

The Riverman

By STEWART EDWARD WHITE

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Chapter 22

ORDE had made his dispositions as the general disposes of his army. At this point five men could keep the river clear; at that rapid it would require twenty, and yet an emergency might call for thirty. Those thirty must not be beyond reach. Among the remotest wildernesses every section must have its driving camp. The crews of each would be expected to keep clear and running their own "beats" on the river. As fast as the rear crew should overtake these divisions either it would absorb them or the members of them would be thrown forward beyond the lowermost beat, to take charge of a new division downstream. A walking boss would trudge the river trail or ride the logs holding the correlation of these many units. Orde himself would drive up and down the river, overseeing the whole campaign. Orde found himself rather short handed. He had counted on three hundred men for his crews, but scrape and scratch as he would he was un-



able to gather over 250. However, later, when the woods camps should break up, he would pick up more men. "They won't be rivermen like my old crew, though," said Orde regretfully to Tom North, the walking boss. Until the logs should be well adrift Orde had resolved to boss the rear crew himself.

The rear crew being farthest up stream, Orde had taken the contract to break the rollways belonging to Carlin, which would be piled on the bank. Thus he could get to work immediately at the breakup and with out waiting for some one else. The lumber in Carlin's drive would keep the men below busy until the other owners should also have put their seasons' cut afloat.

The ice went out early. When the river ran clear in its lower reaches he took his rear crew to Carlin's rollways. This crew was forty in number, a hard bitten, tough band of veterans, weather beaten, scarred in numerous fights or by the backwoods scourge of smallpox, compact, muscular, fearless, loyal, outspoken and free to criticize. In short, men to do great things under a strong leader. The breaking of the rollways began. The logs had been hauled to the river, where they were banked in piles twenty and even thirty feet in height. The bed of the stream itself was filled with them for a mile, save in a narrow channel left down through the middle to allow for some flow of water; the banks were piled with them, side on, ready to roll down at the urging of the men.

First the entire crew by means of its peavies rolled the lower logs into the current to be rapidly borne away. Some tiers would be stuck together by ice and considerable prying and heaving were necessary in order to crack them apart. But forty men soon had the river full. Orde detailed some six or eight to drop below in order that the river might run clear to the next section, where the next crew would take up the task. These men walked to the edges of the railway, rolled a log a piece into the water, stepped aboard, leaned against their peavies and were swept away by the swift current. The logs on which they stood whirled in the eddies, caromed against other timbers, slackened speed, shot away. Never did the riders alter their poses of easy equilibrium.

The evening of the second day Orde received a visit from Jim Denning, foreman of the next section below, bringing with him Charlie, the cook of Daly's last year's drive. "This fellow drifted in tonight two days late after a drunk, and he tells a mighty queer story," said Denning. "He says crew of sixty had men from the Saginaw have been sent in by Heinzman just to fight and annoy us."

"Well, where are they?" "Don't know." "Bring him over and let's hear the story," said Orde. "It's straight, Mr. Orde," said the cook, approaching. "There's a big crew brought in from the Saginaw waters to do you up. They're supposed to be over here to run his drive, but really they're goin' to fight and raise h—, for why would he want sixty men to break out them little rollways of his'n up at the headwaters? He owns

a 'forty' up there, and it ain't more'n half cut anyway." "I didn't know he owned any." "Yes, sir. He bought that little Johnson piece last winter." "Is he breaking out his rollways below?" Orde asked Denning. "No, sir," struck in Charlie, "he ain't." "How do you happen to be so wise?" inquired Orde. "Well," explained Charlie, "when I got back from the woods last week I just sort of happened into McNeill's place. I wasn't drinkin' a drop!" he cried virtuously in answer to Orde's smile.

"Of course not," said Orde. "I was just thinking of the last ft in there together." "That's just it!" cried Charlie. "They was always sore at you about that. Well, in blew old man Heinzman and McNeill himself. I just lay low and heard their talk. They didn't see me, so they opened her up wide."

"What did you hear?" "Well, McNeill he agreed to get a gang of bad ones from the Saginaw to run in on the river. And McNeill said, 'That's all right about the cash, Mr. Heinzman, but I been feggin' on gettin' even with Orde for some myself.' He's payin' them \$4 a day. Now, who'd pay that fer just river work?"

Orde nodded at Jim Denning. "Hold on, Charlie," said he. "Why are you giving all this away if you were working for Heinzman?" "I'm workin' for you now," replied Charlie with dignity. "And, besides, you helped me out once yourself."

"If that crew's been sent in there it means only one thing at that end of the line," said Orde. "Sure. They're sent up to waste out the water in the reservoir and hang this end of the drive," replied Denning. "What would you do?" asked Orde. "Well," said Denning slowly and with a certain grim joy, "I don't bet those Saginaw river pigs are any more two fisted than the boys on this river. I'd go up and clean 'em out."

"Won't do," negatived Orde briefly. "In the first place, as you know very well, we're short handed now, and we can't spare the men from the work. In the second place, we'd hang up sure."

"It isn't a fair game. Delay will hang us. Taking men off the work will hang us. I've got to see what can be done by talking to them."

"Talking!" Denning snorted. "You might as well whistle down the draft pipe of hades! They'll kill you, sure!" "I'm scared. I'm willing to admit it. But I don't see what else to do. Of course he's got no rights, but what good does that do us after our water is gone? And, Jim, my son, if we hang this drive I'll be buried so deep I never will dig myself out. No; I've got to go."



Chapter 23

A GROUP of three small log cabins marked the Johnson and later the Heinzman camp. From the chimneys a smoke arose. Twenty or thirty rivermen lounged about the sunny side of the largest structure. Orde clucked to his horses, and the spidery wheels of the buckboard swung lightly over the wet mudrocks, to come to a stop opposite the men.

"Hello, boys!" said he cheerfully. No one replied. Orde looked them over with some interest. They were a dirty, unkempt, unshaven, hard looking lot, with bloodshot eyes, a flicker of the daredevil in expression, beyond the first youth, hardened into an enduring toughness of fiber—bad men from the Saginaw in truth and, unless Orde was mistaken, men just off a drunk and therefore especially dangerous, men eager to fight at the drop of the hat and ready to employ all the terrifying weapons of the rough and tumble.

"Who's your boss?" asked Orde. "The Rough Red," a man snarled. Orde had heard of this man, of his personality and his deeds. Like Silver-Jack of the Muskegon, his exploits had been celebrated in song. A big, broad faced man, with a red beard, strong as a bull and savage as a wild beast, it was said that while jobbing for Morrison & Daly in some of that firm's Saginaw valley holdings the Rough Red discovered that a horse had gone lame. He called the driver of that team before him, seized an iron starting bar and with it broke the man's leg. "Try th' lameness yourself, Barpey Mallan."



"Whi, Jim Bourke!" cried Orde.

said he. To appeal to the charity of such a man would be utterly useless. Orde saw this point. He picked up his reins and spoke to his team. A huge riverman planted himself squarely in the way. The others, rising, slowly surrounded the rig. He drove deliberately ahead, forcing the men to step aside, and stopped his horses by a stub. He tied them there and descended. A huge form appeared above the river bank.

Orde made out the great square figure of the boss, his soft hat, his flaming red beard, his dingy mackinaw coat, his dingy black and white checked flannel shirt, his dingy blue trousers tucked into high socks, and, instead of driving boots, his ordinary lumberman's rubbers. In a moment he thrust through the brush and stood before Orde. He stared at the young man, and then, with a wild Irish yell, leaped upon him. Orde, caught unawares, was unable to struggle against the gigantic riverman. He was pinned back against the wall, and the Rough Red's face was within two feet of his own.

"And how are ye, ye ould darlint?" shouted the latter, with a roll of oaths. "Why, Jim Bourke!" cried Orde. The Rough Red jerked him to his feet and pounded him mightily on the back.

"You ould snoozer!" he bellowed. "Where th' blanket blank did ye come from? Byes," he shouted to the men, "it's me ould boss on th' Au Sable six year back—that time, ye mind, when we had th' ice jam! Glory be, but I'm glad to see ye!"

"I didn't know you'd turned into the Rough Red," laughed Orde. The Rough Red grinned. "What have ye been doin'?"

"That's just it, Jimmy," said Orde, drawing the giant one side, out of ear shot. "All my eggs are in one basket, and it's a mean trick of you to hire out for filthy lucre to kick that basket."

"What do ye mane?" asked the Rough Red. "You don't mean to tell me," countered Orde, "that this crew has been sent-up here—just to break-out-these-measly little rollways?"

"Thim?" said the Rough Red. "Thim? Not much! Thim's my body-guard. They can lick their weight in wild cats, and I'd loike well to see th' gang of highbankers that infests this river try to pry thim out. We were sint here to foight. Me boss and th' sucker that's drov'n this river has a row on!"

"Jimmy," said Orde, "didn't you know that I am the gentleman last mentioned? I'm driving this river, and that's my dam-keeper you've got hid away somewhere here, and that's my water you're planning to waste?"

"What?" In a tone of vast astonishment the Rough Red mentioned his probable deserts in the future life. "Luk here, Jack," said he after a moment, "here's a crew of white water birlers that ye can't beat nowhere. What do ye want us to do? We're now gettin' \$4 a day and board from that murderin' ould villain Heinzman, so we can afford to wurk for ye cheap."

Orde hesitated. "Oh, please do now, darlint!" wheedled the Rough Red, his little eyes gleam with mischief. "Sind us some more peavies, and we'll hily ye on yure rollways. And till us afore ye go how ye want this dam, and that's th' way she'll be. Come, now, dear, and ain't ye short handed now?"

Orde slapped his knee and laughed. "This is sure one deuce of a joke!" he cried. "It sure be!" "I'll take you boys on," said Orde at last, "at the usual wages—dollar and a half for the jam, three for the rear. I doubt if you'll see much of Heinzman's money when this leak's out."



[To be Continued.]

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JOINT CONVENTION WAS BIG SUCCESS

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LOCAL UNIONS TO DETERMINE Whether This Will be Effected—Synopsis of The Resolutions.

The joint convention of the Farmers Educational and Co-operative Union and the American Society of Equity held at St. Louis recently was no doubt the most spectacular assembly of farmers ever held in the United States. A program consisting of addresses by the most prominent and talented public officials and citizens of the United States was rendered during the entire week. Subjects of vast interest and importance to thousands of people were discussed by the speakers. President Taft was among those who addressed the assembly and it was during his address that the largest aggregation of people assembled during the entire week. The coliseum in which the meetings were held comfortably seats 12,000 people and practically every seat was occupied during his address. President Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor was also present during the meeting and delivered an address. The week's program was closed by an address by William J. Bryan.

While the elaborate program was being carried out a committee representing the Farmers Educational and Co-operative Union and the American Society of Equity were busily engaged in drafting a constitution and by-laws for the union of the two societies. The joint committee worked faithfully on this matter until Friday afternoon when they reported the constitution and by-laws which they had agreed upon, the committee having unanimously agreed upon a consolidation of the two organizations. The report of the committee was taken up by each organization separately at executive session. After thorough consideration the report of the joint committee was adopted in separate session of the American Society of Equity and the Farmers' Union, then by joint meeting of the two bodies. The question of union will now be referred to the local Equity unions and general Convention of Farmers' Union for ratification or rejection. If ratified the two organizations will become one and will be the most powerful farmers' organization ever effected in the United States. The new organization will be The Farmers' Union of America.

Resolutions were adopted during the meeting by each of the organizations asking the Government to print for free distribution the report of the governmental committee on country life, and requested that said reports when printed be kept in the hands of the Commissioner of Agriculture for distribution. A resolution was also adopted condemning the anti-future transaction of boards of trade and speculators and recommending the enactment of a law prohibiting gambling and speculation in grain. A resolution was also adopted endorsing the postal savings bank system and urging Congress to enact a postal savings bank law. A resolution was also adopted asking the enactment of more stringent laws restricting foreign immigration. A resolution was also adopted favoring the initiative and refunding system of legislation. A resolution was also adopted demanding the enactment of laws by national Government making warehouse receipts issued by farmers warehouses upon farm products, legal securities for the loan of money from the Government and that the banking laws be so amended as to provide for the loaning of money by the Government to the holders of such warehouse receipts.

The convention in executive session adopted the following resolution in relation to the conviction of the tobacco growers in the Federal Court at Covington, Ky:

"We deeply depreciate such a construction of the Sherman anti-trust law as to render it formidable to the oppressed, rather than to the oppressor, and we hear with amazement that in Kentucky a Federal Court has recently construed this law so as to punish growers, while the American Tobacco Company, so plainly and so long guilty of violations of this law, has so far escaped punishment. We hope that our Representatives in Congress will give this matter immediate consideration."

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