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W. N. U., DETROIT, NO. 10—1924.

In the Days of Poor Richard

by IRVING BACHELLER

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"I WILL WAIT"

SYNOPSIS.—Solomon Binkus, veteran scout and interpreter, and his young companion, Jack Irons, passing through Horse Valley, New York, in September, 1765, to warn settlers of an Indian uprising, rescue from a band of redskins the wife and daughter of Colonel Hare of England. Jack distinguishes himself in the fight and later rescues Margaret Hare from the river. Jack and Margaret fall in love.

CHAPTER I—Continued.

She stepped closer and he put his arm around her and kissed her lips. She ran away a few steps. Then, indeed, they were back on the familiar trail in the thirty-mile bush. A moose bird was screhming at them. She turned and said:

"I wanted you to know, but I have said nothing. I couldn't. I am under a sacred promise. You are a gentleman and you will not kiss me or speak of love again until you have talked with my father. It is the custom of our country. But I want you to know that I am very happy."

"I don't know how I dared to say and do what I did, but I couldn't help it."

"I couldn't help it either. I just longed to know if you dared."

"The rest will be in the future—perhaps far in the future."

His voice trembled a little.

"Not far if you come to me, but I can wait—I will wait." She took his hand as they were walking beside each other and added: "For you."

"I, too, will wait," he answered, "and as long as I have to."

Mrs. Hare, walking down the trail, to meet them, had come near. Their journey out of the wilderness had ended, but for each a new life had begun.

The husband and father of the two ladies had reached the fort only an hour or so ahead of the mounted party and preparations were being made for an expedition to cut off the retreat of the Indians. He was known to most of his friends in America only as Col. Benjamin Hare—a royal commissioner who had come to the colonies to inspect and report upon the defenses of his majesty. He wore the uniform of a colonel of the King's guard. There is an old letter of John Irons which says that he was a splendid figure of a man, tall and well proportioned and about forty; with dark eyes, his hair and mustache just beginning to show gray.

"I shall not try here to measure my gratitude," he said to Mr. Irons. "I will see you tomorrow."

"You owe me nothing," Irons answered. "The rescue of your wife and daughter is due to the resourceful and famous scout—Solomon Binkus."

"Dear old rough-barked hickory man!" the colonel exclaimed. "I hope to see him soon."

He went at once with his wife and daughter to rooms in the fort. That evening he satisfied himself as to the character and standing of John Irons, learning that he was a patriot of large influence and considerable means.

The latter family and that of Peter Bones were well quartered in tents with a part of the Fifty-fifth regiment then at Fort Stanwix. Next morning Jack went to breakfast with Colonel Hare and his wife and daughter in their rooms, after which the colonel invited the boy to take a walk with him out to the little settlement of Mill river. Jack, being overawed, was rather slow in declaring himself and the colonel presently remarked:

"You and my daughter seem to have got well acquainted."

"Yes, sir; but not as well as I could wish," Jack answered. "Our journey ended too soon. I love your daughter, sir, and I hope you will let me tell her and ask her to be my wife sometime."

"You are both too young," said the colonel. "Besides you have known each other not quite three days and I have known you not as many hours. We are deeply grateful to you, but it is better for you and for her that this matter should not be hurried. After a year has passed, if you think you still care to see each other, I will ask you to come to England. I think you are a fine, manly, brave chap, but really you will admit that I have a right to know you better before my daughter engages to marry you."

Jack freely admitted that the request was well founded, albeit he declared, frankly, that he would like to be got acquainted with as soon as possible.

"We must take the first ship back to England," said the colonel. "You are both young and in a matter of this kind there should be no haste. If your affection is real, it will be none the worse for a little keeping."

Solomon Binkus and Peter and Israel and John Bones and some settlers north of Horse valley arrived next day with the captured Indians, who, under a military guard, were sent on to the Great Father at Johnson castle.

Colonel Hare was astonished that neither Solomon Binkus nor John Irons nor his son would accept any gift for the great service they had done him.

"I owe you more than I can ever pay," he said to the faithful Binkus. "Money would not be good enough for your reward."

Solomon stepped close to the great man and said in a low tone:

"Them young 'uns has growed kind o' lovesick an' I wouldn't wonder. I don't ask only one thing. Don't make no mistake 'bout this 'ere boy. In the bush we have a way o' pickin' out men. We see how they stan' up to danger an' hard work an' goin' hungry. Jack is a reg'lar he-man. I know 'em when I see 'em, which—it's a sure fact—I've seen all kinds. He's got brains an' courage, an' a tough arm an' a good heart. He'd die for a friend any day. Ye kain't do no more. So don't make no mistake 'bout him. He ain't no hemlock bow. I cecalate there ain't no better man-timber nowhere—no, sir, not nowhere in this world—call it king or lord or duke or any name ye like. So, sir, if ye feel like doin' suthin' fer me—which I didn't never expect it, when I done what I did—I'll say be good to the boy. You'd never have to be 'shamed o' him."

"He's a likely lad," said Colonel Hare. "And I am rather impressed by your words, although they present a view that is new to me. We shall be returning soon and I dare say they will presently forget each other, but if not, and he becomes a good man—as good a man as his father—let us say—and she should wish to marry him, I would gladly put her hand in his."

At Fort Stanwix, John Irons sold his farm and house and stock to Peter Bones and decided to move his family

THEY TRAVELED ON SNOW-SHOES.

to Albany, where he could educate his children. Both he and his wife had grown weary of the loneliness of the back country, and the peril from which they had been delivered was a deciding factor. So it happened that the Irons family and Solomon went to Albany by bateaux with the Hares. It was a delightful trip in good autumn weather, in which Colonel Hare has acknowledged that both he and his wife acquired a deep respect "for these sinewy, wise, upright Americans, some of whom are as well learned, I should say, as most men you would meet in London."

CHAPTER I

Sowing the Dragon's Teeth.

That winter the Irons family and Solomon Binkus went often to the meetings of the Sons of Liberty. One purpose of this organization was to induce people to manufacture their own necessities and thus avoid buying the products of Great Britain. Factories were busy making looms and spinning wheels; skilled men and women taught the arts of spinning, weaving and tailoring. The slogan "Home made or nothing" traveled far and wide.

Late in February Jack Irons and Solomon Binkus went east as delegates to a large meeting of the Sons of Liberty in Springfield. They traveled on snowshoes and by stage, finding the bitterness of the people growing more intense as they proceeded. They found many women using thorns instead of pins and knitting one pair of stockings with the ravelings of another. They were also flossing out their silk gowns and spinning the floss into gloves with cotton. All this was to avoid buying goods sent over from Great Britain.

The meeting over, Jack and Solomon went on by stage to Boston for a look at the big city.

They arrived there on the fifth of March a little after dark. The moon was shining. A snow flurry had whitened the streets. The air was still and cold. They had their suppers at the Ship and Anchor. While they were eating they heard that a company of British soldiers who were encamped near the Presbyterian meeting-house had beaten their drums on Sunday so that no worshiper could hear the preaching.

"And the worst of it is we are compelled to furnish them food and quarters while they insult and annoy us," said a minister who sat at the table.

After supper Jack and Solomon went out for a walk. They heard violent talk among people gathered at the street corners. They soon overtook a noisy crowd of boys and young men carrying clubs. In front of Murray's barracks, where the Twenty-ninth regiment was quartered, there was a chattering crowd of men and boys. Some of them were hooting and cursing at two sentinels. The streets were lighted by oil lamps and by candles in the windows of the houses.

In Cornhill they came upon a larger and more violent assemblage of the same kind. They made their way through it and saw beyond a captain, a corporal and six private soldiers standing face to face with the crowd. Men were jeering at them; boys hurling abusive epithets. The boys, as they are apt to do, reflected, with some exaggeration, the passions of their elders. It was a crowd of rough fellows—mostly wharfmen and sailors. Solomon sensed the danger in the situation. He and Jack moved out of the jeering mob. Then suddenly a thing happened which may have saved one or both their lives. The captain drew his sword and flashed a dark light upon Solomon and called out:

"Hello, Binkus! What the h—l do you want?"

"Who he yet?" Solomon asked.

"Preston."

"Preston! Cat's blood and gunpowder! What's the matter?"

Preston, an old comrade of Solomon, said to him:

"Go around to headquarters and tell them we are cut off by a mob and in a bad mess. I'm a little scared. I don't want to get hurt or do any hurting."

Jack and Solomon passed through the guard and hurried on. Then there were hisses and cries of "Tories! Rotten Tories!" As the two went on they heard missiles falling behind them and among the soldiers.

"They's goin' to be bad trouble than," said Solomon. "Them lads ain't to blame. They're only doin' as they're commanded. It's the pesky king that orto be hetcheelled."

They were hurrying on, as he spoke, and the words were scarcely out of his mouth when they heard the command to fire and a rifle volley—then loud cries of pain and shrill curses and running feet. They turned and started back. People were rushing out of their houses, some with guns in their hands. In a moment the street was full.

"The soldiers are slaying people," a man shouted. "Men of Boston, we must arm ourselves and fight."

It was a scene of wild confusion. They could get no farther on Cornhill. The crowd began to pour into side-streets. Rumors were flying about that many had been killed and wounded. An hour or so later Jack and Solomon were seized by a group of ruffians.

"Here are the d—n Tories!" one of them shouted.

"Friends o' murderers!" was the cry of another. "Let's hang 'em!"

Solomon immediately knocked the man down who had called them Tories and seized another and tossed him so far in the crowd as to give it pause.

"I don't mind bein' hung," he shouted, "not if it's done proper, but no man kin call me a Tory lessen my hands are tied, without gittin' hurt. An' if my hands was tied I'd do some holerin', now you hear me."

A man back in the crowd let out a laugh as loud as the braying of an ass. Others followed his example. The danger was passed. Solomon shouted:

"I used to know Preston when I were a scout in Amherst's army fightin' Injuns an' Frenchmen, which they's more'n twenty notches on the stock o' my rifle an' fourteen on my pelt, an' my name is Solomon Binkus from Albany, New York, an' if you'll excuse us, we'll put for hum as soon as we kin git erway convenient."

In the morning they learned that three men had been killed and five others wounded by the soldiers. Squads of men and boys with loaded muskets were marching into town from the country.

"It means that war is coming. We might as well get ready for it."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Preparedness

He—My dear, it's no use for you to look at those hats; I haven't more than a dollar in my pocket.

She—You might have known when we came out that I'd want to buy a few things.

He—I did.—Boston Transcript.

Passing the Buck

Mrs. Peeter—Why did you tell Mrs. Newkid her baby looked like its father? You've never seen Mr. Newkid.

Her Husband—I know it. But all mothers of homely brats like hers think they look like their fathers.

Down the Ages

"You must come with me, growled the traffic cop.

"Cavemen stuff," murmured the girl.

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"No, he merely gassed it."—American Boy.

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Small Girl—Mummy, how do angels get their nighties on over their wings?—London Passing Show.

It's easier to do the things we shouldn't do than it is to avoid doing the things we should do.

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Especially Prepared for Infants and Children of All Ages

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