

# Saints & Beasts

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## ST. MARY'S BEACON

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### CHASED BY WOLVES.

It is scarcely one year since the events which we relate occurred in the northern steppes of Russia. An Englishman, named Hurlbert, had accepted an invitation from a young nobleman to visit him at his beautiful northern home, where he had promised him some excellent hunting, the game being bears and wolves. The Russian was of noble family, and enjoyed an immense estate covering thousands of acres in the wilds of the steppes. Within these possessions there was all that luxury and comfort, but outside the long weary winters of the north were gloomy enough.

It was midwinter when the young Englishman joined his Russian friend at his home. The rigor of the season was extreme and for the first time in his life he realized what the word winter really signified. However, when there is an abundance of pecuniary means, comfort can be realized nearly anywhere, and young Hurlbert was never more agreeably entertained than here in this frigid spot. Every modern luxury and means of amusement were at hand, and his friend, the Count Skarinski, was the best of companions, and a good billiard player, a capital shot with pistol or rifle, and in short a highly accomplished man in all games and sports of the day.

One cold January day the two gentlemen made their preparations for a hunting excursion, and young Hurlbert was somewhat surprised to observe the very elaborate arrangement which was entered into as it regarded the supply of arms and ammunition. Considering that there were but three persons, himself and friend, and the driver of the sleigh, he thought that the number of double-barreled guns and revolvers, with the stuff to put into them, was singular.

There were six double-barreled guns and as many revolvers, all loaded and placed handily in the bottom of the vehicle, besides each of the gentlemen carried a revolver in a leather case at his waist, and a long hunting knife. The driver also had a pair of revolvers in his leather belt, as well as a hunting knife.

"We are a moving arsenal," remarked the Englishman pleasantly, as he regarded these preparations.

"Yes, in hunting in Russia we sometimes come to such close quarters that there is little time for loading."

"Ah, I did not think of that."

"It is the quick and sure hand only that is safe where wild animals sometimes come in large numbers."

"What will probably be our game to-day?"

"We will try for bears."

"Are they plenty?"

"It is not easy to find them now as it will be in the spring. They keep stowed away mostly all winter."

Two large, handsome horses were harnessed to the sleigh, both so full of life and spirits as to require the entire attention of their experienced driver who remarked that they would get some of this fire worked out of them before the close of the day. At the suggestion of the count, a third horse or lead, making what is familiarly termed a spike team, was added to the sleigh, as he remarked that they might have a long pull of it. Thus equipped, with some luncheon in a basket, and well covered with furs to exclude the biting cold, the count and his English friend started off on the hunt.

They sought a somewhat famous locality in a well wooded neighborhood as their first point of search, but finding no signs of game here, they started for one still farther away, but with like want of success. Indeed, it became pretty clear that bears were not abroad, and that there was not much chance of their getting sight of any. In the meantime they had come a long distance, the day was already drawing to a close, and the count gave the word to turn the horses' heads toward home.

The party passed, however, to give the horses each four quarts of cracked corn, and also to partake of their own lunch. Half an hour sufficed for this, and men and beasts refreshed, then commenced the homeward trip.

The sun had set, but the big face of the pale moon was creeping up in the sky, and reflected from the shining surface of the snow, all was light as day. "We shall probably knock over a wolf or two as the evening comes on," said the count, "but I am sorry not to show you some larger game."

Scarcely had the words left his mouth when a noise behind them attracted the attention of both, and turning they beheld a small pack of wolves, rendered desperate by hunger, pursuing the sleigh. They came nearer and nearer. As they were in so large a number—twenty or more—the count told the driver to keep up his speed, and he would pick off one or two of them at a time. They were soon within range, and lifting one of the guns, he fired each of the barrels, and two wolves dropped in their tracks.

Then followed the singular scene which is instinctive with these animals. As soon as one is wounded and rendered helpless, his companions fall upon him and devour his body at once. These creatures, crazed with hunger, tore the carcasses to pieces in an incredibly short time, fighting over the body to secure a mouthful, and were soon rushing after the sleigh with renewed ferocity, excited by the taste of blood. The young Englishman tried his hand and dropped three of the wolves with two shots, one having evidently gone entirely through the body of an animal and entered that of another before its impact was lost.

The same scene was repeated which we have just described, but the pack had increased by the addition of another score of animals, which had been attracted by the smell or noise of those already in the field.

It began to look serious, and the count remarked that he had no idea the wolves were in such numbers this season. They fired again, each time killing a wolf, but that retarded the pursuers but for a few moments—so many snarling mouths devoured the wounded creatures instantaneously.

In the meantime the horses were kept at a steady and lively gait. It would not answer to use them up by a desperate dash of speed; for if they were to give out, the travelers would be torn to pieces in five minutes, as well as the horses themselves.

"Keep a steady hand, Ivan," said the count to the driver. "Don't fret the team, but keep them well up to work. We have a long route before us."

"Yes, count."

"Now, Mr. Hurlbert, we shall give you a chance to show your good marksmanship. Here comes another pack on our flank."

"Twice as large in numbers," said the Englishman.

"You blaze away at them when they get near enough—I see you are an excellent shot—and I will keep these fellows behind busy with each other's carcasses."

pace. Though more than forty of the wolves had been shot, and devoured by their comrades, it seemed that the taste of blood had only fired the appetite, of the rest of the pack, the numbers of which had increased constantly until more than a hundred and fifty were now howling after the sleigh.

At the count had said, they were drawing very near now, and the guns were rapidly emptied into their ranks. Each drew his revolver for close action, the gentlemen taking a revolver in each hand, and Ivan, the driver, setting the reins in his left, cocked his revolver with the right hand, just in time. Fifty open mouths were beside the sleigh on either side, and a hundred behind!

"Now, altogether," said the count; "let 'em have it, right and left!"

Ivan, who was perfectly cool, fired his six charges with deliberate though rapid aim, dropping a half dozen of the wolves, while the count with both hands fired down their throats on his side, and the Englishman, though with less coolness, yet with equal effect, shot down the ravenous beasts on his side. More than a dozen of them rolled over in the snow, while the rapid discharges of the revolvers nearly together, started the horses to fresh exertion and they separated from the wolves, who paused to devour these bodies bleeding upon the snow.

This delay among the pursuing beasts, who fought wildly over the bodies which they so quickly tore to pieces, gave the party in the sleigh a breathing moment, though a brief one. The time was improved to reload all the revolvers and the guns, while the horses were eased a little in their rapid gait in order to save their strength for a crisis which was doubtless to follow. It was still four miles at least to the shelter of his own grounds, as the count was compelled to admit. Whether they could keep the ferocious creatures at bay long enough to traverse that distance was a problem.

The pack now turned again to pursue the sleigh.

"Thank heaven for this respite, short as it is," said the Count Skarinski, drawing a long breath, and disposing of the guns for ready use, now all reloaded.

"The young Englishman said little. He had felt the hot breaths of those wild creatures in his very face, and the frightful situation was something appalling. However, he braced himself to do his best in fighting the terrible enemy, who were driving close and dangerous to the sleigh.

Once more the count and his companion began to drop the wolves two at a time. So dense were their numbers that every shot told, but notwithstanding these brief checks, they were gaining on the sleigh, their numbers in no perceptible degree lessened, though so many had been killed. Indeed, more now joined them, coming from a piece of wood which they were just passing. The horses labored painfully. They had been terribly tried by the long and continuous drag upon their strength.

"Our revolvers once more," said the count, as he emptied the last loaded gun into the savage enemy. "It is to be resolved again. Get ready your revolver, Ivan."

wolves left the sleigh. "Ah! those good fellows, which they had been thus the salvation of the sleigh. The house was in an extra effort, and delivered a shot, and after another among the wolves, and further check to the servants in the house, the noise, there in the distance, of the sleigh.

The gates were closed, and the well-armed household poured volley after volley among the ravenous creatures until there were none left to devour the wounded. The horses were carefully rubbed and tended, and by-and-by judiciously fed, so that they were soon in a way to recover their expended energies. But how about the two men?

Immediately on entering the ground, behind the high walls of which they were safe, the count sent for brandy and hot water. The Englishman had fainted at last from excitement and exertion. He poured out a half tumbler with some honey, and made Ivan drink it as hot as possible, but to his companion he gave it clear, and in small spoonfuls at a time, until he brought him quite to himself again.

His own nerves and system seemed made of iron, and he was quite as well as ever in a few moments after entering the house.

"It was that poor horse that saved us after all," said the count, as they sat smoking at last before the broad, well-filled fire place.

"And it was providential that you happened to put him into the team after it came up to the door," said his friend.

Then it was explained to the visitor that this was a remarkable instance. The heavy snows had cut off all sources of food from the wolves, and had thus rendered them ravenous. At most seasons of the year, they were very shy, and were hunted with perfect safety, it being only necessary to avoid them after night-fall, when they were apt to be found in packs, in order to fight such animals as were superior to themselves, unless attacked by numbers at the same time.

Young Hurlbert never forgot that fight with wolves upon the steppes of Russia.

No FALSE HOPES.—A visiting statury in Paris finds none of that contemptible mock modesty which prevails to so considerable an extent on the American shores of the Atlantic. Where a statue exhibits nudity, there is no attempt at concealing any portion of the anatomy. I had the curiosity to watch the faces of visitors who were inspecting these specimens. Often were the young girls, and in no instance did they blush or show evidence of discomposure. They seemed to comprehend perfectly that it was a work of art, and nothing else, upon which they were gazing. None of the lady visitors—at least, those of them that were French—had for such exhibition any of those averted glances, the strained pretense of being offended, the color of a false modesty, or the American fair sex, there were in packs, in order to fight such animals as were superior to themselves, unless attacked by numbers at the same time.

They had only time to load the guns before the howling pack started for them again, the count, with the coolness of a veteran, shooting them down one after another. They were still two miles from home.

## THE PROPOSED NAVAL COALING STATION ON ST. MARY'S RIVER.

The following important report to the Secretary of the Navy will be read with interest throughout Maryland, particularly in the lower counties of the Western Shore.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 24, 1874.

To Hon. George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy.

Sir: In obedience to your order of the 11th instant appointing you a Board to inquire into the expediency of establishing at the harbor of St. Mary's, St. Mary's river, Maryland, a naval coaling station, forwarding maps and surveys of said river and adjacent waters, made by the Topographical Bureau of the War Department in 1824, with copy of a resolution passed by the House of Representatives April 13, 1874, as follows:

Whereas, The Southern Maryland Railroad Company is now engaged in constructing a railroad from Washington to St. Mary's river and Point Lookout, at the confluence of the Potomac river with the Chesapeake Bay; and whereas said railroad, when completed, will bring the city of Washington within two and a-half hours of the Chesapeake Bay at the deep waters of the harbor of St. Mary's river, which will enable the Government to avail itself of the benefit of said harbor, thus rendered accessible to the seat of Government at all times of the year. Therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Navy, be and he is hereby directed to obtain from the War Department the report and survey made of the St. Mary's river and adjacent routes by the Topographical Bureau of the War Department, made about the year 1824, and to appoint a board of naval officers to whom the same shall be submitted, to inquire into and report as to the expediency of establishing at the said harbor a naval coaling station, and to report the results of the investigation to the Secretary of the Navy, who shall present the same to the House at the next session of Congress.

Directing the Board to give the subject the inquiry which the resolution suggests, and to submit our report to the Department in good season at its present session, the Board to give the subject suggested by the resolution, and in conformity with your orders, a careful examination and consideration, and have the honor respectfully to report:

That from various sources reliable information as to the location of the harbor of St. Mary's river, and its FITNESS FOR A NAVAL COALING STATION, has been obtained. By an examination of the surveys of the St. Mary's river, Maryland, made by Majors Abert and Kearney, Topographical Engineers, United States Army, in 1824, by order of the Secretary of War, in accordance with a resolution of the Senate of the United States, we find in the deep-water channel, extending from the mouth of the St. Mary's six miles, to its harbor, a depth of 21 to 31 feet at low water, the average width of the river at various intermediate points being about one mile. The distance from the confluence of the waters of the Saint Mary's river with the Potomac river and Chesapeake Bay to the Atlantic ocean is 86 miles, with easy and unobstructed navigation to the largest vessels at all times.

The Delaware river is at present the principal shipping point for the anthracite, Washington and Baltimore being the shipping points for the bituminous coals from the great Maryland Basin. ST. MARY'S RIVER, IN ALL RESPECTS, UNEXCEPTIONABLE.

The Board, in the consideration of this subject, respectfully submit, in view of the contingency of war with a powerful foreign Power, whether or not it is wise or judicious to rely upon any shipping point, others being available for its coal supply. With respect to the special fitness for such a depot, the St. Mary's river is, in all respects, unexceptionable—large and commodious, with sufficient depth of water for all classes of vessels; accessible at all seasons of the year, and not subject to being obstructed by ice, as in the upper portion of the Potomac, Patuxent and Delaware rivers. It is situated midway North and South, near to the Atlantic coast, and equally convenient to naval stations, North and South.

COAL FIELDS.—The bituminous coal fields of Maryland and Virginia are located from the St. Mary's harbor about 350 miles; those of the semi-bituminous of Maryland, near Cumberland, 250 miles, and to the anthracite fields of Pennsylvania, 280 miles. These coal fields, on the completion of the Southern Maryland Railroad, will be accessible by rail with the harbor of St. Mary's, and thus will become available a source of coal supply practically unlimited. It is near the confluence of the Potomac river and Chesapeake Bay, and within 86 miles of the Atlantic Ocean, and is not, therefore, subject to the longer and more tedious navigation, as compared with Washington and Baltimore.

SOUTHERN MARYLAND RAILROAD.—By the completion of the Southern Maryland Railroad it will be connected with the great coal fields of Maryland and Virginia via Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, over which any desirable quantity of coal can be delivered at the harbor of St. Mary's at all seasons of the year.

It will connect directly with the anthracite coal regions of Pennsylvania via the Southern Maryland Railroad, the Baltimore and Potomac and Northern Central Railroads. It will be connected with the seat of government by railroad, which will render it accessible in two hours and a-half from the capital of the nation.

### VIEW OF CAPTAIN PORTER.

The late Captain David Porter, when Commissioner of the Navy, in a communication to the Secretary of the Navy, December 27, 1816, in relation to a site for a naval depot and the best means to be adopted for the defense of the Chesapeake Bay, states in reference to the St. Mary's river:

Commodore Rodgers and myself, in our passage down the Potomac, in conformity with your instructions, touched in at St. Mary's, which is situated near its mouth.

In point of healthiness of situation, security from maritime attack, and (I am informed) from ice, excellence of harbor, and the easy ingress and egress to an inner harbor, at all times, to ships not drawing more than twenty-four and a half feet of water; the advantages it offers by means of streams of water to labor-saving purposes, and its convenience to forests of fine timber, St. Mary's is, in my opinion, superior to any other place of which I have a knowledge on the Chesapeake for a naval depot.

### COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS.

Commissioner John Rodgers, United States Navy, also a member of the Board of Navy Commissioners, in a communication to the Hon. Benj. W. Cavanaugh, the Secretary of the Navy, under date of December 23, 1816, upon this subject, writes:

I proceeded now to examine St. Mary's river. This river is situated on the north side of the Potomac, about seven miles above Point Lookout; the next above Smith's Point, with which it forms the entrance into the Potomac. By some it is urged that this place respects salubrity of climate, is preferable to Norfolk or New York. As a safe and commodious harbor it is perhaps not excelled by any in the United States. At its entrance it is about 3 miles wide, and the water is 32 to 33 feet deep for 3 1/2 to 4 miles up, its width gradually decreases until you pass two projecting points at opposite sides, within which at low water, the depth is about 24 feet, and the river from point to point about one half a mile wide, from this to a place about 2 miles further up, the river is by two other projecting points diminished to about five hundred yards in width, presenting above these points a beautiful basin in which there is near the entrance, inside 20 or 21 feet at low water. This river above, where it is perfectly susceptible of defense against a naval force, presents in several respects the most seducing reasons for its selection as a naval depot and rendezvous.

### WHAT COMMODORE PARKER SAYS.

Commodore Foxhall A. Parker, United States Navy, who commanded the naval gunboat flotilla on the Potomac in 1864-65, in a note to the President of the Board remarks:

"There could be no better place for a coal depot than the St. Mary's river, and exactly where I had mine during the civil war, easy of access, day and night, plenty of water, and always as smooth as a millpond."

### ACCESSIBLE ALL SEASONS OF THE YEAR.

The Board cannot express an opinion as to the defensibility of such points upon the St. Mary's river as upon further examination might prove to be the most desirable for a naval coaling depot; while it unqualifiedly recognizes the importance of such a depot, accessible at all seasons of the year to vessels of the greatest draught of water and of easy defense, in communication by shorter routes of transportation with the great bituminous and anthracite coal fields of Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania, as from such a depot of supply the necessary prerequisites to the maintenance of our steam vessels of war and transports in all contingencies and emergencies would be secured, and from which coal can be shipped to points within the United States and elsewhere, throughout the world, when desired.

In conclusion we are of the opinion that at some point upon the St. Mary's river will be found an eligible position at which it is (for the reasons above stated) expedient to locate a naval coaling station.

We have the honor to be very respectfully, your obedient servants,

R. A. WYMAN,

Commodore United States Navy,

President of Board.

## CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK.

The following appeared in the New York Evening Post, June 12th:

We all know that mechanical inventions are the peculiarity of our age, and have much to do with producing and distributing our most important commodities, while they promote the education of our people by taking the heaviest burdens from their hands, and by securing time and means for instruction. It is proper, therefore, to hold our inventors in honor and to present them and their inventions to the public eye in fitting monuments.

It has occurred to a number of our citizens that a suitable monument should be erected in the Central Park, in memory of the late ELIAS HOWE, JR., the inventor of the sewing machine, and that the money should be raised by voluntary offerings of not more than one dollar each from ladies who have known the benefits of the invention. Elias Howe, Jr. was not merely a successful inventor, whose needle machine, more powerful and humane than the famous "needle gun," has changed wholly the face of one of the most universal and fatiguing kind of domestic toil; he was also a good citizen and earnest patriot, who freely gave his money and time, and was ready to risk health and life for his country.

It is understood that an experienced sculptor has a satisfactory design for an impressive monument, with studies modeled from life, and that a gentleman of well-known integrity and thorough acquaintance with the history of the invention is ready to act as Treasurer.

Samuel Oswood, Howard Crosby, William C. Bryant, Charles O'Connor, Henry Ward Beecher, Henry W. Bellows, Willard Parker, E. H. Chapin, Frederick de Peyster, Cyrus W. Field, John Cotton Smith, Alex. Masterton, B. Ogden Doremus, J. S. Gibbons.

We now beg leave to say that the Committee having organized and appointed Rev. Samuel Oswood, Chairman, Dr. R. Ogden Doremus, Secretary, and Alexander Masterton, Esq., Treasurer, we trust that the public will respond freely to the call, so that there may be as little delay as possible before this merited testimonial to the great inventor will be added to the noble works of art that adorn our Park. Subscriptions may be forwarded to Alexander Masterton, President Manufacturers and Merchants' Bank, No. 561 Broadway, New York.

### A MERE MISTAKE.

The Cincinnati Enquirer remarks: "A young man of the town who parts his hair in the center is said to have made a slight mistake at the opera last night. In order to obtain a clearer perception of a high note he reached in his coat-tail pocket and brought forth what he thought was an opera glass, but what indeed proved to be a revised compilation of a derring-do. People in his immediate vicinity were surprised and somewhat frightened to see him elevate the ordinance to his eyes and steadily gaze down into its dark caverns of death. It was upon first impression thought to be a cool, deliberate, pre-planned suicide, but when he quickly put it back in his pocket and brought the real article into requisition, the horror melted from before their eyes and it became apparent that it was only a mistake after all. A few hairs whose boat lay on the harbor side of the young man's skull had by some means gotten on the starboard side.—Hence the slight aberration mind."

Old Dr. Bancroft, of Worcester, the father of the historian, and pastor of the first parish, was annoyed by the impertinence of a man whose character was not superior to that of St. Paul, and who wanted to join the Doctor's church. The Doctor put him off on one pretext or another, till all were exhausted. At last he said: "My friend, the fact is my church is full." "Well," said the rejected applicant, "then I will go and join an English company."

A Methodist clergyman, about to preach in an out-of-the-way town in California, was warned that if he said anything disagreeable the "roughs" would make trouble. He assumed the pulpit, took a couple of revolvers from his pockets, and lying one on each side of the Bible, looked fearlessly around the congregation, and said: "Let us pray." A more orderly service was never conducted.

A WISE EXERCISE.—On one occasion at a dinner at the Bishop of Chester's, Hannah More urged Dr. Johnson to take a little wine. He replied, "I can't drink a little wine, and, therefore, I never touch it. Abstinence is as easy to me as temperance would be difficult." Many have the same infirmity, but are destitute of the same courage, and therefore are ruined.

A young lady in Cambrianborough, tired of being "left alone," has married John Rightower. It is altogether probable she will "order him up" on winter mornings.

A Colorado exchange says: "The Canon city girls don't take kindly to croquet. They say it's too high-toned for them. Leap-frog is their best hold."