

"DOC" SIMMONS AND THE WILD CAT

AN EPISODE IN WOODS AND WATER EXPLOITS

By
Ernest McCallie
Author of Poems of
Gun and Rod, Etc.

(Copyright, by Joseph B. Bowles.)

"Got your compass, Doc?" asked one of the guides, as a short, stout figure passed out from the tents, with a double-barrelled shot-gun over his shoulder.

"Yep," was the reply.

"Which way are you going today?"

"Over by the oak ridges," was the answer, "I saw lots of turkey sign there late yesterday afternoon."

"Well, look out for wildcats over there, too," remarked the guide, "they're settin' around in the green briers over there watchin' for rabbits and turkey."

"All right," replied "Doc," "if I run across one of 'em, I'll try and scratch his back for him."

We were camped in the Arkansas wilderness, forty miles from a railroad and in the heart of the White river country. It had been a heart-rending trip through the swamps, and it had

through the awful going, it was long past noon. By the time we reached camp it was two o'clock, and we laid around and planned a wild-cat hunt with the dogs the next day for the sake of a little variety.

Along about five, when it was getting dark rapidly, we saw "Doc" Simmons coming down the trail, headed for camp. He didn't have any gun with him but he appeared to be perfectly serene about it. He came up just as though nothing had happened, and says, "How soon'll supper be ready?" His clothing was pretty badly torn up, as though he had been wallowing through about a thousand acres of green-brier thickets, and he was a little pale, too.

"What's the matter, Doc," said Emory, "anything happen to you? Didn't meet up with a panther, did you?"

"No!" says "Doc," and then he laughed, "I got a turkey," says he.

"Where is it?" says Ed Morton.

"Hanging up out in the brush," says "Doc."

"Where's your gun?" says Ed.

"I left that during my tete-a-tete with my friend and contemporary, the wild-cat," says "Doc."

"Sure enough?" says we all, "let's hear."

"Well," says "Doc," "it's quite a story; I'll tell you all about it after supper."

"Well, sir, we had supper, and then "Doc" stretches out before the blaze of about a ton of logs and he says "Are we all here, brethren?"

And then he commences, "I started out this morning and went straight to the oak ridges, and built me a little sort of blind and crawled in back of it and commenced to listen, and occasionally call for turkeys. Finally I began to get an answer from over to my right and I kept calling the best I could, but finally I must

flying start and up I went over the briers."

"Now, it's a little singular, but when I came down I lit square straddle of the biggest wild-cat in Arkansas. Yes, sir! I was in the saddle for sure, and I squashed him right down to the ground. I wasn't exactly scared, you might say, but I was a trifle confused. This old cat spit and clawed out from under me and I know he was almost frightened out of his senses. The effect on me was what the scientists call 'optical illusion.' Ever see these cages with a squirrel going around in 'em? Well, I thought the world was going around at the rate of a million revolutions a minute and that I was going around with it in a sort of cage, with eleven wild-cats on top of me to keep me company."

"That's the reason I came away without my gun. That's the reason I didn't hunt up my turkey. That's the reason I hustled for camp. I wanted the sight of human faces and the touch of human sympathy. What I wanted to do was to get away from there and forget all that maze of fur and teeth and yellow eye-balls, and thrashing around there in the green briers, and that pungent smell of scared wild-cat."

"And that's the reason, I reckon, that my clothes seem to be ripped up a little across the seams. I don't know what's the best record for traveling through green-briers on a direct line, and I haven't measured the distance from here to where me and the wild-cat got introduced to each other, but I want to say that my time must have been something terrific. I sailed over the logs like a quail, and I went through the green-briers like a rabbit through an orange hedge."

"I thought if I lingered the wild-cat might have robbed me of my watch and other valuables, I guess, for I never stopped to dicker about the gun at all. And now when I come to size it up, that varmint was as badly scared—I mean confused, as I was. I remember he went over the log like a charge of buck-shot the minute he could squirm loose, but the optical illusion on me was strong at that time, and I thought I had lit right in the middle of a wild-cat convention."

"Who'll go out with me in the morning and help me find my gun?" says "Doc."

"I will," says old Emory.

Erin's Shamrock Grows in Seattle.

Among the many natural resources of the state of Washington new things are coming to light every day. No less wonderful than amusing is the fact that the botanical growth of the state is enriched with one more specially valuable acquisition, for lo and behold, the shamrock, the real thing, has been discovered within the limits of the city of Seattle.

Poor Pat, your claim and mine of relationship to the plant and monopoly of its nativity to our dearly beloved land, has been lost forever! But in surrendering our title of exclusive right to this brave little patriotic emblem of Ireland there still remains the one consolation that it was discovered growing here by a son of the soil who hails from near the beautiful Lakes of Killarney.—Seattle Times.

Saving Himself.

"You don't mean to say," remarked Wise, "that you made a present of that \$5 to Horrowman?"

"Yes," replied Markley; "I had to, to save my own self-respect."

"I don't understand; I thought you loaned it to him."

"So I did; not knowing any better. But now I don't want anybody to believe I was ever foolish enough to expect it back."

Keep This in Mind.

It must not be forgotten that the man who takes advantage of others will take advantage of you if he ever finds it conveniently profitable to do so, no matter how consistently he may pretend to be your friend.

Where Life is Dearer.

In Germany changes costing \$125,000 have been ordered in a coal mine to make it safe for the miners, an action well calculated to make vested rights throw a fit.

SPLENDID!



"Oh, I say, uncle, what a ripping dinner a chap could have if he was as roomy as you and as hungry as I am."



OLD SAWS RESAWED.

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, but both are dirt cheap compared with one on a hotel menu card. Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown, especially if the crown is bald and is fly-time.

People who live in glass houses would make more if they raised hot-house grapes instead of trouble. Evil to him who evil thinketh, and that's generally what he gets.

If you lead a horse to water and can't make him drink, take a slip yourself; he may have good judgment.

Beauty's only skin deep, but that's deep enough for the complexion specialist.

All's well that ends well except a "best-selling" novel.

Fine feathers make soft beds.

Every rose has its thorn, and every dozen its florist bill.

Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day, unless some one did it yesterday.—Judge.

Leading Up to His Support.

"What's doing?" asked one reporter addressing another who had just emerged from the state senate chamber.

"Senator Jayson is speaking."

"Jayson? He was speaking when I left an hour ago."

"Yes; he's been speaking right along, ever since."

"Have you been here since he started?"

"Yes."

"What's he speaking about?"

"I don't know. He hasn't said, so far!"—Chicago Record-Herald.

VERY PERSONAL.



Lord Chumpty (dressed for the opera)—Here, boy, call me a four-wheeler, will you?

The Boy—Well, yer don't think I'd call yer hansom, do yer?—Comic Cuts.

"Easy Humility."

"Why don't you go to work?"

"Work!" rejoined Meandering Mike. "Look at de thousands of poor fellows that is lookin' fur work an' feelin' miserable widout it. Now work ain't necessary to me, an' I ain't goin' to butt in an' reach fur it merely fur de sake of havin' something to brag about!"—Washington Star.

Conflicting Emotions.

"Did you have a good time at your musicale?"

"No," answered Mr. Cumrox; "every time the band played anything I enjoyed I got worried for fear it wasn't classical enough to be the money's worth."—Washington Star.

Here by Purchase.

"The woman who married that old rich fellow has simply sold her youth and loveliness."

"Well, if you could see her account at the beauty doctor's, I bet you'd find she had bought 'em!"

A Sure Proof.

"Does he move in high financial circles?"

"You bet he does. He belongs to the most exclusive indolent club in New York."—Baltimore American.

GIVING.

People give, in order of their preference:

1. Advice.
2. Pain.
3. Gifts.
- a. Unwelcome.
- b. Merely useless.
- c. More or less useful.
4. Good measure, square deal.

Very passionate givers will sometimes exhaust the list. The majority, however, proceed only as long as they find it more blessed to give than to receive, stopping, say, with No. 3. Few get beyond No. 3, b.—Puck.

SONGS AND THEIR SINGERS.



Musical Pirate.—Ow would you like to spoon with me, miss, only a penny.

Habit.

"It is curious how habits fix themselves upon us," said Silas Hayrick's nephew, who was studying for the ministry.

"Yep, I know it," replied Silas. "You take Lizzie's husband, for instance. Since they've moved up to the city where they have all these latest conveniences he takes a bath regular every week, whether he needs it or not."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Mobility.

Mrs. Vick-Senn's eyes flashed.

"Johnny doesn't get that weak chin of his from my side of the house!" she exclaimed.

"No, my dear," meekly responded her husband. "Johnny has my chin, but he inherits his mother's tireless capacity for keeping it in motion."—Chicago Tribune.

ALONE AND FORBIDDEN.



Johnny Elephant.—I wonder why nobody wants to skate near me! I'm just as sociable as anyone.

No Credit.

"That billionaire seems willing to do something for humanity."

"Yes," answered Mr. Dustin Star. "But he is always true to his business principles. He took good care to make humanity pay him in advance."



I thought if I lingered the wild cat might have robbed me of my watch and other valuables.

taken us two days to pitch camp, cut wood, and get our bearings a little.

Five of us had arranged to take the dogs and "drive" deer that day, and "Doc" Simmons, like all but two of us, a "tenderfoot," was going over to try for turkeys. "Doc" had been taking lessons from an artist in turkey-calling, and by means of scraping a small cedar box on the barrels of his gun, after having previously rubbed a quantity of common chalk on the barrels, he had managed to learn a call that sounded quite natural to the uninitiated, even if it didn't fool the turkeys.

But "Doc" had run across a turkey by accident in the brush, the bird having been scared up by the dogs while running a deer, and when it flew right into "Doc" he bowled it over as easy as he would a quail. It was a fine, big gobbler, and filled "Doc's" breast with a desire to get some more of them.

So in about half an hour the camp was deserted by all save the cook, who roamed about among the tents and leisurely made his arrangements for getting supper.

It took us about two hours to start a deer, and when we did, we roused out two of them. The dogs trailed one to the cypress swamps and lost him there, but the other one we turned and drove back towards the ridges and through the cane, and old Emory Walte got a shot at him from behind a blue gum stump and killed him clean with a single bullet. By the time we got him dressed and a horse out to bring him into camp

have let out a fortissimo instead of a pianissimo note, and the turkey quit me cold.

"Forty missimo," says one of the guides, "what's that, 'Doc'?"

"It's a buck-shot translated into English," says "Doc."

"Go on, 'Doc,'" says old man Walte.

"Well," says "Doc," "at last I heard the sound of about a million turkeys gobbling down in the timber and something must have scared them, for they commenced flying over me by singles, pairs, threes and clouds. I got two shots before they all went past, and killed one turkey. When I started back towards where they all had seemed to light, I hung my turkey up by that old cottonwood stump, high up out of reach of anything I guess."

"Well, I was coming along to where the turkeys had all lit, and I got down to the green-brier patches. I wormed my way through about a mile of 'em, but can't raise any turkeys. I sat down and tried the 'call,' but nary a turkey. Then I made up my mind to come back to camp and pick up my turkey on the way. There was a little snow on the ground, just a smear, and every once in a while I'd come across one of those big old logs that was hard to climb over and far to go around, and the wading through the briers was awful tough besides. At last I came to a long old log that was running the way I was headed, and I made up my mind I'd ride her. So I climbed up on top, and as I was coming along down towards the end I saw a thick bunch of green-briers at the other end. Says I to myself, I'll jump that hurdle, and I took a little