

The Blazed Trail

By STEWART EDWARD WHITE

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

WHAT IS IT? "What is the matter?" "What the ——— up?" "What's happened?" burst on Wallace in a volley.

"It's Dyer!" gasped the young man. "I found him on the boom! He held me up with a gun while he tied the boom chains between the center piers. They're just ready to go. I got away by diving. Hurry and put in a new chain. You haven't got much time!"

"He's a goner now," interjected Solly gruffly. "Charley is on his trail—and he is lit!"



Thorpe's intelligence leaped promptly to the practical question.

"Injun Charley—where'd he come from? I sent him up to Sadler & Smith's. It's twenty miles, even through the woods?"

As though by way of colossal answer the whole surface of the jam moved inward and upward, thrusting the logs bristling against the horizon.

"She's going to break!" shouted Thorpe, starting on a run toward the river. "A chain, quick!"

The men followed, strung high with excitement. Hamilton, the journalist, paused long enough to glance up stream. Then he, too, ran after them, screaming that the river above was full of logs. By that they all knew that Injun Charley's mission had failed and that something under 10,000,000 feet of logs were racing down the river like so many battering rams.

At the boom the great jam was already a-tumble with eagerness to spring. Indeed a miracle alone seemed to hold the timbers in their place.

"It's death, certain death, to go out on that boom," muttered Billy Mason. "Tim Shearer stayed forward easily, ready as always to assume the perilous duty. He was thrust back by Thorpe, who seized the chain, cold-shot and hammer which Scotty Parsons brought and ran lightly out over the booms, shouting:

"Back! Back! Don't follow me, on your lives! Keep 'em back, Tim!"

The swift water boiled from under the booms. Bang! smash! bang! crashed the logs a mile up stream, but plainly audible above the waters and the wind. Thorpe leapt, dropped the cold-shot through the other side of the weakened link and prepared to close it with his hammer. He intended further to strengthen the connection with the other chain.

"Lemme hold her for you. You can't close her alone," said an unexpected voice next his elbow.

Thorpe looked up in surprise and anger. Over him leaned Big Junko. The men had been unable to prevent his following. Animated by the blind devotion of the animal for its master and further stung to action by that master's doubt of his fidelity, the giant had followed to assist as he might.

"You fool," cried Thorpe, exasperated, then held the hammer to him. "Strike while the chain underneath!" he commanded.

Big Junko leaped forward to obey, kicking strongly his corks into the barked surface of the boom log. The spikes, worn blunt by the river work already accomplished, failed to grip. Big Junko slipped, caught himself by an effort, overbalanced in the other direction, and fell into the stream. The current at once swept him away, but fortunately in such a direction that he was enabled to catch the slanting end of a "dead head" log whose lower end was jammed in the crib. The dead head was slippery, the current strong. Big Junko had no crevice by which to assure his hold. In another moment he would be torn away.

"Let go and swim!" shouted Thorpe. "I can't swim," replied Junko in so low a voice as to be scarcely audible.

For a moment Thorpe stared at him. "Tell Carrie," said Big Junko.

Then there beneath the swirling gray sky, under the frowning jam, in the midst of flood waters, Thorpe had his second great moment of decision. He did not pause to weigh reasons or chances, to discuss with himself expediency or the moralities of failure. His actions were foreordained, mechanical. All at once the great forces which the winter had been bringing to power crystallized into something bigger than himself or his ideas. The trail lay before him; there was no choice.

Now clearly, with no shadow of doubt, he took the other view: There could be nothing better than love. Men, their works, their deeds, were little things. Success was a little thing, the opinion of men a little thing. Instantly he felt the truth of it.

And here was love in danger. That it held its moment's habitation in clay of the coarser mold had nothing to do with the great elemental truth of it. For the first time in his life Thorpe felt the full crushing power of an abstraction. Without thought, instinctively, he threw before the necessity of the moment all that was lesser. It was the triumph of what was real in the man over that which environment, alienation, difficulties, had raised up within him.

At Big Junko's words Thorpe raised his hammer and with one mighty blow severed the chains which bound the ends of the booms across the opening. The free end of one of the poles immediately swung down with the current in the direction of Big Junko. Thorpe, like a cat, ran to the end of

"Run!" he shouted.

The boom, seized the giant by the collar and dragged him through the water to safety.

"Run!" he shouted. "Run for your life!"

The two started desperately back, skirting the edge of the logs which now the very seconds alone seemed to hold back. They were drenched and blinded with spray, deafened with the crash of timbers settling to the leap. The men on shore could no longer see them for the smother. The great crush of logs had actually begun its first majestic sliding motion when at last they

emerged to safety.

At first a few of the loose timbers found the opening, slipping quietly through with the current; then more. Finally the front of the jam dove forward, and an instant later the smooth, swift motion had gained its impetus and was sweeping the entire drive down through the gap.

Rank after rank, like soldiers charging, they ran. The great force wind caught them up ahead of the current. In a moment the open river was full of logs jostling eagerly onward. Then suddenly far out above the uneven tossing sky line of Superior the strange northern "boom," or mirage, threw the specters of thousands of restless timbers rising and falling on the bosom of the lake.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THEY stood and watched them go.

"Oh, the great man! Oh, the great man!" murmured the writer, fascinated.

The grandeur of the sacrifice had struck them dumb. They did not understand the motives beneath it all, but the fact was patent. Big Junko broke down and sobbed.

After a time the stream of logs through the gap slackened. In a moment more, save for the inevitably stranded few, the booms were empty. A deep sigh went up from the attentive multitude.

"She's gone!" said one man, with the emphasis of a novel discoverer, and groaned.

Then the awe broke from about their minds, and they spoke many opinions and speculations. Thorpe and disapproved. They respected his emotion and did not follow him.

"It was just plain foolishness, but it was great," said Shearer. "That no account Jackass of a Big Junko ain't worth as much per thousand feet as good white pine."

Then they noticed a group of men gathering about the office steps, and on it some one talking. Collins, the bookkeeper, was making a speech.

Collins was a little hunched faced man, with straight, lank hair, near-sighted eyes, a timid, order loving disposition and a great suitability for his profession. He was accurate, unemotional and sensible. All his actions were as dry as the sawdust in the burner. No one had ever seen him excited. But he was human, and now his knowledge of the company's affairs showed him the dramatic contrast. He knew. He knew that the property of the firm had been mortgaged to the last dollar in order to assist expansion, so that not another cent could be borrowed to tide over present difficulty. He knew that the notes for \$60,000 covering the loan to Wallace Carpenter came due in three months. He knew from the long table of statistics which he was eternally preparing and comparing that the season's cut should have netted a profit of \$200,000, enough to pay the interest on the mortgages, to take up the notes and to furnish a working capital for the ensuing year. Those things he knew in the strange concrete arithmetical manner of the routine bookkeeper. Other men saw a desperate phase of firm rivalry. He saw a struggle to the uttermost. Other men cheered a rescue. He thrilled over the magnificent gesture of the gambler scattering his stake in largesse to death.

It was the simple turning of the hand from full breathed prosperity to lifeless failure.

His view was the inverse of his master's. To Thorpe it had suddenly become a very little thing in contrast to the great, sweet, elemental truth that the dream girl had renounced. To Collins the affair was miles vaster than the widest scope of his own narrow life.

The firm could not take up its notes when they came due; it could not pay the interest on the mortgages, which would now be foreclosed; it could not even pay in full the men who had worked for it—that would come under a court's adjudication.

He had therefore watched Thorpe's desperate sally to mend the weakened chain in all the suspense of a man whose entire universe is in the keeping of the chance moment. It must be remembered that at bottom, below the outer consciousness, Thorpe's final decision had already grown to maturity. On the other hand, no other thought than that of accomplishment had entered the little bookkeeper's head. The rescue and all that it had meant had hit him like a stroke of apoplexy, and his thin emotions had curdled to hysteria. Full of the idea he appeared before the men.

With rapid, almost incoherent speech he poured it out to them. Professional

caution and secrecy were forgotten. Wallace Carpenter attempted to push through the ring for the purpose of stopping him. A gigantic river man kindly but firmly held him back.

"I guess it's just as well we hear this," said the latter.

It all came out—the loan to Carpenter, with a hint at the motive—the machinations of the rival firm on the board of trade; the notes, the mortgages, the necessity of a big season's cut; the reasons the rival firm had for wishing to prevent that cut from arriving at the market; the desperate and varied means they had employed. The men listened, silent. Hamilton, his eyes glowing like coals, drank in every word. Here was the master motive he had sought; here was the story great to his hand.

"That's what we ought to get!" cried Collins, almost weeping. "And now we're gone and bust just because that infernal river hog had to fall off a boom! It's a shame! Those scoundrels have done us after all!"

Out from the shadows of the woods stole Injun Charley. The whole bearing and aspect of the man had changed. His eyes gleamed with a distant, farseeing fire of its own, which took no account of anything but some remote vision. He stole along almost furtively, but with a proud, upright carriage of his neck, a backward tilt of his fine head, a distension of his nostrils, that lent to his appearance a panther-like pride and stealthiness. No one saw him. Suddenly he broke through the group and mounted the steps beside Collins.

"The enemy of my brother is gone," said he simply in his native tongue, and with a sudden gesture held out before them—a scalp.

The mediocrity of the thing appalled them for a moment. The days of scalping were long since past, had been closed away between the pages of forgotten histories, and yet here again before them was the thing in all its living horror. Then a growl arose. The human animal had tasted blood.

All at once, like wine, their wrembers mounted to their head. They remembered their dead comrades. They remembered the heart breaking days and nights of toil they had endured on account of this man and his associates. They remembered the words of Collins, the little bookkeeper. They hated. They shook their fists across the skies. They turned and with one accord struck back for the railroad right of way which led to Shingleville, the town controlled by Morrison & Daly.

The railroad lay for a mile straight through a thick tamarack swamp, then over a nearly treeless cranberry plain. The tamarack was a screen between the two towns. When half way through the swamp Red Jacket stopped, removed his coat, ripped the lining from it and began to fashion a rude mask.

"Just as well they don't recognize us," said he.

"Somebody in town will give us away," suggested Shorty, the chore boy.

"No, they won't; they're all here," assured Kerlie.

It was true. Except for the women and children, who were not yet about, the entire village had assembled. Even old Vanderhook, the fire catcher of the yard, hobbled along breathlessly on his pneumatic legs. In a moment the masks were fitted; in a moment more the little band had emerged from the shelter of the swamp and so came into full view of its objective point.

Shingleville consisted of a big mill, the yards, now nearly empty of lumber, the large frame boarding house, the office, the stable, a store, two saloons and a dozen dwellings. The party at once fixed its eyes on this collection of buildings and trudged on down the right of way with unhesitating grimness.

Their approach was not unobserved. Daly saw them, and Baker, his foreman, saw them. The two at once went forth to organize opposition. When the attacking party reached the mill yard it found the boss and the foreman standing alone on the sawdust, revolvers drawn.

Daly traced a line with his toe.

"The first man that crosses that line gets it," said he.

They knew he meant what he said. An instant's pause ensued, while the big man and the little faced a mob. Daly's river men were still on drive. He

knew the mill men too well to depend on them. Truth to tell, the possibility of such a raid as this had not occurred to him for the simple reason that he did not anticipate the discovery of his complicity with the forces of nature. Skillfully carried out, the plan was a good one. No one need know of the weakened link, and it was the most natural thing in the world that Sadler & Smith's drive should go out with the increase of water.

The men grouped swiftly and silently on the other side of the sawdust line. The pause did not mean that Daly's defense was good.

"Do you know what's going to happen to you?" said a voice from the group. The speaker was Radway, but the contractor kept himself well in the background. "We're going to burn your mill; we're going to burn your yard; we're going to burn your whole shooting match, you low lived whelp!"

"Dyer," said Injun Charley simply, shaking the wet scalp arm's length toward the lumbermen.

At this grim interruption a silence fell. The owner paled slightly; his foreman chewed a nonchalant straw. Down the still deserted street crossed and recrossed the subtle cool influences of a half hundred concealed watchers. Daly and his subordinate were very much alone and very much in danger. Their last hour had come, and they knew it.

With the recognition of the fact they immediately raised their weapons in the resolve to do as much damage as possible before being overpowered.

Then suddenly, fall in the back, a heavy stream of water knocked them completely off their feet, rolled them over on the wet sawdust and finally jammed them both against the trestle, where it held them, kicking and gasping for breath, in a choking cataract of water. The pistols flew harmlessly into the air. For an instant the Fighting Forty stared in paralyzed astonishment. Then a tremendous roar of laughter saluted this easy vanquishment of a formidable enemy.

Daly and Baker were pounced upon and captured. There was no resistance. They were too nearly strangled for that. Little Solly and old Vanderhook

turned off the water in the fire hydrant and disconnected the hose they had so effectively employed.

"There, blast you!" said Rollway Charley, jerking the mill man to his feet. "How do you like too much water, hey?"

The unexpected comedy changed the party's mood. It was no longer a question of killing. A number broke into the store and shortly emerged bearing pails of kerosene, with which they deluged the slabs on the windward side of the mill. The flames caught the structure instantly. A thousand sparks, borne by the offshore breeze, fastened like so many stinging insects on the lumber in the yard.

It burned as dried balsam thrown on a camp fire. The heat of it drove the onlookers far back in the village, where in silence they watched the destruction.

Daly and his man were slapped and cuffed hither and thither at the men's will. Their faces bled, their bodies ached as one would.

"That squares us," said the men. "If we can't cut this year, neither kin you. It's up to you now!"

Then, like a destroying horde of locusts, they gutted the office and the store, smashing what they could not carry to the fire. The dwellings and saloons they did not disturb. Finally, about noon, they kicked their two prisoners into the river and straggled back along the right of way.

"I surmise we took that town apart some!" said Shorty with satisfaction.

"I should rise to remark," replied Kerlie.

At the boarding house they found Wallace Carpenter and Hamilton seated on the veranda. It was now afternoon. The wind had abated somewhat, and the sky was struggling with the still flying smoke.

"Hello, boys," said Wallace, "been for a little walk in the woods?"

"Yes, sir," replied Hyland, "we!"

"I'd rather not hear," interrupted Wallace. "There's quite a fire over east. I suppose you haven't noticed it."

Hyland looked gravely eastward.

"Sure 'nough," said he.

"Better get some grub," suggested Wallace.

After the men had gone in he turned to the journalist.

"Hamilton," he began, "write all you know about the drive and the break and the rescue, but as to the burning of the mill—"

"The other held out his hand.

"Good," said Wallace, offering his own.

And that was as far as the famous Shingleville raid ever got. Daly did his best to collect even circumstantial evidence against the participants, but in vain. He could not even get any one to say that a single member of the village of Carpenter had absented himself from town that morning. This might have been from loyalty or it might have been from fear of the vengeance the Fighting Forty would surely visit on a traitor. Probably it was a combination of both. The fact remains, however, that Daly never knew surely of but one man implicated in the destruction of his plant. That man was Injun Charley; but Injun Charley promptly disappeared.

After an interval Tim Shearer, Radway and Kerlie came out again.

"Where's the boss?" asked Shearer.

"I don't know, Tim," replied Wallace seriously. "I've looked everywhere. He's gone. He must have been all cut up. I think he went out in the woods to get over it. I am not worrying. Harry has lots of sense. He'll come in about dark."

"Sure!" said Tim.

"How about the boys' stakes?" queried Radway. "I hear this is a bad smash for the firm."

"We'll see that the men get their wages all right," replied Carpenter, a little disappointed that such a question should be asked at such a time.

"All right," rejoined the contractor.

"We're all going to need our money this summer."

TO BE CONTINUED.

Real Estate Transfers.

George W. Kesler to Wm. C. Hammond, Marshall and Jackson tps., 105a, \$1,200.

Sheriff to Harry R. Muntz et al, Liberty tp., 534a, \$2,000.

Harley M. Sulter to George Post, Marshall tp., lot, \$290.

Cornelius W. Enefield to P. C. Edenfield, Highland and Adams counties, 94a, \$1, etc.

Jacob Post to A. E. Post, Marshall tp., 1a, \$1, etc.

L. A. Galliett, admr., to W. F. Galliett, Whiteoak tp., 1 inst. 1a, \$1, etc.

L. A. Galliett, admr., to W. F. Galliett, Mowrystown, 1 inst. 1a, \$1, etc.

Wm. Stethem to M. F. Kneisley, Marshall, lot, \$60.

R. R. Watts, to M. F. Kneisley, Marshall, lot, \$40.20.

Mary G. Sams to O. N. Sams, Paint tp., 102a, Hillsboro, lot, 1 inst. \$1, etc.

Thos. J. McClelland, to Elizabeth Davis, Lynchburg, lot, 1 inst., \$150.

Wm. H. McClelland to Elizabeth Davis, Lynchburg, lot, 1 inst., \$200.

Charles M. Gardner to John P. Morrow, East Monroe, lot, \$600.

Stephen Campbell to Adam Campbell, etc., Centerfield, lot, \$42.00.

Wm. H. Johnson to Nancy L. Thurman, Leesburg, lot, \$1, etc.

Ed. R. Smith to Emma Allen, Lynchburg, lot, \$500.

Nellie M. McDermott to John F. Link, Hillsboro, lot, \$2,400.

N. E. Bennett et al to N. B. Bennett, Madison tp., 61a, q. c., \$1, etc.

Thos. J. Hunter to Scott Sken, New Market tp., 66a, \$1,050.

W. F. Galliett to George Cooper, Mowrystown, lots, 1 inst., \$1, etc.

George Cooper to L. A. Galliett et al, Mowrystown, lots, q. c., \$1, etc.

John E. Burnett to Viola Sypherd, Marshall, lots, \$650.

Viola Sypherd to John E. Burnett, Marshall, lot, \$300.

Carrie D. Rucker to Alice S. Cronc et al, Greenfield, lot, \$1, etc.

Elizabeth Drals to Florence B. Minler, Lynchburg, lot, \$760.

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What will be the total July 4th attendance at the St. Louis World's Fair? At Chicago, July 4, 1893, the attendance was 283,273. For nearest correct estimates received in Woolson Spice Company's office, Toledo, Ohio, on or before June 30th, 1904, we will give first prize for the nearest correct estimate, second prize to the next nearest, etc., etc., as follows:

1 First Prize	\$25,000.00
2 Second Prize	1,000.00
Prizes—\$500.00 each	1,000.00
10 Prizes—100.00 "	1,000.00
20 Prizes—50.00 "	1,000.00
50 Prizes—20.00 "	1,000.00
250 Prizes—10.00 "	2,500.00
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2139 PRIZES,	TOTAL, \$20,000.00

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What will be the total Popular Vote cast for President (votes for all candidates combined) at the election November 8, 1904? In 1900 election, 13,350,533 people voted for President. For nearest correct estimates received in Woolson Spice Co.'s office, Toledo, Ohio, on or before Nov. 5, 1904, we will give first prize for the nearest correct estimate, second prize to the next nearest, etc., etc., as follows:

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2 Second Prize	1,000.00
Prizes—\$500.00 each	1,000.00
10 Prizes—100.00 "	1,000.00
20 Prizes—50.00 "	1,000.00
50 Prizes—20.00 "	1,000.00
250 Prizes—10.00 "	2,500.00
1,800 Prizes—5.00 "	9,000.00
2139 PRIZES,	TOTAL, \$20,000.00

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The railroads have granted one fare, plus 25 cents, for the round trip from all points in Ohio, and entertainment on the "Harvard plan" is offered to all regular appointed credentialed delegates by the good people of the Convention City.

A strong program on practical Sunday School problems is being prepared. It includes the names of W. C. Pearce, Chicago, Miss Ninnie Lee Frayer, Louisville, Ky., and others. The music will be under the leadership of Prof. E. O. Excell, assisted by W. G. Landes, both of Chicago.

Those wishing for something new in the way of Sunday School equipment will be delighted with the Sunday School Bazaar in connection with the Convention.

For further information address Dr. Joseph Clark, General Secretary, Columbus, Ohio.

Mother (who doesn't like cats, to young son)—Thane, don't give the cat that milk.

Thane—It won't hurt her.

First Mother—My daughters play on the piano while I wash the dishes.

Second Mother—My daughter is taking lessons, and had rather wash dishes than practice.

The Butcher—What'll be this morning, Mrs. Shanigan?

Mrs. Shanigan—Some liver.

Butcher—About how much?

Mrs. Shanigan—Oh, about enough for a pad.