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Old Squire.

The Romance of a Black Virginian.

By B. K. BENSON.

Author of "Who Goes There?" "A Friend With the Countess," "Bayard's Courier," etc. (COPYRIGHT, 1903, BY THE MACMILLAN COMPANY.)

CHAPTER XVII.

WAYS CONVERGING.

"Is the coast clear? None but friends?"—Goldsmit.

More than half the night was gone; the moon, changing to its last quarter, was fully two hours high.

Morgan's new captors were Buford's Division, which had retired from the fight near Williamsport, and was now beginning its movement toward Kiptpatrick's left. In the recent combat Buford's people had been sorely tried; the company into whose clutches Morgan had stumbled had suffered greatly, the men being held too long to their work even after their cartridges were exhausted. His commander was not in the best of humor.

"How did you get here, sir?" he asked sharply, when Morgan was halted before him. "The question brought with it the apprehension of a possible danger not hitherto thought of: this Confederate, unharmed, in the midst of moving enemies, was peculiar. Yet a moment's reflection assured the captive that, in full gray uniform, he had no reason to fear being accused as a spy."

"I was captured, sir," was the simple reply, given in tones respectful and low. "Can't I see that? But how the devil did you manage to get here in order to be captured?"

"Straggling and hiding out, sir." "Where are your arms?" "I had to throw them away, sir, and to abandon my horse; he was taken before I was."

"You were not in the fight this afternoon?" "No, sir; I heard cannon in two directions, but I saw no fighting. The declaration, literally taken, was true."

"Your command?" "Morgan answered freely and fully, telling the whole, inclusive organization, of the officer under the matter by giving the prisoner in charge of two men whom he ordered to ride hard toward Boonsboro, that they might overtake a batch of prisoners sent back under guard earlier; they were to deliver the prisoner and return forthwith to their company."

"But if we don't catch up with 'em, Lieutenant?" "You may be compelled to go as far as Boonsboro."

Morgan was made to mount behind one of the men, and the second trooper followed, his horse's head at the other's tail. The leader struck a trot and soon found his road, moving eastward. In the road, however, the trooper was not to be depended on, for the mud was above the fetlocks and the foundation was slippery.

The great rains that began on the night of the 4th had been an advantage, and later would prove to be his peril. The Maryland mud, coupled with uncertainty, prevented the swift pursuit which the President, in agony of suspense, urged upon his General. Lincoln's belief that the rebels could not move more rapidly than the Federals was borne out neither by facts nor by valid theory. In retreat, Lee had one purpose: in advancing, Meade must have many; besides, the retreat was conducted with infantry leading, cavalry marching in rear; the advance necessarily was "in reverse order, so that the Confederate infantry had the advantage of roads wet enough in all conscience, but not out and churned into the loblolly through which Neil's Division was forced to splatter behind their own and their enemy's cavalry. So the bulk of Meade's infantry was diverted from a direct pursuit of the Confederates, and made a flank march to Middleburg through mud and slush, a slow and painful because of greater destitution than the Union troops often experienced. Though Buford and Kiptpatrick had marched with sufficient rapidity to bring Stuart to action, they had not succeeded in doing him, Stuart and the mud gained Lee the great position of Hagerstown where the swollen Potomac held him for a week.

"Say, Locke," said the rear guard, "you lead out of this. Git out there on the right. Blessed if ever I saw such a mess."

"How the devil you expect me to climb that fence?" "They were in a closed lane, on the left a fence of stone, on the right, one of rails. The progress was the slowest walk."

"Well, we might just as well go on back," said the rear. "Them fellows is five mile ahead before now, an' a gainin' ground. If they got any sense at all, it's more'n we got, an' they tack to the hard ground, you can bet your bottom dollar on that. Say, Locke, you halt."

"What for?" "You halt, an' I'll show you. Look out for that Johnny now, an' I'm a-goin' to let down a gasp."

"All right, Sam; that's talkin'." "Sam rode to the rail fence and speedily lowered it so that the horses could step over."

The march was now better, yet the hoofs sank into the soil of a plowed field. The leader guided right and left, seeking avoidance of the bog, and soon cried out, "Struck a good one, Sam," as the hoofs rang upon a stony, unplowed path stretching directly downhill before them.

The hill in front, wooded, obscured the moon. Locke's path was yet had diverged, but little from the fence, and it was true policy to keep this path until its course should change. The horses trotted, and the prisoner had not spoken, neither had his guards addressed him a word. These were three veterans; curiosity as to unknown individuals was not a strong point with any of the three.

thrust his left hand through his twisted bridle reins.

Locke was now standing at the fence; he gave a strong push against a topmost stone; its outward fall was followed by a loud splash. He leaned against the fence, peering over. The shadows of the wood on the hill were receding toward the east. Locke's head was in the moonlight.

"Sam, I'll swear the's a bluff here 10 feet."

The rear gave no response. Locke remounted. The rear guard returned his pistol to his holster. The leader urged his horse to the right, finding better ground. Now and then he

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"No, only I see 'at he had a jacket on 'stead of a sack like your'n; an' then they don't start first one way, an' then they don't go no more'n ten rod before here they come a-rickin' back an' goes on east; an' then I says to myself, 'You two fellers is rebs, an' I can see it by your pore hosses,' says I."

"Well," says Locke, "let 'em go. I guess they'd be willin' to let us pass providin' we were willin'." I want to know how to get to Boonsboro, pointin' toward the back track; "a mile from here you'll strike the big road. No way to put you out; all you got to do is just stay on top of the range, an' just follow the plain road, don't matter how it turns. How'd the fight go, up higher?"

"Went wrong. Johnnie had all the luck. Say, where does this end of this cursed road go to, anyhow?" "Winds about over the range and strikes for Harper's Ferry, but not all at once."

"Harper's Ferry? Our folks there, or the rebs?" "Durn, I hear; but I hear a heap of things that I don't count for Gospel."

They turned back. Locke had no desire to see Harper's Ferry, even though he were sure to find it in the hands of his own people, who were indeed at this time about to seize it. Gen. Kenly would march at sunrise for Maryland Heights, which commanded the town. The Federals had already sent scouting parties in that direction, who had reported the coast clear; but they failed to see and intercept

through, but didn't know it, so Morgan was left with Father; he's got a Yankee Surgeon staying with him."

"And how is he?" "Better, so the Doctor says, but he hadn't said a word up to the night I left."

"When was that? Ah?" and Sency's jaw was stuck in an exclamation. "Sh—," whispers West, and halts.

"I hear it," says Sency. "How far, you think?" "Close by, and coming; between here and that house we passed. Don't you think so, Joe?"

"Boon! to be." "How many do you make 'em?" "Sency sprang from his horse and put his ear to the ground. An instant more and he had remounted."

"Suppose we gobble 'em up," suggested Mosby's man, professionally. "I'm willing. I don't want the men, but my horse is in need of repairs, and I'm willin' to swap sight ussen."

Sency took command. He posted Usher West on the south of the road. Baxter and Lewis on the right, all in bushes, while he remained, sitting his horse, in the open road.

"The two Federals, with their prisoner, were making good headway on the best road they had yet found, and were nearing the end of their outgoing journey—a mile more, they had been told, would put them in the main road. In a little while they would turn over their charge and then start on their return. As yet there was no sign of day."

The prisoner, actually asleep, his head resting against Locke's neck, was roused by the abrupt jerk which the guard brought his horse to a stand.

"What's up?" says Sam. "Morgan, dimly conscious, at first awakened, and then fully awake, quickly became alert. He peered over Locke's shoulder. In front, some 50 yards away, stood a motionless horseman in the open road."

"Don't you see?" asked Locke. "Sam changed position a foot or two, and, as his horse moved, he thought he had seen the man in the distance; but his attention was distracted at once from this noise by seeing the single horseman begin to turn as though he intended flight."

Locke's first thought had been that the man in front was a sentinel, posted by whatever Federal command had camped at Boonsboro; he had expected, in a challenge, which would have been highly welcome to his ears; now, seeing the man begin to retire, suspicions assailed him.

Of course, in these parts, chances were great that the man was of the right color—perhaps he was a Federal scout willing to compromise, choosing to slip away rather than run the risk of capture by the man whose degree of unfriendliness could not be accurately estimated at 50 yards under a half-moon. At any rate, the man's behavior was strange, and Locke had no objection to such movement on the part of the unknown. Locke had drawn his pistol, and he still held it as he again rode on.

But the singular horseman had made less than a hundred feet before he halted; he turned his horse and faced the Federals once more.

"Who comes there?" asked the stranger. Locke had now heard the wished-for challenge, and he felt a cold shiver run down the center of his spine in contrary directions and back—not at the words, or at the tones, but merely at the low pitch of the voice. For an infinitesimal moment he considered. The reply to a challenge should be immediate; but Locke was not thoroughly prompt. Never his previous experience had his been challenged in a voice so little above a whisper; yet he must speak, and he opened his lips; but before he had made a sound there came to him a repetition, any more, three repetitions of the challenge.

"Who comes there?" "Right, left, and rear, the low voices had sounded."

Sam turned, and saw a horseman blocking his way. From both sides came the noise of hoofs, sounds hardly heard in the greater noise of rustling leaves and boughs.

some of Mosby's men, who sent out to Maryland below Leesburg, had been cut off by the swollen Potomac and had been forced to steal their way at night, by twos and threes, up the river, making for Lee's army on its retreat. On this night Usher West and Tom Baxter had reached the range.

"Hush!" said Tom, bringing his horse to a stand.

Far in front there were sounds, but so indistinct that the two could only know that a man was speaking. Again the sound was heard; then there was deep silence that continued long.

"How far, you think?" asked West. "A quarter, I reckon."

"Better wait a while, hadn't we?" "But at once another sound was heard—than of a horse's footfall."

"Coming?" whispered Baxter. "Yes."

They dismounted and hid in the thicket; there Baxter remained and West returned toward the roadside. Before him was an irregular open space strewn with great rocks and low straggling bushes. West lay behind a bush and watched the man. Sounds of hoofs were clear and sharp, more than one horse coming.

A minute later two horsemen came into the moonlight. They were riding abreast in a slow walk, perhaps wary, possibly weary. They came on until they were against Usher's hiding-place—30 feet from the road.

"Hello! hello! hello!" "The voice was clear, yet it came from a distance, perhaps the fourth of a mile, for the night was very still, and the two horsemen halted and turned their heads, as though to listen."

"Hello! hello! hello!" "Yanks," said one of the horsemen. "I'm a-thinkin' so too, George," said the other.

West rose to his feet. At once two pistols were leveled upon him. "I'm yourn, boys," said he, laughing. "Usher West."

"What?" exclaimed two voices. "Yes; come on down here in the woods; I've got Baxter with me."

In the thicket reciprocal explanations followed, showing on the one part that Sency and Lewis had been sent out by their Colonel to examine the ground between Buford's left and the Potomac.

"It's all clear here," he said for two or three miles, George," says Baxter; "we've just come up that way."

"And what you fellers goin' to do now?" "Got to go up the river till we can get across. They say Lee's making for Williamsport; and if that's true, we've got to go there, too."

Sency decided to turn back. He must make as early report as possible; besides, it seemed useless to go on—he had already found that the Federal cavalry were leaning north rather than south.

The shouts that the men had heard were no more repeated. The four men rode westward, Sency and West leading.

"Know the road?" says Usher. "Yes, just come over it. Big house up here a piece. We stopped there, but the man gave us nothing to eat, and he was sly; I think that's just about where we heard that hullo business a little while ago."

"How's all the boys?" asked Usher. "How's Armstrong and Morgan?" "Both in bad luck, but might be worse. Charley's got a sword cut on his head, and Morgan's missing since late yesterday; afraid they've got him."

"Armstrong got it bad?" "Doctor said he wasn't sure any bones had been cracked, and if they hadn't he'd be all right in no time. If he could just keep his head cool in this hot weather, but then he didn't know. You put him in a wagon, and I reckon he's at Williamsport by this time. Old Squire's with him, and Sency gave a great yawn at the news."

"Say, Sency, did you know that Morgan's brother is at our house?" "At your house? Why, no; how did that happen? I thought they were taking him to Washington. Another yawn."

"Yanks couldn't get through with the ambulance; you know they just found out about Stuart's march, and didn't know what to do. They could 'a' got

Short Histories of Notable Regiments

By COL. WM. F. FOX.

SECOND NEW HAMPSHIRE INFANTRY.

BURLING'S BRIGADE—HUMPHREYS'S DIVISION—THIRD CORPS.

(1) COL. GILMAN MARSTON; BRIG. GEN. (2) COL. EDWARD L. BAILEY. (3) COL. JOAB N. PATTERSON; BVT. BRIG. GEN.

COMPANIES.	KILLED AND DIED OF WOUNDS.			DIED OF DISEASE, ACCIDENTS, IN PRISON, &c.			Total Enrollment.
	Officers.	Men.	Total.	Officers.	Men.	Total.	
Field and Staff.....	1	1	2	1	1	2	13
Company A.....	1	9	10	14	14	28	102
B.....	4	12	16	2	5	7	101
C.....	1	8	9	5	5	10	100
D.....	7	7	14	8	8	16	100
E.....	3	11	14	11	11	22	98
F.....	2	12	14	1	10	11	102
G.....	2	7	9	1	12	13	100
H.....	2	8	10	1	7	8	101
I.....	1	9	10	1	9	10	100
K.....	1	9	10	1	9	10	100
Totals.....	15	93	108	6	91	97	1,013
Recruits.....	15	70	85	75	75	150	1,639
Totals.....	15	163	178	6	166	172	2,652

Of the 1,013 originally enrolled, 108 were killed—10.6 per cent. Total of killed and wounded, 658.

BATTLES.	K. & M. W.	BATTLES.	K. & M. W.
First Bull Run, Va.....	14	Gettysburg, Pa.....	8
Williamsburg, Va.....	23	Drewry's Bluff, Va.....	48
Oak Grove, Va.....	9	Cold Harbor, Va.....	22
Glendale, Va.....	1	Siege of Petersburg, Va.....	10
Manassas, Va. (1864).....	37	Fair Oaks, Va. (1864).....	2
Fredericksburg, Va.....	3	Scouting, Va. (April 2, 1862).....	1

Present, also, at Yorktown; Fair Oaks (1862); White Oak Swamp; Malvern Hill; Chantilly; Wapping Heights; Bermuda Hundred; Fall of Richmond.

NOTES.—Arriving at Washington June 23, 1861, it encamped there a few weeks, and then marched away to First Bull Run, with Burnside's Brigade of Hunter's Division. It passed the succeeding fall and winter in Maryland, on the lower Potomac. In the spring of 1862 it took the field, then in Grover's (1st) Brigade, Hooker's (2d) Division, Third Corps. Hooker withstood the brunt of the attack at the battle of Williamsburg, in which the Second lost 16 killed, 68 wounded, and 19 missing. Upon its return from the Peninsula, Grover's Brigade was hotly engaged at Manassas, where the regiment, fighting on that familiar field, lost 16 killed, 87 wounded, and 30 missing, out of 332 present in action. The Second was ordered home on February 26, 1863, and was absent a couple of months, rejoining the Army in June, while on its way to Gettysburg, at which time it was assigned to the Jersey Brigade of Humphreys's (2d) Division. It fought in the Peach Orchard, at Gettysburg, and while there, just before the opening of the fight on the second day, the roll was called. Only eight men were absent from their places, while 24 officers and 330 men answered to their names. Of that number, the regiment lost 20 killed, 137 wounded, and 36 missing; of the 24 officers, 7 were killed and 14 wounded. One wounded captain, shot in the forehead, wandered into the enemy's lines, where he died and was buried by some brother masons. In August, the regiment was assigned to guard duty at Point Lookout, Md., where it remained until May, 1864, when it took the field as part of Weitzel's (2d) Division, Eighteenth Corps.

FIRST WISCONSIN INFANTRY.

STARKWEATHER'S BRIGADE—BAIRD'S DIVISION—FOURTEENTH CORPS.

(1) COL. JOHN C. STARKWEATHER; BRIG. GEN. (2) COL. GEORGE B. BINGHAM.

COMPANIES.	KILLED AND DIED OF WOUNDS.			DIED OF DISEASE, ACCIDENTS, IN PRISON, &c.			Total Enrollment.
	Officers.	Men.	Total.	Officers.	Men.	Total.	
Field and Staff.....	1	1	2	1	1	2	15
Company A.....	13	13	26	17	17	34	142
B.....	8	8	16	17	17	34	118
C.....	1	18	19	12	12	24	132
D.....	1	13	14	9	9	18	125
E.....	1	17	18	10	10	20	159
F.....	1	17	18	10	10	20	102
G.....	1	21	22	18	18	36	148
H.....	1	11	12	22	22	44	142
I.....	1	14	15	16	16	32	145
K.....	1	19	20	11	11	22	158
Totals.....	6	151	157	1	142	143	1,386

157 killed—11.3 per cent.

Total of killed and wounded, 428; missing or captured, 108; died in Confederate prisons (previously included), 32.

BATTLES.	K. & M. W.	BATTLES.	K. & M. W.
Nashville, Tenn., March 9, 1862.....	2	Dallas, Ga.....	10
Chaplin Hills, Ky.....	77	Kenesaw, Ga.....	6
Jefferson, Tenn.....	2	Chattahoochee, Ga.....	1
Stone's River, Tenn.....	1	Peach Tree Creek, Ga.....	1
Dug Gap, Ga., Sept. 11, 1863.....	1	Siege of Atlanta, Ga.....	5
Chickamauga, Ga.....	44	Jonesboro, Ga.....	3
Rocky Face Ridge, Ga.....	1	Place unknown.....	2
Resaca, Ga.....	1		

Present, also, at Hoover's Gap, Tenn.; Jones's Ford, Tenn.; Missionary Ridge, Tenn.; Dalton, Ga.

NOTES.—Originally a three months regiment which, upon its return, reorganized on a three years enlistment. It left the State October 28, 1861, proceeding to Kentucky, where it joined Negley's Brigade. It wintered at Munfordville, Ky., remaining there until February 14, 1862, when it marched to Nashville. While encamped near there its picket line was attacked, March 8th, in which affair one of the regiment was killed. The regiment made several long marches back and forth through Tennessee during the summer of 1862, and then, returning to Kentucky, participated in the battle of Chaplin Hills, October 8, 1861. It was then in Starkweather's Brigade, Rousseau's Division, McCook's Corps, and its loss amounted to 58 killed, 132 wounded, and 14 missing; total, 204, out of 407 engaged. The regiment was present at Stone's River, but having been posted in the reserve, sustained but slight loss. At Chickamauga it was in the Second Brigade, First Division (Baird's), Fourteenth Corps, sustaining a loss of 27 killed, 84 wounded, and 77 missing or captured; among the killed were five line officers. It went into winter-quarters at Chattanooga, and in May, 1864, joined Sherman's advance on Atlanta; the division was then under command of General R. W. Johnson. Although reduced in numbers, it participated in all the battles of the First Division, and was present at the fall of Atlanta. It was mustered out October 13, 1864, the recruits and reallocated men, 368 in number, having been transferred to the Twenty-first Wisconsin.

EDITORIAL NOTE: The above pages are reproduced from Col. Fox's famous book, "Regimental Losses." Other pages, giving short histories of notable regiments, will appear from week to week. It is hoped the appearance of these short histories will stimulate comrades to send in material for the preparation of more complete histories of their respective regiments than have yet appeared.