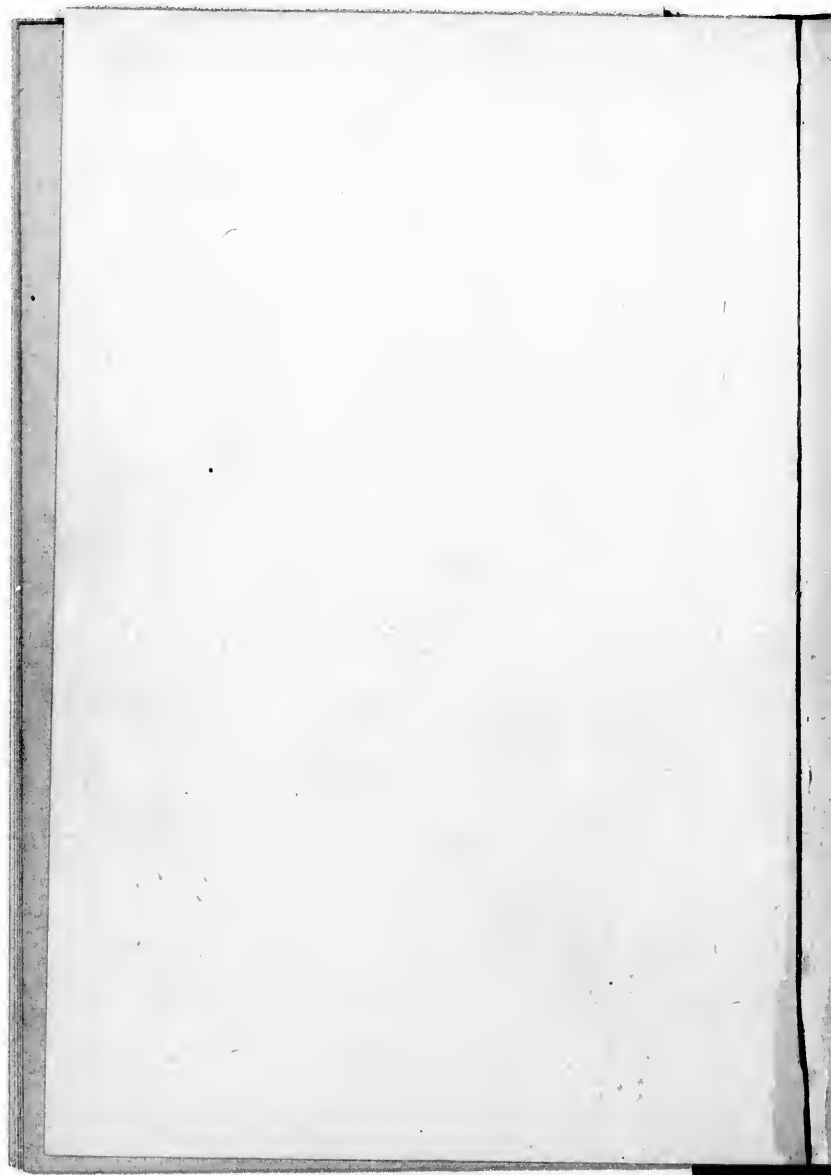
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"They were within two rods of the battery." Page 276.



muskets on the fence, and pick off the gunners; and when the volley sounded, not a man was left by the guns. Then, with a shout, the Americans rushed in, and in a moment a murderous fire of the artillery poured upon them. Many fell to the ground. The British tried to charge bayonets; but still the brave men fought on in a hand-to-hand contest. At last the British were pushed slowly back, the place had been won, and the seven great brass cannon were taken.

Three times the British tried to regain the place, but each time were unsuccessful. At their fourth attempt, re-enforcements for the Americans had arrived, and the struggle for the battery ceased. It was one of the bravest deeds, that of Miller and his men, in all the war.

Meanwhile, Scott and his men were fighting and holding their position, and half-past ten o'clock had come. The heavy smoke of the battle refused to rise in the summer air, and the men were surrounded by darkness. General Brown and General Scott had both been severely wounded before this time, and had been carried from the field; and when it was seen that the British had indeed been repulsed, the command rested upon General Ripley, a good man, but, as we already know, too slow and timid to do much.

Stragglers were to be seen moving about on every side in the darkness; and Brown told Ripley to fall

back to Chippewa and reorganize, and then come back again, and renew the battle at sunrise.

When daylight came, Ripley was at Chippewa; but frightened by rumors that the enemy had been re-enforced, he did not move. The captured cannon, which had been left on the hill until daybreak, could not be gained now, and most of the advantage of the battle was lost. Indeed, the British claimed that they had won, because the Americans did not hold their ground, nor keep the cannon they had captured; while the Americans claimed they had won, because they had driven the British back, and taken the cannon in the fight. The Americans lost eight hundred and fifty men, and the British eight hundred and seventy-eight. The British troops in the fight numbered forty-five hundred, while the Americans had twenty-six hundred in the engagement. Lundy's Lane was a great battle.

General Brown had been shot in the thigh, and wounded in the side. Scott had two horses killed under him; and when he himself was shot in the left shoulder, after the battle he was carried to Chippewa, then on to Buffalo, and at last to a little hamlet named Java, where the British general Riall was also.

General Brown was so irritated at the failure of Ripley to do anything on the morning after the battle, that in hot haste he sent for Heman and Henry. He would send a word this time to Sackett's Harbor

that would mean something! And as soon as the two men he had summoned received his word, they hastened to his quarters, and soon were standing in the presence of the wounded, and yet undaunted, general.

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CHAPTER XXVI

DAVID'S CONFESSION

IT was a sudden impulse which had led David Field to make his quick plunge into Lake Ontario. He realized the desperate situation of the men, whom a chance shot, if it struck the powder, might send into eternity in the very same manner in which they had planned to send the crew of the Oneida. He also thought that in their haste they would not stop to look after him; for what would the loss of one man be, compared with the danger into which a moment's delay might bring them all? Accordingly, he had acted on the impulse of the moment; and before he fully realized what he was doing, he found himself in the water.

As soon as he came to the surface again, he found that all his strength was required to keep himself afloat. The boots he wore filled quickly with water, and his clothing seemed to him like lead. In spite of all his endeavors, he was splashing in the water in his efforts to keep his head in the air. He knew that if he could only maintain himself for a few minutes, all the boats would have passed him, and then

he was certain he would have but little difficulty in removing his heavy boots and a portion of his clothing, and could make his way to the shore; and if he once could gain that, then home and freedom would again be his. The reward would be worth all his efforts, and he put forth his entire strength to keep himself above the water.

In a moment, however, he saw another boat coming directly towards him. In the darkness it seemed to him to be twice its ordinary size, and was coming with the speed of a racehorse. His first impulse was to sink, or remain under water until the yawl passed over him: and if he had not been impeded by his heavy clothing, doubtless he would have been able to have done so; but in spite of his efforts to be quiet, his splashing was heard, and in a moment he felt the grasp of a strong hand upon his shoulder, and he was drawn through the water after the boat.

He struggled fiercely to free himself, but without avail, for the man did not relax his grasp, and speaking in a low voice to one of his companions, called for his aid; and before he fairly realized what had occurred, David felt another hand grasp him, and he was lifted quickly into the boat, and thrown upon the bottom, where he lay almost stunned.

For some moments he did not move, and was only dimly conscious that the men were making desperate efforts to leave the harbor. He could hear their breathing as they pulled at the oars; but they made

little noise, and the thick darkness was all in their favor. Their oars had been muffled, and consequently made no sound as the men dipped them deep into the water, and exerted all their strength.

David then knew that it was one of the boats of the Magnet which had picked him up; for the Oneida's men would not have muffled oars, nor would they be so silent in their work. Indeed, even then David could hear the voices of men in the distance; but they sounded fainter and fainter, and he knew the British were gaining in the race.

And they had every inducement to exert all their strength, for a chance shot might hit one of the kegs of powder; and David, only partially realizing what was going on about him, wondered how it would seem to be lifted high into the air by an explosion. It did not seem to him that he cared very much what the outcome might be. Every effort he had made to escape had been futile, and it almost seemed that he was destined to remain among his captors.

And now his condition would be far worse than it had been. They had been suspicious of him before. Of that fact David was well aware; but he had been treated as if he were one of the crew, and the most of his hardship had consisted in the fact that he was kept from his home and comrades, and compelled to serve on board of one of the vessels of the enemy. Now, however, all would be changed. The men would be angry at the failure of their at-

tempt to blow up the Oneida, and would not deal gently with one who had tried to leave them in the lurch; and they might even suspect him of being in a measure the cause of their disaster.

He was now for the first time conscious that he had received an injury of some kind. His head was paining him severely, and when he placed his hand on his cheek he realized that he must be bleeding. Perhaps the men had thrown him so hard when they had lifted him into the boat, that his head had struck against something. Still he had felt no pain, and even now was only dimly conscious of his position.

Meanwhile, the men were rowing hard in their desperation, and he knew that they must have gone a long distance from the fleet by this time. It had been long since he had heard the sound of voices, and doubtless they had succeeded in leaving their pursuers so far behind them, that there was no prospect of being overtaken. That hope had failed too, and David became almost indifferent. It seemed to make but little difference to him now. Disappointment was to be his portion always, and he might as well be in one place as in another.

Suddenly he realized that the men had ceased rowing. He could hear the yawl as it rubbed against something, and when the men arose he knew that they had returned to the Magnet.

"Up ye come, my lad!" said one of the men as he lifted him by the arms. "We're all safe and sound

now, and the Yanks can whistle for their game." Another sailor took hold of his other arm, and David in a moment found himself on board the schooner. No time was lost; and although he was left to himself, and had no share in the work, the Magnet soon spread her sails, and started for the open lake.

Then only did the tense feelings of the men find relief. They laughed and sang, and talked of their exploit, but David had little interest in the proceedings. His head was paining him, and his heart was so heavy, it seemed to him to make little difference where they went or what was being done.

"Hello, my lad! what's the trouble?" David was sitting on the deck, holding his head in his hands. He recognized the voice as Jack's, but made no reply. "That was a cur'os kind of a' accident ye had, David. I didn't just know whether ye fell overboard a purpose, or not. I thought it was all up with ye, for I didn't have any spare time just then to look after anybody. Tom told me how he yanked ye out o' the water, and 'twas a mighty close shave, too, let me tell ye."

Still David made no reply; and Jack, peering more closely into his face, said, "What's the matter with you, lad? Be ye sick?"

"I think I'm hurt, Jack. My head feels so."

"Hurt, be ye? We'll see about that. Come below with me, and I'll look after ye."

The rough sailor, now all kindness and attention,

helped David to stand, and, throwing his strong arm around him, partly led and partly carried him below, and then laid him in one of the bunks, and removed his wet clothing. He soon had a light; and as he held it over his friend's head, he said, "Hurt! Well, I guess ye be! Yer head looks like a biled lobster. Not that biled lobsters are over plenty in this pond, but ye look like one all the same. Now, how'd it happen?"

"I think I struck my head when I fell."

"That's no way to do. Never go into a yawl head foremost. That's always been my rule and belief. But I'll look after ye. Jest you wait till I get some warm water. I'll be back in a minit."

In a brief time the sailor returned with a bowl of warm water, and tenderly bathed the face of his young friend. Then he took a piece of linen cloth, and wrapped it about his forehead, and said, "Now, ye jest go to sleep, and in the mornin' ye'll be fit to fight the Yankees 'gain. That is, if ye want to fight 'em. Sometimes I've had my doubts about it. Hello here! what's the matter now?"

His young patient was sobbing. The pain and disappointment had combined to make David so utterly wretched, that now when he found himself again on board the Magnet, and every prospect of escape gone, he could no longer control himself. Homesick and wretched, the weary boy at last had given way to his grief.

Jack waited in silence for a few moments, moving about, and apparently busying himself in other duties. He remained quiet until David's sobs ceased, and then turning to the bunk, said, "Now, ye jest tell yer uncle all about it."

David hesitated a moment, and then said, "Jack, you've been good to me. I don't know what I'd have done without you."

"Sho'! Ev'ry man aboard the Magnet would give ye a lift. Don't you take it to heart. I won't do so any more, if it makes you feel so bad about it."

"That's not it, Jack," said David, smiling feebly. "But I'm just so wretched I almost wish I was dead."

"Don't ye give way that way. Yer ballast needs 'justin'; that's all."

"But, Jack, I don't belong here."

"Yes, ye do belong here. Why not, I'd like to know? Who picked ye up on the lake? Who hauled ye out o' the water? Who rescued ye from them torments back by the blockhouse? The Magnet's men ev'ry time. Where'd ye be now, I'd like to know, if it wasn't for the crew o' the Magnet, what is the best sailin' vessel on Lake Ontario? Yes, ye do belong here."

"No, I don't," replied David stoutly.

"Whar do ye belong, then?"

"Sackett's Harbor." As Jack made no reply, David continued, "I'm a Yankee, and I don't care

if I do say it. I was captured last spring, and then I wasn't sent on with the other prisoners to Toronto at all. Probably they've all been exchanged before this, and I've just been kept right at it all the time. I've tried to get away, but it doesn't do a bit of good. I'm just tied up, and that's all there is about it." Once started, David went on, and told Jack the entire story.

The sailor was silent for a time when David had finished his story; but at last he said slowly, "Well, David, I don't mind tellin' ye that I've suspected somethin' o' this all along. When ye fell overboard last night I didn't believe it was all accidental-like; and to tell the truth, I didn't care to stop, even if I could, to get a young fellow that was cryin' for his mammy."

David felt his cheeks flush, but the sailor could not see them in the dim light. It would be a long time before he would give way again to his feelings! But he said nothing; and Jack went on, "Now, don't ye deceive yerself, David; I sha'n't lift my little finger to help ye. I'm fer the British, 'all the way up and all the way down, from the sole o' my foot to the top o' my crown,' which same is po'try. I do feel sorry fer ye, no mistake about that; but I hain't much use fer Yanks. Last year I owned a little house at Toronto. Sally and the babies lived there when I was out on the lake, which was most o' the time when there wasn't ice; but some o' your

brave men came along last year, and burned up my house, that's what they did."

David was silent. He himself had gone on the expedition against Toronto, and had very distinct memories of the time, and perhaps not all of them were pleasurable.

"No, I won't help ye a bit," resumed Jack. "I wouldn't lift my finger to let ye go back and go to fightin' aga'n; not that I think your fightin' would amount to much. Still, I don't mind sayin' some time I may be blind; who knows? But you must do one thing now. Don't tell another livin' soul what you've told me. They're suspicious o' you now, and 'twouldn't do no good, anyway. Jest you keep on jest the same as you have been a-doin', and leave all the rest. And don't go to tryin' fool things any more, either. I'm glad I'm the only one aboard what knows this. I sha'n't peep, but I don't want no one else to know it. Now you go to sleep, and in the mornin' you'll feel fine as a fiddle."

He immediately sought his own bunk, and David was soon asleep. In the morning he felt much better. He was sorry that he had spoken to Jack, but it was too late now for regrets. He was the only one on board who knew it, and that was some comfort. He dressed himself, and went on deck. The first men he saw were Jim Nairne and the dwarf, who looked at him in astonishment, and then quickly approached him.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE YANKEE PRISONER

THE surprise of David was no greater than that of Jim Nairne and his diminutive companion. For a moment they looked at each other in silence; and then Nairne, after glancing about the deck and seeing that they were unobserved, with a low laugh said, "Well, my young friend, you seem about the most pervasive chap I ever looked at. I thought I left you on an island down by the St. Lawrence, and here you are a full-fledged member of the crew of the Magnet. How did you get here?"

As David made no reply, the dwarf murmured, "Wings;" but there was a touch of sympathy in his words that caused his companion to laugh. "That's it! That's it!" he said. "The imp's just struck it. Ye've had wings, David. That must be it. Tell me, now, have you joined the crew in dead earnest?"

David looked around before he replied. It was a calm and beautiful morning, and there was just wind enough to keep the schooner in motion. She was headed towards Canada; of that he felt certain. He knew now the part which the treacherous man

before him had taken in the preceding night. Doubtless he had been the pilot who had guided the yawls in their approach to the Oneida, and he had not much doubt that he had been in consultation with Commodore Chauncey or some of the officers at Sackett's Harbor within a day or two. Perhaps he had brought them also information of the plans of the British, and was still busy in playing his double game. If he should betray him to the commander of the Magnet, of whose good opinion he then did not feel at all certain, his own present condition would be made much worse; and yet he was in a measure helpless. What could he do? Jim Nairne evidently was in the good graces of the Magnet's men, and a word from him would be at once received and acted upon. These thoughts all quickly flashed through David's mind, and he realized that he was helpless if the treacherous man should care to betray him.

"Yes, I'm one of the Magnet's crew for the present; but I'm no more British than you are," he said. "The only difference is, that you can leave when you want to, while I can't. They're too fond of my company."

Nairne laughed as he replied, "You'll have to try the dwarf's suggestion. I sha'n't tell of you, though; that is, if you won't tell of me." He waited a moment; but as David made no reply he said, "I saw some o' your folks yesterday."

"Where? Who was it?" said David eagerly.

"Oh! I saw Andrew and one o' them boys what goes around with you; and then there was a long, red-headed, gawn, yawky fellow too. It was up near your house, and I met 'em in the road. They made particular inquiries about you."

"Was everything all right?" asked David, his eyes filling at the thought of his old home. "That must have been Heman you saw. How did he get home? He was taken prisoner the same time I was."

"I guess that's the chap, but I don't know how he got away back any more than I know how you came to be aboard the Magnet. I told your brother you was on the Black Snake; but he wouldn't believe it, for they took the whole crew in."

"What do you mean? Prisoners? Did they capture the Black Snake?"

"They took her crew, but not the boat. Ye see, the way of it was" —

But Jack was approaching now; and Jim Nairne turned abruptly, and said no more. The dwarf, however, lingered, but paid no attention to the curious glances of the sailor. Ignoring the presence of the little man, David quickly told Jack of what Jim Nairne had been telling him, omitting, however, all reference to the use which the American leaders were making of him, and the manner in which he was trading with both sides.

"I'll kind o' keep my eyes and ears open, David,"

replied Jack; "and if I hear of anything he's said, I'll tell ye. But you take my advice. You jest do yer best on the Magnet, and don't ye go to makin' any attempts to get away. It'll all turn out right fer ye in the end, if ye have a bit o' patience."

"That sounds all right," said David; "but I'd just like to have you have a dose of it, and see how you'd feel."

"I've told ye the truth, my lad, just the same," said Jack. "I should shoot at ye myself if I saw ye tryin' to steal away. I'd have to. There ain't been no blood spilt yet on the lake this season, and it doesn't look like as if there would be. Chauncey jest doesn't dare to fight. He sticks to Sackett's Harbor like a rat in a hole. Sir James has tried to draw him out, but he won't come. So I don't think ye're likely to have to pull a trigger at any o' yer relations; and if ye only could just see it as it is, ye'd know we was yer best relations, too, and ye wouldn't want to keep up this tarnal nonsense. I'll keep my eye open fer ye, though; I will, honest."

During the day Jim Nairne seemed to avoid David. The young prisoner tried several times to get into conversation with him again; for he was very desirous of hearing something more about his home, and the condition of the fleet and the army. There were rumors of the battles near Niagara; but as we know, each side claimed a victory, and the reports were not at all satisfactory.

But try as he would, all his efforts were unavailing; and when at nightfall the Magnet drew near the Canadian shore, Jim Nairne and his strange little companion were taken ashore in a yawl, and not a word more could he gain.

During the ten days which followed, David became convinced that Nairne had not told of him; and as Jack also declared he had not heard a word of suspicion expressed, he was satisfied that the freebooter had been content to leave matters as they were.

"If he thinks I won't tell, though, he's mightily mistaken," thought David. "I only wish I had the chance. I'd explain all about that attempt to blow up the Oneida. Still, it turned out all right; that is, all right for the Oneida, but not for me."

The Magnet had been cruising about the lake in an aimless manner, and David could not understand just what the plans of the British were. The various vessels of Yeo's fleet seemed to be gathering in Kingston Harbor, and one day there was great excitement among them all. The Magnet had been farther out on the lake than the others, and in the distance five sails could be seen. They steadily held on their way; and it was not long before it was surmised that the sails belonged to Chauncey's fleet, which at last had put to sea.

The Magnet quickly put about, and in a brief time it was known that Chauncey's fleet had come to blockade that of Yeo's within the harbor at Kings-

ton. And a thorough blockade it was! Not a vessel dared to leave the shelter of the harbor. Again and again Chauncey tried to draw Sir James into an engagement of some kind, but every offer was declined without thanks by the blockaded nobleman.

David was in a fever of excitement; but as the days passed, and nothing was done, he began to be almost in despair. He did not know just what he would do if an engagement took place, but trusted that somehow in the excitement he might be able to slip away. If the worst came, there was still a chance for him to be exchanged; for doubtless many prisoners would be taken by each side. Meanwhile, the white sails of Chauncey's fleet could be seen every morning as they cruised on and off out beyond the harbor, and every one of Yeo's followers kept safely within the shelter of Kingston Harbor.

"I thought you said Sir James was wild to get a chance at Chauncey," said David one morning to Jack. "He doesn't seem to have quite the appetite he did. What's the trouble?"

"Pooh! Chauncey wouldn't try to touch us till he had more of a fleet than we had. Sir James will give him a dose yet."

"He's a good while preparing it."

"He's preparing it all the same. You've seen the St. Lawrence up on the stocks when we've been ashore, haven't you?"

"Yes. She's a rouser, and no mistake. How many guns will she carry?"

"A hundred and twelve. She'll be the biggest craft ever launched on Lake Ontario when she's finished, and that won't take long now. And just as soon as she's ready you'll see Chauncey turn tail like a whipped puppy."

"Well, Sir James seems to be doing the very thing now that you've been blaming Chauncey for. He won't fight till he's got a big advantage on his side. I wish he'd run out of the harbor now just once, and try titles."

"No doubt. No doubt," laughed Jack. "But, David, a little party of us are going ashore now. Don't you want to go along too?"

"Where are you going?"

"We're going down the harbor, and land on the shore over there about a mile from Kingston. Oh, we won't go far enough out to run any risk from Chauncey's guns! You needn't be afraid."

"Yes, I'll go, and glad of the chance," said David, who was thoroughly tired of the monotony on board the Magnet.

In a few minutes Jack and two men besides David were pulling for the shore over on the right of the harbor. The country had been largely cleared in the region, and there were many farms that bore evidence of the prosperity of their owners. The August day was hot and still, and the surface of the harbor was

almost like glass. The only signs of war were the vessels in the harbor, and the distant sails of Chauncey's fleet that could be seen far out on the lake.

David had but little interest in the expedition, and had gone more for the sake of a change than anything else. He had almost abandoned the hope of any engagement, and knew, as soon as the mighty St. Lawrence was ready, that Jack's words would be true, and Chauncey's fleet would without doubt be driven back to the shelter of Sackett's Harbor.

The men rowed leisurely; for the day was warm, and they were in no haste. David did not know on what errand they were going, and indeed he cared but little. Several times he had gone ashore with Jack after provisions before this, and he had no thought but this was to be for the same purpose.

The men soon landed, and the yawl was made fast to a little dock; and then they turned to walk up the road towards a little farmhouse. The cows in the pasture by the roadside were lying in the shade of the trees, and looked lazily at the party as if they were too well satisfied with their present position to give any heed to passers-by. The hens were fluttering in the dust of the road, and almost refused to leave at the approach of the strangers. The locusts in the trees sent forth their shrill music. It was an ideal summer day, and only the sight of the distant fleet gave any tokens of the presence of war's rude alarms.

Before they turned into the yard a small boy rushed forth to meet them, evidently deeply impressed by the sight and presence of the British sailors.

"Pa sent me," he said as he drew near the men.

"Oh! he did, did he?" answered Jack, laughing. "Well, I'm glad he did. What did he send you for?"

"He see ye a-comin' from the schooner, and he told me to come out and tell ye."

"Well, tell us, sonny. You excite our curiosity. It's too hot to wait long."

"There's a Yankee sailor up in the house," said the boy in a loud whisper.

"A what?" The men were interested immediately.

"A Yankee sailor. He's in the kitchen havin' some dinner."

"Your pa's the kind of a pa to have," said Jack. "Now, men, we want that fellow. We'll go up to the kitchen-door and speak to him. Come on, but be quiet about it."

The little party advanced carefully, David being especially interested now, and approached the kitchen-door. They were near the doorstep, when the Yankee sailor came out of the house, and, greatly startled, looked at the approaching men. It was too late to retreat; and David saw that the man before them was Andrew Field, his own brother.

CHAPTER XXVIII

UNEXPECTED VISITORS

ANDREW FIELD had ridden rapidly to Sackett's Harbor as soon as his friend Heman had disappeared down the road. The report which he had brought of the attempt to blow up the Oneida had been sufficient to arouse all his interest; and in a brief time he found himself in a group of excited men who were standing in the street, and talking of the great event of the preceding night.

Heman had been correctly informed, and the keg of powder which the British had left behind them in their hasty flight had afforded ample evidence of their intentions. Naturally the men at Sackett's Harbor were highly incensed, and vowed vengeance against the men who had formed the plan, and had so nearly succeeded in their efforts. It is scarcely worth discussing now whether they on their side would not have done the same thing if it had been within their power; but as we shall see a little farther on, a project was formed almost equal to that of the British, which they now were so bitterly condemning.

"It's an outrage, Andrew!" said Lieutenant Gregory, as he recognized his friend, and approached him in the crowd. "Did any one ever hear of such a dastardly thing?"

"Never," replied Andrew, who fully shared in the feeling. "Do they know who it was that tried it?"

"No. We didn't even know that any of the British were around here. It'll teach us to be on our guard a little more after this. They almost caught us napping. The men are feeling worse than ever about being cooped up here. But we're about ready now, and shall put to sea in a week, I think."

"Do you know, I think Jim Nairne could have told something about it if he had wanted to. I saw him over by my house yesterday afternoon. It's funny this thing should have happened just after his visit. I'm afraid of him."

"So am I. He's a rascal, there's no doubt about that. But he gives the commodore lots of points he can use, and so I suppose he shuts his eyes to the rest of it. If he was at the bottom of this thing last night, though, he deserves to be strung up on the yardarms. They say the British yawls cleared out at a lively pace last night. I suppose they thought that if a stray bullet should happen to hit one of those kegs of powder, it might give them a dose of their own medicine."

"Served them right if it had," replied Andrew angrily.

"We're all agreed as to that. But look here, Andrew, I've been thinking of something for some time. I wish you'd serve aboard the General Pike. I was talking with the commodore yesterday about it, and he's agreed. You can have a berth as middy."

"What's that you say?"

"Just what I mean. You're more used to the water than you are to the land. All you'll have to do will be to take the sergeant's stripes off your arm. You've got glory enough on land; now take a turn at it on the water."

"That's what I'll do," said Andrew eagerly. "I'd a good deal rather be on the General Pike than tramping about on foot. When do you think the fleet will start?"

"In about a week."

"I'll be ready then. You can count on me."

Andrew rode back home filled with the thoughts of the new project. Already he had served on the Lady of the Lake; for such was the freedom of the times, that it was no uncommon thing for sailors and soldiers to be interchanged. And his preference all the time had been for the water, and now his highest ambition was about to be gratified.

Within the next few days many soldiers were sent forward to Sackett's Harbor; and the general in command of the post began to think he had a sufficient following to warrant him in starting for the

Niagara frontier, where most of the fighting on land was being done. He was delaying now only for Commodore Chauncey, who was expecting to sail almost every day, as his fleet was nearly ready. Arrangements were made at the farm whereby the hermit and the cook were to oversee the place. Elijah Spicer, or Corporal Spicer as he was known among the soldiers, was to go too, but as one of the land force.

At last, on the 31st of July, Commodore Chauncey, somewhat better of his illness, but still far from well, was carried on board the Superior, part of the forces of General Izard were embarked, and the squadron of nine boats sailed away from Sackett's Harbor. The Superior was the flagship, and had sixty-two guns, while the General Pike, on which were Lieutenant Gregory and Andrew Field, had only twenty-eight; but all the men were confident, and the tedium of the long delay at last was broken.

It was a glorious sight the squadron presented as it sailed away on that July morning. There was a good stiff breeze blowing; and the day seemed to correspond to the bright, fresh appearance of the fleet, fitted out as most of the vessels were with new sails and new rigging. The men were singing; and as the "point" was passed, and Sackett's Harbor disappeared from sight, there was a feeling of exhilaration felt by all. The sight of the open lake was greeted

with a shout as each vessel gained it; and even Andrew, who was leaving wife and mother and home behind him, shared in the feeling of all on board.

On the 5th of August the fleet appeared off the mouth of Niagara River. Izard's men having been landed at the mouth of the Genesee River, the commodore decided to leave the Jefferson, Sylph, and Oneida to blockade some British vessels which were there, and with the remainder of his fleet sailed away in search of Yeo, who had so frequently expressed his eagerness to meet the Yankee boats, and administer to them the castigation which he declared they richly deserved.

Not finding Yeo's fleet at Toronto, Commodore Chauncey sailed away for Kingston; and there, as we already know, he discovered the British vessels enjoying the repose to be found within the harbor.

The situation at Sackett's Harbor was now reversed at Kingston. It was the British fleet which was blockaded, and nothing which the American commander could do would draw them into an engagement; but as it is much more pleasant to be the blockader than the blockaded, the men were not now disposed to grumble at their leaders.

The days were almost as monotonous as they had been, but every morning Chauncey hoped the British would accept his challenge. Nothing he could do, however, served to draw them out; and so the fleet cruised on and off out beyond Kingston Harbor.

One morning late in August, Andrew and Lieutenant Gregory were standing together by the rail of the General Pike, which was riding at anchor. They were discussing the unwillingness of the British to enter into an engagement, when their attention was directed to a little skiff which had left the shore, and evidently was making for them. It chanced that Commodore Chauncey was at the time on board the Pike, as the ship was commonly called, in consultation with her commander; but the young officers had given no heed to him when the gig had brought him, and now all their interest was centred upon the little skiff as it drew nearer.

Suddenly Andrew started as he said, "That's Jim Nairne in that skiff, and there's the ever-present dwarf with him too. What do you suppose he wants? Maybe he's going to try his gunpowder plot on us."

"I guess not," replied the lieutenant. "But we'll soon see."

The skiff was soon alongside; and glancing up at the two men, whom he had not yet recognized, Nairne called out, "I want to see Commodore Chauncey. I don't suppose he's aboard this craft, but will I find him on the Superior?"

"No; he's here now," replied the lieutenant, as Andrew, from some cause which he himself could not have explained, had stepped back out of sight.

"I'll come aboard, then. Throw over your rope-

ladder. Here, you imp," he added, turning to the dwarf, "you hold on to the ship while I go aboard."

He quickly made his way up the ladder, and soon stood on the deck. "Now take me to the commodore; I want to see him on important business. What! you here!" he added, as he noticed Andrew for the first time. "Well, I must say you're the most pervasive family I ever yet struck. I'll see you again."

He turned to follow the lieutenant as he led the way to the quarters of the commander, where the commodore then was. In a few moments the lieutenant returned, and for an hour he and Andrew stood by the rail talking in low tones of what the visit of Nairne might mean.

"Andrew," called the dwarf, "I've seen David."

"What's that?" replied Andrew, leaning over the rail, and looking down at the strange little figure in the skiff below. "You've seen David? Where is he?"

"I don't know," replied the dwarf. "I saw him, though, the other day."

"Where was he?"

"Aboard the Magnet. He" —

But just then Jim Nairne reappeared, and the boys turned as he approached. He apparently gave them no heed, and quickly descending to the skiff, took up the oars, and started for the shore.

The approach of Commodore Chauncey drew the attention of the young men from the little boat as he

said, "Lieutenant, that man tells me the St. Lawrence is 'most ready to put to sea. If it's true, it means much to us. She's pierced for a hundred and twelve guns, and my whole squadron could hardly hope to cope with her."

"Can you believe his words?" inquired the lieutenant.

"Yes; I think so in this. I know he's a rascal, but I believe he has told me the truth this time. Still, I must know more about it. Do you think you could find out for me?"

"I can try," replied the young officer. "What do you want me to do?"

"Go ashore alone, or with a small party, and find out all you can."

"I'd rather take a few men with me."

"Very well. You had best go soon, for I must know about this. Report to me just as soon as you return." The commodore then left them, and departed for the Superior.

"You'll go, Andrew?" said the lieutenant.

"Yes," replied Andrew quickly. He was thinking of the words of the dwarf more than he was of the information they could gain just then; but he eagerly hailed the proposal of his friend. It would perhaps aid in solving the problem in his mind; although just how he expected to learn anything concerning his brother he could not explain, even to himself.

In about an hour the six men whom Lieutenant Gregory selected were ready. Their uniforms were laid aside, and they were dressed in the garb of farmers. The word was given, and the boat started towards the shore.

The lieutenant did not plan to go near Kingston itself, unless he should be compelled to do so. He hoped to be able to gain the desired information from some of the people who dwelt along the shore; but if it should prove to be necessary, some of them might have to go to Kingston, for he was resolved not to return before he had learned just what the condition of the St. Lawrence was.

The men rowed up to a place on the shore where there were thick bushes, and there concealed the boat. "Now, men," said the lieutenant, when they all stood together in the road, "I'm going to separate you here. I want you," he said to Andrew, "to go up the road alone. Stop at the first house, and learn all you can. Two of you go down the road; and the others are to come with me, and we'll start off here," and he pointed to a road which not far away joined the one on which they were standing. "Now, find out all you can; but if any of you get into trouble, fire three shots with your pistols. Fire them close together; and if we hear that, we'll all of us understand there's trouble, and we'll all make for the place. Don't fire unless there's danger, and be sure to fire if there is."

The party at once separated, and Andrew started up the road alone. He had gone but a short distance before he came to a farmhouse, and at once decided to stop. As he went up to the kitchen-door, he could see the family at dinner. He immediately decided to enter, and in response to his question as to whether he could obtain something to eat there or not, he received a cordial invitation to join them, and was soon seated at the table with the father and mother and their four children.

The man seemed to be suspicious of him, and before the meal was finished, the older boy left the table; but Andrew did not see the quick signal of the father to the lad. He tried to talk freely, and allay all suspicions, and thought he had succeeded; but we can well imagine his feelings when at last he had finished the dinner, pushed back his chair and approached the open door. There before him was a party of four British sailors; and one of them was his own brother, David Field!

CHAPTER XXIX

ANDREW'S SURPRISE PARTY

THE situation, when Andrew Field stood in the doorway of the little farmhouse, and saw before him the approaching party of British sailors, can well be imagined. For a moment Andrew looked in surprise at the men, and did not speak. David's face flushed, and he was about to call out to his brother; but he restrained himself just in time, and no one suspected his relationship to the man before them.

"I'm glad ye've come," said the farmer, approaching, and standing by Andrew's side. "This man's a Yank, and you've got him fast."

"How d'ye know he's a Yankee?" asked Jack, the spokesman for the party.

"'Cause I watched the boat in which he came," replied the man. "It came from the Yankee fleet, and that means he's a Yankee too, doesn't it?"

"Did he come alone?" inquired Jack, glancing quickly behind him.

"No. There were two or three more, but I don't know where they be."

"Did you come from the fleet?" said Jack, looking keenly at Andrew as he spoke.

"Yes," replied Andrew shortly. He was convinced that he could not deceive the men after he heard the farmer's words. He was feeling a little indignant at Lieutenant Gregory. Why had he insisted upon dividing his party? If they had kept together, he would not have found himself in his present predicament.

"Well," said Jack, "I don't see but you're our prisoner, then. You'll have to go back with us to the Magnet. Maybe we can find a place for you on board. We use all the likely men we can find."

"Yes; you use them whether they belong to you or not. That's what all the trouble's been about," said Andrew quietly.

"Like enough; but once a Briton always a Briton. That's good enough teaching for me, though I don't know as I ever heard a preacher say so. We come to get some green stuff for the men aboard the Magnet," he added, turning again to the farmer; "but I don't know as we jest thought we'd get this kind," and he looked again at Andrew.

The men laughed; and even Andrew, downcast as he was, could not repress a smile, the sailor was so evidently good-natured with it all.

"I've got some I'll sell ye," replied the farmer, quick to scent a bargain; "but I think afore we load up, ye'd better all come in and have some dinner. I

guess the girls ain't too tired to feed a few o' his Majesty's tars. Be ye, girls?"

"No," said some one within the house. "Tell 'em to come right in."

"All right, then," replied Jack; and the men, in a good-humor at once at the prospect of a dinner on shore, quickly entered the house, and took their places at the table.

"You'd better take a seat along with us," said Jack to Andrew, who had entered with the men.

"I've been to dinner," said Andrew.

"Kind o' lost yer appetite, have ye? Well, ye better sit down along with us. It'll be more like company; and we don't want ye to leave us right away, for we've kind o' taken a shine to ye, somehow."

Andrew made no further reply, but took a chair, and started towards the table. All this time David had been silent, glancing only occasionally at his brother, his eyes full of a question he dared not utter. What was the meaning of it? Why had Andrew come? and how did it happen that he should be here in Kingston Harbor? Of course he could find no explanation, and his brother did not even appear to recognize him. Andrew must be playing some deep game.

"Hello!" said Jack; "I guess I'll take them pistols," pointing as he spoke to the butts of two which the prisoner had in his belt.

Andrew hesitated a moment, and then his face suddenly lightened. He drew the pistols, as if he were about to throw them upon the table; then he appeared to draw back a little, and said, "If you don't care, I'd like to fire them off before you take them. It's only a matter of sentiment, but somehow I've always felt I never wanted to be taken a prisoner with 'em loaded. They were presents to me; and if you don't care, I'd rather hand them over to you without their load."

The good-natured Jack laughed as he replied, "All right, young man, I'll respect your sentiments; but I guess I'll step out on the porch wi' ye, jest to see that yer sentiments don't carry ye too far away. Come on."

Andrew rose quickly from his chair, and, going out on the low piazza, fired three shots into the air in quick succession. "There, that'll be enough to satisfy my sentiments, I guess," he said, as he handed the pistols to the sailor. "I think I'll feel better now."

"Thank ye kindly, sir," replied Jack, taking the weapons, and placing them within easy reach on the table. "Now we'll resume our former occupation, if you're agreed."

When Andrew seated himself again at the table, he gave his brother one quick glance that was full of meaning, but which David could not understand. In a moment Andrew apparently entered into the spirit

of the occasion. He told stories and jokes until his captors were ready to declare that he was the best Yankee they ever had seen. The farmer brought out some cider, which he said he had kept for seven months, and which now was fit to drink; and the men, taking him at his word, did ample justice to that as well as to the dinner.

David was more and more puzzled. He knew Andrew so well that he was positive he had some plan in his mind, but what it was he could not conjecture. He took but little part in the conversation himself; for he somehow felt nervous and almost alarmed, for he well knew Andrew was not doing all this without some purpose behind it.

"I'll tell you what, Captain," said Andrew, speaking to Jack, whom he persisted in calling by that title, to the sailor's evident delight, "I'd like to know why it is you don't come out and fight us as men should."

"For the same reason you fellows over at Sackett's Harbor kept huggin' the shore there. We're not fools."

"That may be; but I hear that Sir James Yeo has been talking all summer that the only thing he was waiting for was to get a chance at Chauncey; and now the commodore has come and given him the warmest kind of an invitation, and he won't accept it. What's the trouble with him, anyhow?"

"Sir James is all right, and it won't be long before

you'll see Chauncey taken into camp jest as slick as we're takin' you. You seem to be a-hungerin' and thirstin' like for a bite at Sir James, and it won't be long afore he'll give ye more'n a bite. He'll give ye a whole mouthful, and maybe a meal besides. Though I won't promise that it'll be as good as this one," he added, glancing at the farmer's daughters, who were waiting upon the men.

"It ought to be a good one," said Andrew; "he's been long enough cooking it. What's he going to feed us with?"

"You'll find out just as soon as the St. Lawrence is ready. She's a beauty, she is; and when she begins to furnish the music with them hundred and twelve guns o' hers, you won't find enough of Chauncey's fleet to make a gig of."

"The St. Lawrence? Oh, yes! I've heard you were building some kind of a tub over here; but she won't be ready before next April Fool's Day."

"She won't, eh?" replied Jack. "Jest you let Chauncey hang around here three weeks more, and see whether she will or not. Yes, sir; three weeks will do it. I don't suppose I ought to be tellin' ye state secrets," he added; "but as long as ye've kind o' become one of us, I guess it don't matter much."

Jack was becoming more friendly under the influence of the substantial dinner the farmer had given them, and somehow David thought there was an unusual interest displayed by Andrew as he spoke. He

could see that his brother was leading the old sailor on, but he could not understand what his purpose was. Was not Andrew a prisoner as well as he? All this information would be useless as soon as he was on board the Magnet, and he was becoming impatient for the dinner to be over. He wanted to be alone with his brother. He had so many questions to ask concerning his mother and his home, and he knew he would have no opportunity before they were back on board the Magnet.

Still, Andrew seemed to be strangely interested. David noticed that he occasionally glanced out of the windows; but what he was looking for he did not know.

"Then, the St. Lawrence'll whip us out, will she, in three weeks?" said Andrew, leading the conversation back to the point from which it started.

"Yes, sir; and I dunno as I'll give ye that much time. Sir James is just a-rushin' the men day and night, and she's 'most done now."

"Pshaw! He'll never get men enough to man her. You know as well as I do that the British are trying to send all the men they can to Niagara to keep that place from running away from them there."

"Running away, is it? I'd like to know who run away at Lundy's Lane?"

"The British, of course."

"Well, if the British run away, why didn't your men take them cannon, then?"

"They were all brass. They weren't worth the taking."

"Wasn't worth takin'? What in the world did ye fight so to get 'em for, then?"

"Oh! to keep your men from being hurt."

"Mighty kind o' ye! Course, I don't mind sayin' that I hear we was a little tripped on the first fall; but we got our second wind all right, and then I'd like to know where the Yanks were? A-skulkin' back by the Chippewa; that's where they was, and we just held on to the ground, and them cannon too!"

"Are they the guns you're going to use on the St. Lawrence?"

"Nary a bit. We've got a hundred and twelve o' the best guns ye ever saw, and we can have a thousand men if we want 'em any day. We're goin' to sweep the lake, jest as my old woman uses her broom in my house."

"I think you'd do better with brooms, myself," replied Andrew, laughing. The men were all in such good-humor now that they could afford to have some sport with this little Yankee bantam. "Then, you think within three weeks you'll drive us out, or take us all prisoners, do you?" resumed Andrew.

"Yes, sir; and maybe in less time than that."

"I don't think so," replied Andrew calmly. "At least, not all of us."

"Why not?"

"Because every man at this table is my prisoner now."

A laugh was the only reply, but Andrew did not join in it. David looked in astonishment at his brother. Was he crazy? What did he mean by such wild talk.

"I mean just what I say," said Andrew a little more firmly. "I want every man of you to lay his pistols on the table."

The laugh ceased, and Jack was thoroughly angry. "You little whipper-snapper!" he said; "I'll teach you" —

But just then he glanced behind him, and quickly sank back into his chair. Through each of the open windows in the room he saw the barrels of pistols pointed directly at him. Behind them were five men, and the determined look upon their faces sobered him in a moment.

"Yes," resumed Andrew; "I'll trouble you to lay your weapons on the table."

CHAPTER XXX

A NARROW ESCAPE

AS we already know, both General Brown and General Scott had been severely wounded in the battle of Lundy's Lane, or "Niagara" as many of the British called the engagement; and they were about to be taken across the river when Heman and Henry received the message they were to carry to Sackett's Harbor. The general was suffering so severely from the pain of his two wounds, for he had been shot in the thigh and wounded also in the side, that he could say but little; but he delivered the letter, and added a word expressive of his desire for haste, and then the couriers turned away.

They, too, must cross the river to regain their horses, but at another place which was several miles away; and they at once started forth to seek the crossing. They did not know that General Ripley, whom Brown had left in command, was frightened, and the British were steadily pushing on, and that the American leader already had thoughts of abandoning the place he held.

General Brown's estimate of General Ripley was

probably the correct one, for he considered him as one who was not a physical but a moral coward. That is, General Ripley was not afraid of any danger to himself, but he was afraid of taking responsibility upon himself. When the leaders lose heart, or the men lose faith in their leaders, then mischief is sure to follow; and the morning when Heman and Henry were walking along the rough road which led to the ferrying-place was no exception. But they were ignorant of all this, and believed that the Americans had won a very substantial victory, as indeed they had, although the incompetency of the leaders then in command was already threatening the loss of all they had gained.

"We'll have something to report to Buckett's now," said Henry, who was filled with enthusiasm, although he had had no part in the engagement.

"Truly spoken," replied Heman, who was walking with an air of great importance. It was seldom that he was in a position where he felt that he was appreciated, and his elation at the present time was correspondingly great.

"Hurry up, Heman," said Henry, eager to start on the journey. "We've no time to lose."

"Haste thee, for the Philistines have invaded the land." First Samuel xxiii. 27. I see a band of men before us, but their appearance does not betoken danger."

Henry also had noticed the approaching men; but

he had given them little thought, for he had no fear of an enemy in the region where they then were. As the horsemen drew nearer, however, he suddenly noticed that they all, for there were six of them, wore the British uniform. "Heman," he said quickly, "they're British, and we're caught. What shall we do?"

"The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are Esau's," Genesis xxvii. 22," murmured Heman, who was as greatly alarmed now as was his companion.

"If they get our letter we're done for, and so is the general," replied Henry. "It's lucky we're not in uniform. Heman, you talk, and I'll keep still." The men were close upon them by this time, and there was no opportunity to say more.

The leader halted his men, and stopped to speak to our two trembling messengers.

"Who are you? Give an account of yourselves."

"We are men," replied Heman solemnly, as if he were delivering a funeral oration.

"That's no news," laughed the officer. "But which side do you belong to?"

"I am a man of peace. 'They came and asked the Levite of peace.' Judges xviii. 15."

The leader looked at Heman a moment in astonishment, and then laughed aloud. "What is he, a little light in the upper region?" he said, turning to Henry.

Henry shook his head, but made no reply, and the

officer continued, "The surest way to prove it will be for you to come along with us, and we'll find out more about it. What'll we do with them, men?" he added, turning to his followers.

As there was only one horse for each man, and no one seemed to be desirous that his steed should carry double, a brief consultation followed. Henry looked at Heman in despair. Was this to be the result of their efforts, to be captured before they were fairly out of their own camp? He gave no heed to the signal which Heman was trying to give him to come nearer. His companion, finding that all his efforts to draw his friend closer failed, followed the recorded method of Mahomet, when he found that the mountain would not come to him. He left his place, and drew nearer to Henry, who was standing a few feet behind the officer.

"Henry," said Heman in a loud whisper, "Henry;" but the boy apparently did not hear him. "Henry, I say, Henry," repeated Heman in a whisper louder than before. "Henry, I believe these fellows are Yankees, and they've dressed themselves up as British. They'll drive us into Brown's camp, and what shall we do?"

"I heard that!" said the officer, turning sharply about. "I heard every word you said. I'm mighty glad I did too. Do you know, I took you for Yankees. But I guess you're all straight. We couldn't take you with us very well, anyway, if you had been

Yankees. But you take my advice, and don't you hang around here. You'll fall in with some of Brown's men as sure as you live. We'll start on," he said, turning again to his followers; and before Heman and Henry could fully realize what had occurred, they were far up the road.

"Well," said Henry with a great sigh of relief, "that's what I call a pretty close shave. Heman, that was a great trick of yours. I didn't think you were up to it."

"Ah, Henry, indeed you don't know me!" replied Heman, swelling with pride. "I've never shown you half I could do. 'And Jonadab was a very subtle man.' Second Samuel xiii. 8. Of course Jonadab wasn't Heman. Heman was a singer"—

"Don't stop to sing now, you subtle Jonadab Heman! Jeduthan Chubb! Let's put out, and not let the grass grow under our feet, either. We'll be falling in with some more of your kindred. If I remember aright, it was the serpent which was more subtle than all the beasts of the field; and I'd just about as soon see him in person as to see any more redcoats."

Heman had been about to break out into a song, so great was his elation at the success of his trick; but restraining himself, he quickened his steps, and soon they arrived at the place where they were to cross the river. They found their horses where they had left them on the farther side, and in a brief time

they were riding rapidly along the road on their journey homeward.

Here they had little fear of meeting any of the enemy, but the exciting experience of the morning furnished a theme for such conversation as they indulged in. At night they stopped at a place they well knew, and in the morning changed horses and resumed their journey. It was near night on the third day when they saw a young Indian coming down the road towards them, using the easy run which many of them could maintain for hours, and even days, at a time. It needed only a second glance to assure them that the stranger was Garangula; and as the recognition was mutual, all three stopped for an interview.

Garangula briefly related the result of his visit at Sackett's Harbor, and told how David's absence was still unexplained. He himself did not know what had become of him, and his brother and all his friends were equally at a loss. He listened eagerly to the report Henry gave of the battles at Niagara, and then inquired how Red Jacket and his men had acquitted themselves.

Henry related the story which was current, and in a measure true, that Red Jacket had proposed, and General Brown had willingly acquiesced in the scheme, that he and some of his warriors should seek an interview with some of the leading chiefs of the Indians on the British side, and should agree

that all the red men should withdraw from the war.

"They do say, Mr. Garangula," said Heman, "that this Red Jacket does not like to fight. They even say that some of the men told him they would get a scalp for him, only they knew he would be afraid to carry it home."

The young Indian's eyes flashed as he looked at Heman and said, "Sagoyewatha no brave. Great talk. Words like fire in sky."

"That's so, Henry," said Heman. "I happened to be present some time ago at a meeting of the tribes when Mr. Erastus Granger—he's the Indian agent, you know—was there, and I'll tell you this Fire Jacket can talk. Why, this is what he said at the beginning, 'We are glad of having an opportunity once more of meeting you in council. We thank the Great Spirit that has again brought us together. This is a full meeting. All our head men are present. The voice of war has reached our ears, and made our minds gloomy. We shall listen with attention to what you have to say'—Oh, I could go on"—

"Don't," said Henry abruptly.

"But this Oneida"—

"He no Oneida," said Garangula quickly. "Seneca, sachem of Wolf tribe. But Sagoyewatha great talk. Too much poison."

"What?" said Heman. "What's poison?"

"Firewater;" and Garangula's eyes flashed again. "Pour firewater all time. Make Sagoyewatha like squaw."

"Yes, that's so, I guess," replied Heman. "I understand when he was bidding farewell to one of the officers, he said he hoped he would never go where firewater was more than two shillings a quart. They say he'll make a great speech, and then in an hour be so drunk they can't lift him from the ground. Mr. Garangula, will you listen?"

The Indian's eyes were peering sharply into Heman's face; but he made no reply, and the singer went on, "I want to quote something to you. 'Elah was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk.' That's from First Kings xvi. 9. Then, too, we know that another man said, 'Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow.' Ezekiel xxiii. 33. Now, I hope you"—

"Sagoyewatha drunk. No Garangula,"—and without waiting for any more words to be spoken, the young Indian abruptly left them, and, resuming his lope, was soon beyond their sight.

"There, Heman, that's just like you," said Henry angrily. "There were lots of things I wanted to ask him, but you go and spoil it all by talking too much."

"Nay, Henry," remonstrated Heman, "words are the greatest things in all this world. They convey thoughts. They are the coin of the soul. They are

the medium of exchange between kindred spirits. Words. Why, words cannot be measured."

"That's so; some people's can't, anyway. You might as well try to dam up Niagara as to stop your tongue."

Henry thought he heard Heman say something about the sound of many waters, but he was too angry to listen; and the wordy singer was compelled to do his utmost to keep up with his young companion, who had started his horse into a run. Indeed, throughout the remainder of the journey he felt that Henry was angry with him, but he was at a loss to understand the cause. To himself his words were always of value, and he could not see how any one could fail to appreciate them at their true worth. But Heman was not the only man who has been puzzled over the same problem.

The fifth day saw them both safely at Sackett's Harbor, Heman proudly riding upon the horse which he claimed as his own. Henry almost forgot about his companion when he heard that Chauncey's fleet had sailed, and that his brother Elijah had gone to Niagara to join the army there. He was bitterly disappointed that he himself had not remained, instead of returning with Heman; but we may be sure that his father and mother did not share in his feeling.

"Never mind, Henry," said the old cook one morning when he stopped at the Field home. "I

know, I know all about it; I've been there myself."

"I didn't know you had ever been to Niagara," replied Henry.

"Not exactly that. But I've been where I know how you feel. I know, I know all about it."

"There's something for you to do here, Henry," said the hermit.

"I don't see it."

"Well, it'll try your soul; but you just listen, and I'll tell you all about it, as the cook says."

CHAPTER XXXI

ANOTHER SCHEME

THERE was a moment of intense silence following the demand which Andrew Field made upon the men. They all had followed the movement of Jack, and had seen the faces of the men at the windows; and the pistols were aimed in a direction of which none of the British sailors approved.

"Don't you stir from your seats," called Lieutenant Gregory, who was peering through the window directly behind Jack. "Just do as you're told, and lay your pistols on the table. The first man that tries to turn will be shot like a dog."

"We're in a box, boys, and we'll have to make the best of it," said Jack, quietly drawing his two pistols from his belt, and laying them on the table. His companions quickly followed his example, and the table was soon covered with the weapons.

"Keep your seats," called Lieutenant Gregory. "I'm coming in there. Now keep your men covered," he added, turning to his own followers; "and if one of them starts to get up, let him have it, and be sure you don't miss your man either."

The young officer ran quickly around the corner of the house, stopping for a moment, as he caught a glimpse of a man and a boy running up the road towards Kingston as if life itself depended upon the speed they could make. Entering the room, he quickly secured the weapons, handing them through the windows to his companions. "Now I want you to get up one at a time, while we search you to see that you haven't forgotten some of your guns. Keep the men covered," he called to his followers; "and, Andrew, I want you to help me."

One after another the British sailors were summoned to the piazza, and a thorough search was made; and as fast as it was completed the men were told to take their places directly in front of the windows, where they could be easily covered by the attacking party.

David was the last to be summoned; and as he arose, Andrew said to the lieutenant, "That's my brother David. Don't you know him, Lieutenant? He was taken prisoner when we were coming from Oswego that morning, and we've almost lost all trace of him since."

The young officer peered into David's face, and said, "It is your brother, as sure as you live. I suppose you're ready to turn in on the other side now, although you have on the British uniform?" he said to David.

"Ready?" replied David. "I should say I was!"

and the boy, quiet though he usually was, rose from his chair, and ran to his brother; and in a moment, all forgetful of his associates, he flung his arms around his brother's neck. "O Andrew!" was all he said, but evidently Andrew understood what he meant by the words. The prisoners looked on in half-stupid surprise, as if they could not understand what it meant; that is, all but Jack, who, in spite of the predicament in which he found himself, showed some traces of moisture in his eyes as he watched them, while Lieutenant Gregory discreetly looked out of the window for a moment.

"I don't think we'd better delay long here," said the lieutenant. "I saw a man and boy speeding along the road as if they were in a great hurry. It may mean mischief."

"It was the farmer and his boy probably," said Andrew. "They've gone for help, very likely."

"All right, then," replied the lieutenant, "we'll put out. We'll hold these fellows," he said to the men outside, "while you come round here and join us."

His companions speedily joined them; and then, with the prisoners in advance, they started towards the place where they had left their boats. As they marched out of the yard, the farmer's wife and daughters emerged from the barn, whither they had gone at the approach of the lieutenant's party, and stood watching the departing men. No attention was paid

to them, however; and soon the boats were gained, the prisoners assigned their places, and they were rowing rapidly back to the General Pike. There were no signs of pursuit; and soon the party, with their prisoners, were all safely on board.

A warm welcome awaited them there; but Andrew and David, at once withdrawing from the others, were soon engaged in an earnest conversation. There were so many questions to be asked, and so many things to be told, that they did not notice that the young lieutenant had taken Jack and a few of the men, and rowed over to the Superior to report to the commodore. Nor did they notice them when they returned. To David the long absence from home had rendered all that had occurred while he was away of increased interest, and his own experiences also were of equal interest to his brother.

Their conversation was at last interrupted by the approach of the lieutenant, who said, "Have you got through looking at each other yet? It seems to me as if you'd each forgotten how the other looked."

"Yes," laughed Andrew, "but it's been a lucky day for us. This fellow's been through enough to fill a book since we parted at Oswego."

"I don't doubt it," said the young officer, with a sympathetic glance at David; "and some time I want to hear all about it. But just now I've something else to talk about with you. You know I've just come from the Superior."

"No, I didn't know it," said Andrew.

"Well, I have; and I've had a long talk with Commodore Chauncey too. He's a good deal troubled about these reports of the St. Lawrence. I took that sailor who seemed to be the leader over with me; and he declares, with a good deal of gusto, that she's already afloat, and they are fitting her out."

"That sailor's been mighty good to me," interrupted David. "He knew I was a Yankee all the time, but he never let on. I hope he'll be treated as well as I was."

"Oh! he'll be treated as he deserves; never you fear about that. He does seem to be a pretty decent sort of a chap. But the thing just now is to find out just where the St. Lawrence lies, and whether she can be touched or not."

"I don't understand what you mean," said Andrew.

"Why, I mean just this. If the St. Lawrence once gets out on the lake, we've nothing to stand against her. Chauncey knows that, as well as the British; and there's no dodging it, either. This sailor thinks she'll be ready to put to sea in a few days, and the commodore has a mind to stop her if he can; and I think he can," added the lieutenant significantly.

"How?" inquired Andrew.

"Torpedo."

"What!"

"Torpedo. They haven't been put to much use

on the lake yet, and he's a mind to try one here at Kingston. And I hope he will too."

"But that's the very thing the British tried at Sackett's Harbor," interposed Andrew; "and we all thought that was a kind of outrage, — something not fit for civilized men to try."

"No, there's a big difference. They tried to blow up the Oneida when all her crew were aboard. All we want to do is to blow up this St. Lawrence before any one can get aboard. And we've got to do it too," he added emphatically, "or she'll drive every Yankee craft off the lakes."

"I don't think I just understand about this torpedo business, anyhow," said Andrew. "What is it? and how does the commodore intend to use it?"

"Why, it's an invention of Robert Fulton, and the history of it is about like this. Fulton was working over in Paris along with Joel Barlow. He got the notion into his head that he could make a submarine boat, which he called a nautilus. His plan was to attach some bombs to it, and blow up any boat he wanted to. He offered his invention to the French, and then to the Dutch; but neither of them seemed to think there was much in it. Then he went over and talked with the English. Pitt took to the scheme right away, but the others on the committee appointed to examine it reported against it."

"Why?" inquired Andrew.

"Oh! they were shrewd enough to see that it was

a great thing; but they went against it, because they though it would give too much power to weaker navies. You see, England thinks she owns the ocean, and she's pretty nearly right about that too; and she didn't want anything to come in which would help others at her expense. Well, Fulton finally gave up the boat idea, and put all his strength into making a submarine bomb which he called a 'torpedo.' His motto was, 'The liberty of the seas will be the happiness of the earth.' That's not bad, either."

"Is that what the commodore is going to use here?" inquired David.

"Yes, one of them. Fulton invented two or three kinds of torpedoes. One you anchor, and then arrange a kind of trigger; and when a boat comes along and pulls the trigger, why, the torpedo gets in its fine work. Then he has another kind. It's what is called a clockwork torpedo. It has a copper case with about a hundred pounds of powder in it. It has a harpoon, which a man shoots into the ship he wants to blow up; and there is a coil of light rope, and some cork to hold the case up, and bring it around under the boat. When the harpoon sticks, they swing the case around, pull out the peg that keeps the clockwork from going, and that starts her off, you see; and then when the work reaches the point, there's a click and a bang, and then you'll have to look up in the air if you want to see the

new St. Lawrence. The commodore's having a platform built out over one of the biggest yawls now to put this very thing on."

"Then, he's really going to try it here, is he?" said Andrew, thoroughly interested now.

"That's just what he is, if one other plan works."

"What's that?"

"For you and me to row up the harbor to-night, — there'll be no moon, you know, — and find out just exactly where the St. Lawrence is, and whether the scheme will work or not."

"For me?"

"Yes, for you. Will you do it?"

"Yes," replied Andrew, after a moment's reflection. "We're to go in different skiffs, you say?"

"That's it. We won't go together. I'll have my skiff, and you'll have yours."

"What time do you start?"

"About half-past ten. That'll be late enough to be dark, and yet not so late that any one will be suspicious of us. They'll think it's some sailor who's been ashore."

"I'll be ready," said Andrew quietly; and the lieutenant turned, and left the brothers.

"It's too bad, Andrew," said David angrily, "to send you off on such a dangerous errand as that. And when we've just got together too. It's too bad."

"It can't be helped, David; and we'll hope there'll

be no danger. But if anything should happen to me, I'm glad I saw you, and you can report about it at home."

But David could not talk any more. He turned, and walked about the deck. All his pleasure at his release was gone now, in his anxiety for his brother. He knew that, in spite of Andrew's hopeful words, he also regarded the enterprise as one full of peril. The British were alert, and any sign of danger would speedily call them into action. It could not be changed now, however. Andrew had promised to go, and he knew that he would keep his word.

He wandered about the deck, curiously inspecting everything, and talking with some of the sailors whom he had previously known at Sackett's Harbor. He was trying to take his thoughts from the expedition on which Andrew and the young lieutenant were about to go, but with all his efforts he could not succeed.

He heard that Jack and his companions had been placed in the hold for the night, but he was glad when he heard that probably they would be allowed the liberty of the deck in the morning.

Several times Andrew tried to engage him in conversation; but at last ceased when David said, "I can't talk, Andrew. I just can't. Somehow I'm afraid of this trip of yours to-night. I shall keep up till you come back, or"—

"There's going to be no 'or' about it, David,"

replied Andrew. "We've got muffled oars, and they can't see us any more'n they can see the centre of the earth. Here's the lieutenant; and it's time we started, I suppose."

In a brief time the young men had taken their places in the skiffs, and David could see them as he peered over the rail. Far away were the lights of the British fleets, and an occasional light on shore indicated where the town was. Between the Superior and them was a great darkness, which he thought reflected that within his own heart. A brief word was spoken; and then the two skiffs, each with its solitary occupant, moved swiftly away, and were soon lost to sight in the darkness.

CHAPTER XXXII

HARPOONING

ANDREW and the lieutenant kept together when they first rowed away from the General Pike. Several miles were between them and the harbor, and the danger all lay at the other end of their voyage. Jack and David had told them about where they thought the St. Lawrence lay; for the sailor was so confident of the prowess of the new war-vessel that he had been more than willing to talk of it, and had gladly told all he knew.

The two skiffs went on for some time within a few feet of each other. The men stopped rowing frequently, and conversed in low tones; but not a sound to alarm them was heard. Their eyes became somewhat accustomed to the thick darkness, but at no time could they see far in advance. The only signs by which they could be guided were the distant lights displayed on the battle-ships. These seemed to the eager men to twinkle at times like the stars, but the gentle motion of the lake probably caused it all.

At last they reached the first of Sir James Yeo's fleet; but, changing their course, they passed it at

a distance of a hundred yards. They were rowing slowly and with great caution now. At any moment their presence might be discovered, and a shot ring out when they were least expecting it. The darkness, which was their shield and protection, was also a source of peril; for it prevented them from seeing what was going on about them, and some danger which was concealed from their sight at any moment might be approaching.

One after another of the vessels of the fleet were passed, and at last they found themselves near the shore. The dim outlines of the few and scattered houses loomed up in the darkness, but as yet they had not found the object of their search. With increased caution; they rowed on, keeping all the time near the shore. The silence was not broken, save by the occasional call of the watch on some of the boats; and whenever this was heard they ceased rowing for a time, and waited in the darkness, half afraid that their presence had been discovered.

They continued their efforts, moving up the harbor, and in a few minutes saw the shadowy outlines of a mighty vessel directly before them; and they knew at once that the object of their search had been found. That mountain of a ship could be none other than the mighty St. Lawrence itself.

Andrew looked up at it with almost a feeling of awe. He never before had seen anything like it. It was resting on the water, and the tall masts rose in

the darkness like the tallest trees of the forest. "A hundred and twelve guns!" thought Andrew. "She looks as though she could carry a thousand." Commodore Chauncey's entire fleet would be able to do but little against her if she once got into action.

He was able to see that she was not yet fitted out for service. Not a sail could be seen; and as there were no lights on board, he concluded she had not yet been manned. But that she would soon be ready was evident; and what would the American commodore be able to do then? In spite of the danger of his present position he could not prevent the feeling of sympathy for the brave Chauncey rising higher in his mind at the time than anything else. To be ill all summer, and to be delayed as he had been in equipping his fleet, and then, when at last he had put to sea, to find the British refused every offer of battle was bad enough; but to find, when the summer was almost ended, that a single vessel had been built capable of carrying alone almost as many guns as his entire fleet, was far worse.

It was no wonder that he wished to try Fulton's new invention of the torpedo, and Andrew found himself sharing in the desire. He had been resting on his oars for several minutes, peering through the darkness at the great hull before him, almost forgetful of his danger and the object of his voyage. Near him was Lieutenant Gregory, and he somehow felt that his companion was sharing in his feelings.

He was roused from his reverie, however, by feeling a hand laid upon the oar he grasped; and in a low whisper the lieutenant said, "Andrew, that must be the St. Lawrence. She's almost big enough to fill up the harbor herself."

Andrew made no reply, and then the lieutenant whispered, "She's lying bow on towards the lake. We've found out what she is, and where she is, and I suppose we might as well start back for the Pike now and report; but before I go I want to take a pull around her, and see what there is on the other side. You row out about fifty feet in front of her bow, and I'll pull out around her and join you. Then we'll go back, but you wait for me there."

"Hadn't I better go with you?" inquired Andrew.

"No, no," whispered the young officer. "You pull out as I say, and I'll soon be with you."

He relaxed his grasp on Andrew's oar, and started slowly towards the stern of the mighty St. Lawrence. Andrew followed his directions, and rowing carefully out to what he considered about the place he had been bidden to take, rested there upon his oars, and waited for his companion to join him. How slowly the moments passed. The silence itself was oppressive, and he was in an agony of fear. Every moment he half expected to feel a heavy hand laid upon him, or to hear a shot fired by some unseen enemy. He almost forgot that the darkness was his greatest pro-

tection; and in his anxiety to see his friend, or to know that some danger was near, he wished that the morning would come.

Suddenly he was recalled to himself by a shout that to the excited man seemed to come from a multitude, and the report of several guns discharged together. Through the darkness came a yawl pulled by six men and not more than ten yards away. Almost instinctively Andrew grasped his oars, and desperately began to row out towards the lake; and yet, excited as he was, he saw that the yawl was headed in the other direction, and apparently the men either were in ignorance of his nearness or had disregarded his presence.

"It's the lieutenant they're after," thought Andrew; "and they've cut him off too. Hark! what's that?" He could hear men calling to one another and shouting as if they were engaged in a contest of some kind. One or two shots rang out, and then all was still. "They've got him," he thought, "or it may be they've shot him. I can't do anything here, and they may be after me next. I'll pull farther down the harbor."

He rowed rapidly out to what he thought must be a mile beyond the fleet, then rested on his oars again. The darkness seemed to be thicker than before, and the silence of the night was now unbroken. The lights on the distant fleet still glimmered, and far ahead were those which shone from Chauncey's fleet.

But Andrew could not bear the thought of returning and leaving his friend behind. Whether he was dead or a prisoner he could not tell, and there might be a chance that the daring young officer had succeeded in making his way past the party which had attacked him.

Of this latter possibility he was not very hopeful; but as it was already far past midnight, he resolved to remain where he was until morning, and possibly Gregory might join him.

The long hours slowly passed, as Andrew impatiently kept watch on the water; but not a sound could he hear that gave any indication of the presence of friend or foe. He silently and slowly rowed back and forth; but when at last the rising sun appeared, he decided to return to the General Pike. He could not see a skiff in all the harbor, and Lieutenant Gregory must either have been shot or was now a prisoner.

When he arrived at the Pike, and made his report of the loss of his companion, there was a feeling of anger among all the men. The young lieutenant was such a favorite with all, that any danger to him was at once taken up by his men; and they were eager to go to his relief, or to find out whether he still was alive or not.

The commander was calmer, however, and only promising the men that they would soon have an opportunity to do something, took Andrew in his gig,

and withdrew to the Superior, on which the commodore then was.

Andrew gave a detailed account of his expedition on the preceding night, replying to the commodore's questions, and relating the loss of his companion.

"It's too bad about Gregory, but we'll try to do something for him yet," said the commodore. "Just now we've got something else in mind. Don't go," he added, as Andrew was about to leave the quarters; "we may want to ask you a question."

A long conversation followed between the officers concerning the torpedo. "I've put it on a platform which reaches out over the stern of the yawl," said the commodore. "That'll prevent its getting tangled up with the rudder. It's all ready to try to-night, but I'm inclined to think we'd better wait a night or two before we put it into use. How long should you think it would take to equip the St. Lawrence?" he said, turning again to Andrew.

"I can't just say," replied Andrew. "Of course, it was so dark last night I couldn't do much more than make out the outlines; but as far as I could judge I should say she wasn't rigged at all."

"It'll take ten days or two weeks at the least then, probably," replied the commodore; "and that will suit us better. They'll be on their guard to-night; but if they've taken young Gregory prisoner, they won't get much out of him. I picked him out to go on that trip after the Black Snake; and I wasn't dis-

appointed in him then, and I haven't been since either. You know about that?"

"I was one of the men with him," replied Andrew modestly.

"Were you? That's good; and you'll be one of the men to go with this torpedo?"

"If you desire it."

"We do desire it, and about day after to-morrow we'll be ready. I hope you'll blow the St. Lawrence up just the way Fulton did the Dorothea. She was a brig the British furnished him when he was trying to get them to purchase his invention. Fulton worked the scheme all right; and that great brig, which drew twelve feet of water, went up in the air, and cracked in two in the middle like a pipe-stem. If we succeed in simply damaging the St. Lawrence so that she can't put to sea, I shall be well satisfied."

Andrew returned to the General Pike, and related to his brother the new project; but he was deaf to all of David's pleadings that he too might go. "One in a family is enough at a time," said Andrew; "and this time I'm the one."

On the second night the torpedo boat was ready. Six men manned her, and one of them was Andrew Field. A platform reached out several feet over the stern, and on this the torpedo was carried. A harpoon was rigged, and one of the men who had had experience on board a whaler in a similar capacity

was selected to throw it. Not many of the American sailors knew of the attempt which was about to be made, as the commodore was fearful that somehow the enemy might gain information of his project.

It was about midnight when the boat started from the Superior. The crew was a picked one, and made up of sturdy and determined men. They all realized the danger, as they realized the importance of the attempt. Success would mean that the British fleet would be kept off from the lake. Failure would simply reverse matters, and give the British the control of Lake Ontario from Sackett's Harbor to Niagara.

Their oars were muffled, and in silence the boat moved on in the darkness. The lieutenant in command occasionally spoke a low word to his men, but all the others were still. On and on the boat moved up the harbor, hugging the shore all the way. Soon one of the fleet had been passed, and then another, and it was not long before the outlines of the majestic St. Lawrence loomed up in the night.

So far they had been successful. Their presence had not been discovered so far as they could judge, and they now were near the ship which they were seeking. The men pulled up a little nearer the bow so that the torpedo could be swung around and come under the St. Lawrence about amidships. Every

man was listening with straining ears, for any moment might show that they had been discovered.

At last they gained the position which seemed to satisfy the lieutenant; and turning to the man nearest him, he whispered, "It's all right now, Tom. Let her go!" The sailor drew back his arm, and in a moment the harpoon was sent whizzing through the air.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE RETURN

ALL the men in the yawl were eagerly following the movements of the harpooner; and the two who had been stationed near the platform in the stern, in their excitement, and without waiting for the word of the lieutenant, quickly tipped the heavy copper cask into the water the moment the harpoon was thrown. This was expressly against the orders of the lieutenant, as his plan had been to wait until the harpoon was fast before the torpedo should be swung round into position.

Whether it was the unexpected movement of the men, or the darkness and excitement of the moment, has never been known, but something had caused the harpooner to miscalculate the distance; and a low cry of dismay arose from all on board when they saw that he had failed.

"I've missed it, I've missed it!" said the man.

"Haul in and try it again," said the lieutenant in a low voice.

The men obeyed, and tried to raise the small rope which connected the harpoon with the torpedo, and

which had sunk the moment the latter had been pushed into the water by the excited men. The long boat-hook was dipped deep, but several efforts failed to connect it with the sunken rope. They were all intensely excited, and their very eagerness served to make their movements more confusing. They were breathing hard, and their hearts were beating like trip-hammers.

"Lieutenant," whispered Andrew excitedly, "I think I hear the sound of oars over there on the right. Can't you hear it?"

The officer listened sharply a moment, and then replied, "Indeed I do! Give way, men! we're caught if we don't get out of this!"

He drew a knife from his pocket, and with one swift movement severed the rope which connected the float with the torpedo; and, freed from its burden, the cork float quickly came to the surface, and they knew that the torpedo and the harpoon must have gone to the bottom. The men instantly took their places; and although the oars were muffled, in their excitement one or two of the men splashed in the water before the yawl was fairly started on her return.

There were calls and cries from various parts of the harbor now, and they could hear the sounds of oars and men as boats were despatched from the various vessels of the fleet.

They might be headed off any moment, and the

men needed no word of encouragement from the lieutenant to make them do their best. They were making good time, and soon were beginning to hope the danger was past, when directly before them loomed up a yawl filled with men who were pulling desperately. A quick movement of the lieutenant just avoided a collision, as there came a hail from the other boat.

"What's the row! What's all the trouble about?"

"Yankee boat up by the St. Lawrence," replied the lieutenant. "Be quick, and you'll head her off."

"Mighty queer that you should be going in the direction you are, if the trouble's up the harbor. Stop, or we'll shoot!"

But the Yankee yawl was already beyond the man's vision now, and the muffled oars did not make sound enough to reach to the British. A volley was fired in a moment, and the flash enabled the escaping men to see just where their pursuers were. The bullets went wide of their mark, but they served to quicken the efforts of all on board.

"Pull, men, pull!" said the lieutenant. "We'll have the whole of Yeo's fleet after us in a minute. Do your best! There, that's right! he added, as the speed of the yawl almost redoubled.

"I wish they would follow us out into the lake. That would give the commodore a chance at them,"

said Andrew ; but the lieutenant made no reply, and the yawl swept on.

They could not tell for a time whether they were being followed or not ; but a drizzling rain had begun to fall, and the darkness steadily deepened. The lights on Chauncey's fleet glimmered in the distance, and appeared to come nearer and nearer. In less than an hour the Superior had been gained, and all the men were safe on board.

It was a discouraging report they had to bring. Not only had their effort failed, but they had lost the torpedo as well. And not a word had been heard of Lieutenant Gregory. The crew of the Superior gathered about Andrew and the men, to listen to their story, while the lieutenant went below to confer with Commodore Chauncey. Many were the execrations of the men as the story was told, and more than one vowed that next time they would succeed, 'or know the reason why.'

The lieutenant soon appeared ; and when Andrew said he would row back to the Pike, for he knew that David would be waiting in great anxiety for his return, he offered no objection, and Andrew prepared to depart in a skiff.

"Never mind, Lieutenant," said Andrew. "The men all say they'll do better next time."

"I'm afraid there won't be any 'next time,'" replied the lieutenant. "The British will keep a guard on the St. Lawrence day and night now, and

it won't be long before she'll be ready to put to sea. No, I think the jig's up. What a slip that was when Tom missed with the harpoon."

Andrew made no further reply, and descending to the skiff began to pull for the General Pike. The failure of the attempt greatly depressed him; but he did not feel as the lieutenant did, that nothing more could be done. Somehow he could not think that with a British fleet lying inactive within the shelter of the harbor not three miles away, that all efforts to draw them into an engagement of some kind would be abandoned. Still, he knew that the St. Lawrence must be nearly ready now; and when she once was equipped, there would be a change of some kind.

He hailed the guard as he approached the Pike, and was soon on board. He reported to the commander the failure of the expedition, for most of the sailors were in ignorance of the attempt which had been made, and then rejoined his brother, who had been waiting impatiently for his return.

A long conversation followed as Andrew related the details, and it was with heavy hearts that the brothers at last turned in for the night. On the following morning all the men had somehow learned of the expedition, and Andrew was compelled to relate again and again the story of the attempt to blow up the St. Lawrence with a torpedo.

"That thing's no good anyhow, I believe," said

one old sailor. "I'd jest as soon have a firecracker as one o' them torpedoes."

"You wouldn't if you could see one once," replied Andrew. "A hundred pounds of powder let off in a copper cask is going to start something."

"I'll tell you what it'll start. It'll start us out of this pretty soon."

The sailor's prophecy proved to be true in part, although he had not given the proper cause for the withdrawal of the fleet; for on the third morning after the attempt, the signals were displayed, and all the vessels sailed away, leaving Yeo all unharmed in the harbor at Kingston. Nor was that all; for they knew that the mighty St. Lawrence would be ready in a few days, and then woe betide any unfortunate Yankee craft that might be overtaken by her. Chauncey's fleet arrived safely at Sackett's Harbor, and Andrew and David were soon on their way to their home.

When they drew near the house David could see his mother standing beneath one of the apple-trees in the yard; and, looking closely, he could also discern the old hermit up in the tree, picking the early fruit, and tossing it down to Mrs. Field, who was holding a large basket in her hands. Glancing up the road, she saw the two men approaching, and at first gave little heed to them; but a second look caused her to drop her basket, and speed up the road as if she had been a girl of sixteen.

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For a moment she seemed to forget Andrew; for she held David to her bosom, as if she were afraid that he would disappear each moment. She patted his cheeks, and stroked his hair, as she had done many a time when he was a little fellow and had crawled up into her lap. There was a strange moisture in the eyes of both her sons; and when she at last was willing to let David go, and share some of her motherly feeling upon her older boy, Andrew laughed, and said, "That's what comes of being the baby of the family. David, you seem to get all the welcome, but I don't grudge you a mite of it. But I know some one who'll be just as glad to see me as mother," and he started to run towards the house. Charity was standing in the doorway, and when Andrew appeared we may be sure that his welcome was as warm as he could desire.

"It isn't that I love David more than I do you," said Mrs. Field, as she and David drew near the house. "It's only that he's been away so long, and been a prisoner too. I was afraid I'd never see him again. Andrew, I knew, would somehow take care of himself and you too."

"Yes," replied Andrew, "I suppose you divide up your feeling a little as I do between my wife and my mother. I don't think any less of my mother because I love my wife. It's just multiplying by dividing, that's all. Still, there's something in being the baby of the family. David'll have to acknowledge that."

They entered the house, and Mrs. Field at once prepared something for them to eat. In vain they assured her that they were not hungry. She would listen to no protests; and at last, when they were seated about the table, and the hermit and the cook had joined them, the boys managed to tell their stories. It was an interested audience they had, we may be sure; and there were many ejaculations from the cook that "he knew all about it," but no one heeded his interruptions.

At last, just as the stories and the meal were finished, who should enter the house but Heman and Henry Spicer. Again there was a scene of welcoming, and again the stories had to be told. Heman had been silent most of the time, an unusual occurrence for him; but at last, feeling sure that his turn had come, he broke out, "The Capitol's been burned!"

"What!" exclaimed all together.

"Yes; Washington's been burned. Ashes where once was beauty! The British have destroyed all. 'I will build again the ruins thereof.' That's not from the place I love to quote, though. Here, let me see, I have it now. 'Who knoweth the ruin of them both?' Proverbs xxiv. 22. That's more like it. Yes, that'll do very well."

"Be still, Heman, and tell us about it," said Andrew.

"How can I be still, and yet tell you? 'Ramoth

is ours, be silent from taking it.' First Kings xxii. 3." Heman was offended, and at first refused to speak; but his own desire to talk was too strong to be resisted, and soon he was compelled to tell his story.

"Well," began Heman, rolling his eyes towards the ceiling and clasping his hands, as if in this way to add to the importance of the story, "you know they say the British have blockaded pretty much all our sea-coast. Wellington, after he whipped Napoleon, made up his mind to send some of his troops over here. Just think of it, Wellington's forces against ours! Selah! Well, they came, so I am told. They landed down in Maryland at the mouth of the Patuxent River; and then about forty-five hundred of them, all told, started to march to Washington, forty miles away. Our wonderful secretary of war hadn't thought of such a thing, and everything was in a whirl there. General Winder got together, in mighty quick time, a force of about seven thousand men and some cavalry. They took their stand outside the city, and waited. Up comes the British army in about three days, all hot and tired out; but, bless you, Winder was so scared he never thought of that! The second charge they made sent our men flying in every direction; and then the British had a straight road to Washington, and they took it too. They marched on; and when they entered they had it all to themselves, and just made a bonfire."

"Did they burn up everything?" inquired Andrew.

"Everything. 'There was hail, and fire mingled with the hail.' Exodus ix. 24."

"That's an outrage, an outrage!" exclaimed Andrew, rising and walking back and forth in his excitement.

"Can't be helped now," said Heman. "'A man that is clean shall gather the ashes.' Numbers xix. 9."

"Where's Elijah?" said David, turning to Henry.

"Elijah? Haven't you heard about him? Come out into the yard, and I'll tell you;" and both boys arose, and went out of the house.

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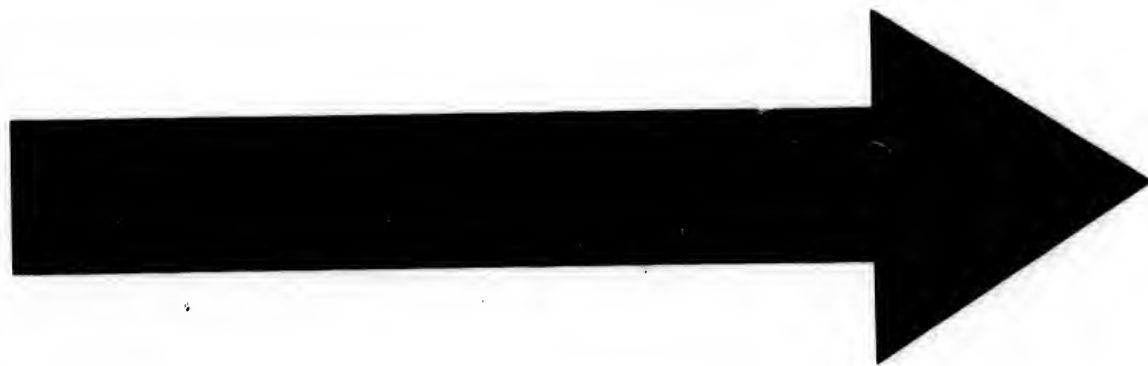
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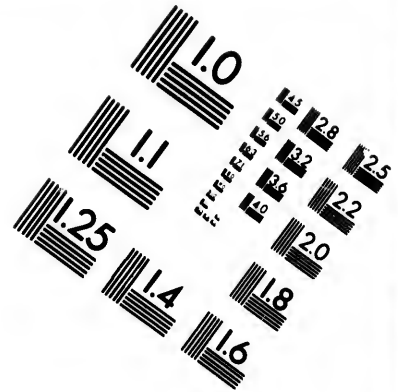
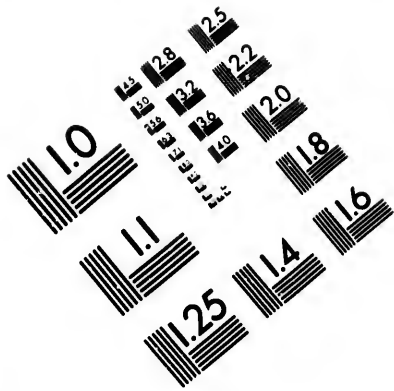
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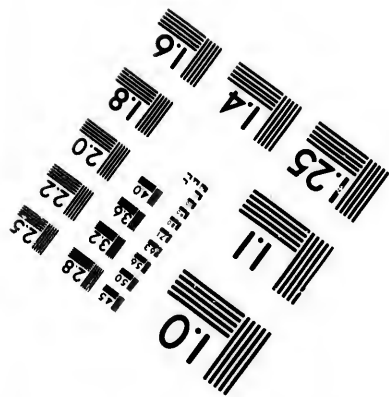
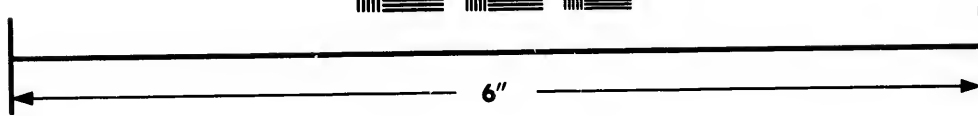
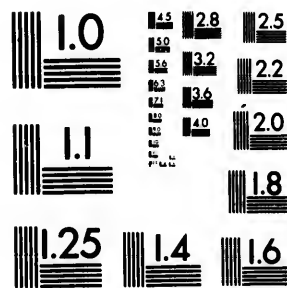
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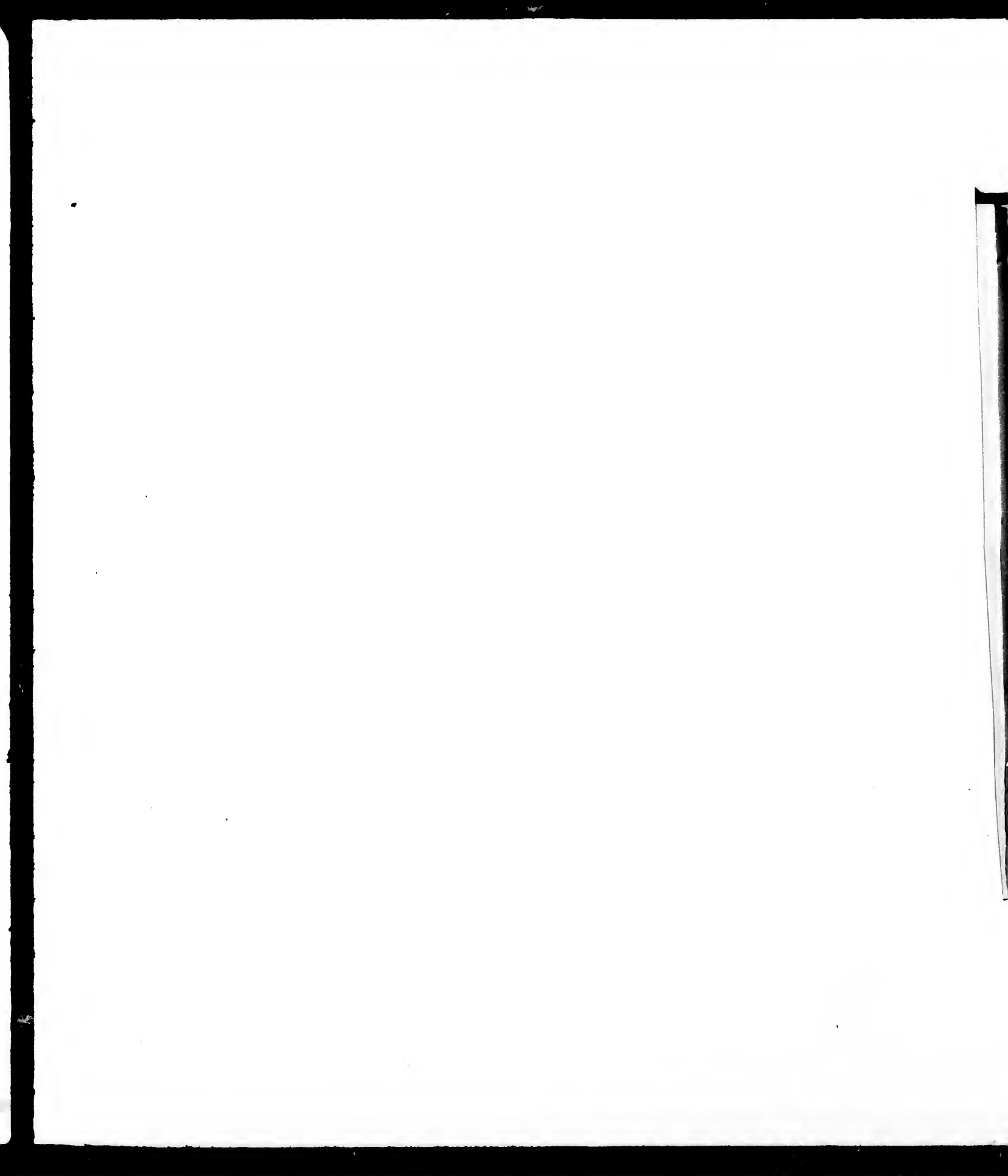
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CHAPTER XXXIV

CONCLUSION

FOR a long time the boys remained in the barn, whither they had gone when they departed from the house; and there David first learned of the departure of Elijah for the Niagara frontier some weeks before. Nothing had been heard of him, or from him, since he had gone; and the suspense which had hung like a cloud over the Field home during David's absence had now been transferred to the home of the Spicers.

"What terrible times these are!" said David. "First it's one family, and then it's another, that has to take it. I suppose if Heman was out here he'd begin to quote the Bible, and tell how there was not a family of the Egyptians in which there was not one dead."

"Yes," replied Henry; "I feel very different now about the whole war from what I did last spring. There's been a big change since then."

"And the worst of it is that no one knows when the end will come. Oh, well! we mustn't whine now. We've started in, and we've just got to stick

to it till the whole thing is over. But that was a shame, that was, about the burning of Washington, wasn't it? I wouldn't have believed the British would do it."

"It's not so very different from our burning Toronto, though," said Henry.

"Yes, it is too. That was done without any orders from the war department, and this thing seems to have been done on purpose."

"Well, when we're in for it, as we are now, I don't see any very great difference. It's give and take, and that's about all you can make of it."

Their conversation was at last finished; and after David had made an inspection of the entire place, they returned to the house, where the party had remained much as they had been when the boys had gone out.

"It seems too good to be true," said David, standing for a moment with his arm about his mother. "Just think of it, I'm home again. If you want to know just what that means, you want to spend a few weeks with our English cousins. I used to think I'd rather live anywhere than around here, but now I think there isn't such a spot on earth."

His mother smiled and said, "I hope you'll never have to leave it again, my boy. It may be hard for you when you are away, but it's a good deal harder for those who have to stay without you. I do hope the war will soon be over."

"It can't last very much longer this season, anyway," said the hermit; "but no one knows what will come next year."

"Never you fear," said Andrew. "We're just beginning to learn how to carry it on. It's about the same as it was during the Revolution. It takes two or three years to get fairly started. And we've made a pretty fair beginning."

On the following day the boys went over to Sackett's Harbor, where they had to report each morning. There was a constant fear of an attack by Yeo's fleet; but as long as Chauncey's vessels remained, the people were not greatly alarmed.

In a few days the entire community was thrown into a state of great excitement by the arrival of Major-General George Izard, who had been in command of the land forces about Lake Champlain. At Sackett's Harbor a message was awaiting him, which urged his immediate departure for Niagara. He promptly resolved to act; and on the 21st of September he embarked twenty-five hundred of his infantry on Chauncey's fleet, and after leaving directions for his mounted and unmounted dragoons to move by the way of Onondaga, he set sail.

The general and his infantry landed at the mouth of the Genesee River, and moved as rapidly westward as the wilderness and the heavy rains permitted. On the 5th of October they arrived at Lewiston, and that very evening he held a consultation with General

Brown. As General Brown was outranked by Izard, he relinquished the command, and made preparations to return with a few of his men to Sackett's Harbor; and among this number was our friend Elijah Spicer.

General Izard soon found that he was in command of almost eight thousand troops, and he at once prepared to march against the British. He left a colonel in charge of Fort Erie, which had been most gallantly held by the Americans, and advanced with his army towards Chippewa. But his efforts to draw the enemy into an engagement met with about the same success as Commodore Chauncey's had.

But a report came to the American commander that the British had a large quantity of grain stored at Cook's Mills, not far away; and Izard sent a large detachment of men to take or destroy it. In the night, after the detachment had encamped near the mills, the pickets were posted in advance, and fell in with a body of the Glengarry Guards; and in the morning there was a sharp engagement, in which the forces engaged on each side were largely re-enforced. In a brief time the British were driven back, and leaving their dead on the field, fled to their main camp at Chippewa, after they had lost about a hundred and fifty men. The Americans, who had lost in all about seventy, then destroyed the two hundred bushels of wheat, and had made such an impression upon the British commander that he soon fell farther back to Fort George and Burlington Heights.

General Izard now knew that it was too late in the season to plan for any further advances, and soon afterwards withdrew with his army to the American side of the river, and abandoned Canada. The honors throughout the campaign had been nearly even; and although each side claimed the advantage, the Americans felt that they had gained in many points, and history has in a great measure confirmed their impression.

In the summer of this year, the British had sent fresh troops into Canada, feeling that the general peace of Europe would now warrant them in so doing, and formed a plan for invading northern New York, as Burgoyne had done in the Revolution.

Lake Champlain was in their route, and Commodore Thomas Macdonough was in command of the American fleet there. He was a man of great ability and sterling worth, and had built and equipped his little fleet with the utmost haste.

On Sept. 11, in the harbor of Plattsburg, he met the enemy, and entered into an engagement which was to decide the fate of the British expedition. The British attacked at daybreak; and a desperate fight followed, which lasted for two hours, and then the four largest of the British fleet surrendered, and the others fled; and, like the famous campaign of John Burgoyne, all their plans ended in failure so far as that part of the country was concerned.

Macdonough's despatch, which was sent to various

parts of the country, became almost as famous as that of Commodore Perry at about the same time in the preceding year — for Perry's fight on Lake Erie occurred on Sept. 10, 1813. Macdonough's despatch read: "The Almighty has been pleased to grant us a signal victory on Lake Champlain, in the capture of one frigate, one brig, and two sloops-of-war of the enemy."

On the ocean, during the year of 1814, very stirring events had occurred. In the spring the Peacock, the name given to a new American war-vessel, took the Epervier off the coast of Florida. The Essex had previously been blockaded in the harbor of Valparaiso by the two British vessels, the Phoebe and the Cherub, which had been sent out to search for her. The Essex was crippled by an accident, and at a safe distance the two British vessels began to pelt her with shot. The Essex was unable to close with them, and after half of her men had been killed, she surrendered; but as the Phoebe alone was a far heavier vessel than she, her surrender was no disgrace. This was considered the most savage engagement of the entire war.

In the summer the Wasp, right in the British Channel, captured the two British brigs, the Reindeer and the Avon. As the Wasp was never heard of again, it was concluded that she must have been lost at sea. For some time afterwards there was not an American war-vessel on the ocean; but in the

fifteen engagements on the ocean during the war, the Americans had lost but three, and the little American navy won a world-wide reputation. Although there were so few strictly war-vessels, privateers continually flourished. Nearly two thousand vessels were taken on each side during the war, and the nations began to respect the daring and ability of the new country.

Lieutenant Gregory was not exchanged, but was sent to England. It was customary to grant comparative liberty then to such prisoners; and he spent much of his time in society, a method of imprisonment, we may be sure, to which the young lieutenant did not object. He became a great favorite among the English ladies, and was always spoken of by them as that "vivacious little Yankee." He was not destined to spend his days in England, however; for after the war was over, he returned to America, and by his ability and energy steadily rose, until he became a rear-admiral. He lived until he was seventy-seven years old; but we may be sure he never forgot his adventures when he was a young lieutenant at Sackett's Harbor in 1814. One of the events in his life, of which he always was especially proud, was that he was in command of the *Grandywine* when she carried Lafayette on his visit to this country in 1825.

The young Indian, Garangula, was a frequent visitor at Sackett's Harbor during the winter which

followed, and spent many days at the old Field homestead. But as the boys were not there during that time, his visits were never prolonged, although his welcome was always a warm one, as he had been known as one of the friends of the young soldiers.

The sailor Jack, who had been a good friend to David during his service on the British schooner, was soon exchanged, and for a time disappeared beyond the circle of our friends.

As for Jim Nairne and the dwarf, occasional reports of their doings came to Sackett's Harbor; but the reports which Andrew and David gave of the part Jim had played in the attempt to blow up the American vessel had destroyed all confidence in him, and none of the leaders would use him any more. Doubtless the dwarf's "wings" landed him safely in some secure Canadian harbor, and he was content to remain there for a time.

The building of the mighty St. Lawrence by the British stimulated the American leaders; and plans were at once formed to build a three-deck man-of-war, capable of carrying one hundred and twenty guns, and which should be more than a match for the St. Lawrence. Work was begun upon her at Sackett's Harbor, and she was to be named the New Orleans. She was never completed, however, for reasons we cannot here give. To render assurance doubly sure, another similar vessel was also to be built; but she too never was finished, for the same

reasons which prevented the completion of the New Orleans.

After the destruction of Washington, the British beat a hasty retreat across the country, and embarked again on their fleet. Then they sailed up the bay, bent upon the destruction of Baltimore also. But the men of that city made a stout resistance. In an attack on Fort McHenry, the ships were repulsed; and the army withdrew after an unsuccessful battle at North Point, below the city. It was during the night attack on Fort McHenry that the now famous battle-song, "The Star-Spangled Banner," was written by Francis S. Key, who had visited the British fleet to try to obtain the release of some prisoners, and had been detained on board, contrary to all the customs of civilized warfare; that is, if war can ever be spoken of as "civilized."

When Elijah Spicer returned to Sackett's Harbor, great was his surprise to learn that all the boys, and Heman also, had departed, bound for a far distant part of the country. Whither they had gone and why, and how Elijah set forth to join them, we cannot relate here. Nor can we now describe their meeting with some other friends of ours, whom those who have read all the books in this series already know. However, those who have a desire to follow their farther fortunes may do so in a story which will be called,

THE BOYS WITH OLD HICKORY.



