THE DIAMOND DRILL.

THOS. CONLIN, Editor.

CRYSTAL FALLS, : MICHIGAN

## The Red Mill Road.

By C. B. LEWIS.

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"FORWARD, march! Right face! Left face! Order arms! Te-he-he! I'll scare Bessie Baines most to death, I guess. Attention! Forward, march—ha-ha-ha!"

Down the road from the direction of Bennington came a strange figure. It was that of a young man of 22 or 23, and his dress was a mixture of continental and British uniform. On his shoulder rested a stick, instead of a musket, and his face bore that vacuous expression always seen with an idiot.

It was about noon of an August day. Below him, as he halted to make ready for a charge, was the red mill wherein Elijah Baines had ground corn and wheat and buckwheat for the public for a decade. In the rear of the mill was the miller's house, and while he ground the grists and took only the toll of an honest man, his daughter Bessie, who was motherless, minded the house and sometimes worked beside him.

On this summer day the big wheel was at rest, and the waters fretted and splashed and gurgled as they found a way over the moss-grown buckets. The miller had been one of the minutemen called out to harass and annoy Gen. Burgoyne as he sought to get into Fort Edward, and in one of the many skirmishes had been shot through the leg and brought back home for nursing. All along the New York and Vermont line the patriots were up in arms and waiting.

"Hip-hurrah!" cried the idiot, as he came dashing down on the mill and turned a corner. "Fire at will! Charge the enemy with the bayonet! He-he-he! How scared you look, Bessie!"

His shouts had brought the girl to the door. She smiled as she saw the young man's queer dress.

"I knew it was you, William," she quietly said. "What are they doing in Bennington?"

"What are they doing? Why, they are doing 'Right face! Left face! Halt! Load your muskets! Charge your bayonets and drive the British!' I'm a general now, Bessie. Don't you want to marry a general?"

She watched him with pitying smile as he marched up and down before her, and threw out his chest and held up his chin in an effort to look important. She had known him for years, and had always spoken kindly; and in return his atttachment for her was like that of a dog to its master.

"No, you won't marry me," he said as he came to a halt and tried to bring his heels together. "I know who you are going to marry—te-he-he! I've seen him kiss you and you kissed back. It's Capt. Luke Greenwood—te-he-he."

"You mustn't talk that way!" said the blushing girl in tones of reproof. "I've got a sweet-cake in the oven, and when it's done I'll give you a big piece. Run away, now, and fight the British. Hark! What's that!"

From over the hills and meadows and tree-tops to the north came the notes of fifes and the beat of drums, and the red cheeks of the girl grew pale as she listened. She realized in a moment what the sounds meant. Burgoyne had sent out his 1,000 men on the march to Bennington. At Salem the entire command should have gone on by the left-hand road. Instead of that, and to deceive Col. Stark, waiting on that road behind defenses, all but 200 men had swung into the Red mill road, and would find it clear of patriots from Salem to Bennington.

"Are the British coming?" asked William in a whisper, as he crowded closer to the girl.

"It must be them!" she answered, as she caught her breath. "Climb up the ladder, William, and tell me what you can see."

There was a rough ladder leaning against the north wall of the mill, and the idiot was soon at the top and looking northwards.

"I see red-coats and flags—red-coats and flags!" he called to the girl.

"Father, Burgoyne's men are coming!" exclaimed the daughter, as she ran into the house. "We can hear the drums and fifes, and William says there are many soldiers."

"It is so! It is so!" replied the miller, as he raised himself up on his elbow to listen. "God defend Bennington if the British are coming by this road! Run away, girl—hide yourself in the woods before they reach us. If the troops are Hessians they will kill me and burn the mill!"

"Run away—never!" shouted Bessie. "Be quiet, father—don't try to get up. We have two muskets and powder and ball, and they shall kill me before they lay hands on you! Be quiet—be quiet!"

At the door, she hurried out, the girl found the idiot. He was parading up and down with the stick on his shoulder. The notes of fife and drum sounded nearer.

"Oh! William!" she said, as she grasped his arm and halted him, "try to understand what I am going to say to you! Look at me—look into my eyes! The British are coming!"

"Yes, the British are coming, but don't you be afraid, Bessie Baines. I am a general, you know."

"Listen, William. It is noon, and the soldiers will halt here for an hour. Do you know where Capt. Greenwood is? You can find Walnut hill. It is over there—over there. You must know the place—you have been there?"

"Yes, I know," he replied, evidently trying his best to follow her.

"Luke is there—at Walnut hill—with his scouts. Look at me, William—you must go at once, and run as fast as you can!"

"Yes—yes; I can run like a deer. I'll find Luke, I will. Here, you take my gun and shoot the British and I'll go."

"Tell Luke there are 1,000 soldiers."

"Yes—yes; there are 1,000—1,000,000—but we can lick 'em all!"

"Poor boy—poor boy! Oh, I pray to God to give him his wits for an hour, if no longer! Remember, William—Walnut hill—a thousand men—run! run!"

"Yes—Walnut hill—thousand men—Boom! Bang! Run!"

"They are almost here, father," said the girl, as she stepped within the door; "they will stop here for the noonday halt. I have sent William to tell Capt. Luke, and the captain will send word to Col. Stark. Oh, if William can only remember—if our soldiers will only get word in time!"

"You should have gone," said the father in hopeless tones. "I am wounded, but the Hessians have bayonetted wounded men on every field. The mill is undefended, but the men who burn farmhouses and churches will not spare a mill. Kiss me, Bessie, and God keep us!"

The girl went back to the door and looked out upon the red-coated soldiers as the head of the column forded the creek and came to a halt on the great open field opposite the mill. It was hardly five minutes before fires were being lighted and coffee made, but it was half an hour before the last of the column arrived. A few soldiers, accompanied by an officer, looked through the mill. They found not even a half-ration of flour or meal for a hungry soldier. The search was followed by mutterings and curses, and a voice cried out that the mill should be burned. Then a score of the first arrivals, whose hunger had been satisfied, crowded up to the door of the miller's house, and a sergeant leered at the girl and said:

"Out of the way, my pretty; there may be a score of your gallant coon-hunters hiding under the beds, and we would make acquaintance."

"Only my father is here," she replied, as she barred his way with her arm; "only my old father, and he is badly wounded."

"Wounded, eh? One of the rebel bushwhackers who fought us at Fort Edward and got a king's bullet into him. That's better yet. We must have him out and put him on his knees to take the oath to good King George. Stand aside, girl!"

"No one shall enter here!" she resolutely replied.

"Ah! little rebel!" chuckled the soldier, as he looked around upon his comrades with smiles and winks, "but you're fishing for a kiss, I see. You shall have one, and it shall be such a smack that all may hear. I take you thus—"

One of the muskets leaned against the wall within reach of the girl's hand. As the soldier reached out to grasp her she stepped back and next instant the muzzle of the firearm was pointed at his breast and she was saying to him in a low, stern voice and blazing eyes:

"Lay a hand on me or try to force this door, and I will kill you!"

"Oh-ho! Oh-ho!" he sneered, as he started back in fear and anger. "So the hare has claws! I would have kissed you and not been too hard on the wounded man, but you go too far. No she rebel shall menace me thus."

"Burn the mill! Burn 'em out!" cried a score of voices in chorus, as the owners pressed forward.

The sergeant seemed about to give the order when a British captain forced his way through the crowd to the door. For a moment he looked at the girl and her leveled musket—at the sergeant—up at the walls of the mill. Then he asked:

"What is this? What are you men about to do?"

"We wanted to search the house, captain," humbly replied the sergeant, "but she threatened to shoot. Give the word, and we'll burn 'em out."

"Away with you—out of this!" shouted the officer. "Did we march here to menace a girl? Would you light a beacon fire to tell the rebels at Bennington that we are coming? Back to your companies!"

"Only my father is here," said Bessie, as she lowered her musket, "and he is wounded."

"A rebel, of course," said the captain, half to himself, as he entered the house, "but he shall have protection, for all that. The dogs of Hessians would even kill a blind babe. Tell me, girl, is there a rebel force at Bennington?"

"There are patriots there," she replied.

"Ah yes. That is another name for them. And in what force?"

"I cannot say."

"And no one is hiding about here?"

"Not a soul."

"You are a brave girl and shall not be annoyed again. I will place sentinels at the door."

The mill was saved. Certain of the soldiers cursed loud and deep because they were compelled to stay their hands, but no fire was lighted. With that contempt for time and the patriots which was evinced almost daily for years, the British force lingered when they should have been marching, rested when they should have been pushing ahead. It was nearly two o'clock when the fifes and drums gave warning and the head of the column started up the road, and it was 20 minutes later when the last soldier disappeared.

"God has preserved us!" said the miller, as his daughter went in to him. "But they may capture the stores at Bennington and destroy the town. Oh! if the mountain boys—if brave John Stark—only gets the news!"

"They will, father," she replied, "and now I must help them still further."

"You—you—what can you do?"

"William has surely found Luke. God will help him to make it plain. Luke will send word to Col. Stark, and then fell trees to obstruct the road. I will use the ax, father. I will go up the hill and cut down trees. We mustn't leave the way open for the enemy to return."

"And I am wounded and can't help you!" he wailed after her as she ran from the house with an ax in her hand.

A quarter of a mile up the Bennington road the highway passed through the virgin forest, and there was a deep cut through the hills. The girl glanced up at the trees to see how they leaned, and then selected one and applied the ax. In a quarter of an hour it came crashing down and the roadway was blocked. Then another and another, and her work was done. The last tree was down and the girl stood panting, when the sounds of musketry reached her ears. Dropping the ax, she ran with all haste to the house.

"Aye! I hear them—the fight has begun!" shouted the father as she entered.

"I am going up to the barricade, father, and I will take both muskets along. If the enemy seeks to return I must fire upon him—I must hold him!"

"And I—I cannot go with you!" he moaned, as he held out his hands and sobbed in his helplessness.

With a musket in either hand the girl ran back up the road, her footsteps hastened by the volleys of musketry. Kneeling at the barricade, she loaded a weapon with trembling hands, and was about to creep forward among the felled trees, when the idiot leaped down beside her and gleefully shouted:

"I did it, Bessie—I told Capt. Luke! He cut down trees, and sent word to the big general, and they are fighting—fighting—fighting! Don't you hear it? They can't get out, and we shall kill 'em all!"

"God bless you, William!" she half sobbed as she rose up. "Oh, if we only had a hundred men here—fifty—a score—a dozen!"

"But ain't I here, Bessie? I can shoot a musket, even if the noise does make me jump. See how tall I am! See what long steps I can take! Right face! Left face! Shoulder arms! Order arms! Parade rest! Don't you be afraid when I am here."

"William, she said, as she laid a hand on either shoulder, "listen to me and help me, and may God give you a mind as bright as day for your reward! We have got to fight. We have got to kill men. We have got to hold this road. Keep your eyes on mine and try to understand every word I say. You do understand, don't you?"

"Yes—yes—I understand. We have got to fight and kill men. Yes, I know."

"Heaven is sending him light," whispered the girl as she followed him. "He understands and will help me!"

It had been quick work with the patriots. They had looked for the enemy by the other road, and had easily held at bay the small force sent to deceive. The idiot had hastened as never before. He had told his story almost word for word as he had been commanded to, and within a quarter of an hour trees were falling across the highway and a courier was riding to Col. Stark. Then the patriot force gathered with the swiftness of death. They swarmed out of Bennington—down from the hills—out of the green forests. They gathered behind the felled trees and the great bowlders and opened fire. The haughty and headstrong foe scarcely halted at first, but as fresh forces came up they were made to realize they had entered a trap and must fight for their lives.

"We are hemmed in—we are lost!" was the cry, and it was answered from the barrier with:

"We are fighting—Bessie—we are fighting and killing and whipping the enemy! Load! Aim! Fire! Isn't it grand?"

"Down, William, down!" cautioned the girl. "We are holding them—we are confusing them! Oh! if we had a dozen more—a dozen more!"

"Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" cheered a score of men who burst through a thicket on the hillside and came tumbling and rolling to the roadway. "Into the barricade, men, and hold it to the last."

It was Capt. Greenwood and a few of his scouts, and they had scarcely fired three volleys before the fate of the battle was decided. There was no advance—no retreat—no breaking out of the blood-sodden highway to right or left. There was nothing left but surrender, and of the thousand men who had marched out of Fort Edward less than 200 fugitives returned.

"You—you here Bessie!" cried Capt. Luke in amazement as he found the girl among the branches with musket in hand.

"Oh! Luke!" she sobbed as she put down her weapon and covered her face with her hands, "I have had to kill men—three—five—seven of them!"

"And I have killed, too!" added the idiot as he rose up and swung his hat. "Te-he-he! Bessie and me have fit and fit and killed and killed, and—and—!"

A panic-stricken Hessian, on his knees and sobbing with fright, fired his musket at random, and the whistling bullet struck the poor idiot and laid him low.

"God reward him!" sobbed Bessie, as she kissed a face which had never been kissed by maid before. "Of all men who have died for liberty to-day, his name should longest be remembered!"

### Poker and Politics.

"Charley, dear," said young Mrs. Torkins, "I hope you are not departing from the precepts of our forfathers and allowing yourself to be dazzled by the pomp and glitter of empire?"

"What book did you get that out of?" asked her husband.

"No book," she answered, stoutly. "I remembered some of it after reading a newspaper article. But I hope you have not abandoned your old principles. Last night you were talking in your sleep, and you said several times that all you wanted was another king to make you all right. And after the trouble we had with George III. it does seem perfectly foolish."—Washington Star.

### The Way of the World.

Towne—Every man must hustle for himself, or get left. You'll get very little in this world if you don't ask for it.

Browne—Well, there's one thing you're likely to get most of if you don't ask for it.

"What's that?"

"Credit."—Philadelphia Press.

### Loyalty to His Employer.

That young man who consented to have a portion of his blood let out to save his employer, set a remarkable example of heroism. The incident shows what power there is in good blood. There is only one natural way to get good blood, and that is from the stomach. If the stomach needs assistance, try Hostetter's Stomach Bitters. This wonderful medicine cures dyspepsia, indigestion, constipation, and makes rich red blood.

"Where are you rushing so fast?" "Up to the health office to get vaccinated." "Eh! Been exposed?" "Yep. Telephone girl this morning gave the pesthouse number by mistake!"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

### There Is a Class of People

Who are injured by the use of coffee. Recently there has been placed in all the grocery stores a new preparation called GRAIN-O, made of pure grains, that takes the place of coffee. The most delicate stomach receives it without distress, and but few can tell it from coffee. It does not cost over ¼ as much. Children may drink it with great benefit. 15 cts. and 25 cts. per package. Try it. Ask for GRAIN-O.

To be thrown upon one's own resources is to be cast into the very lap of fortune.—Benjamin Franklin.

### Speltz, 80 bus. per Acre

Of this remarkable hay and cereal food. Adam Herwebe of Iowa writes to the John A. Salzer Seed Co., La Crosse, Wis., the introducers: "Speltz beats anything and everything I ever saw for stooling, for food and for yield. I could hardly believe my own eyes that I grew from one kernel of seed 72 big heads." While E. L. Rogers, Castlemore, Canada, says Speltz yielded him at the rate of 100 bus. per acre. It will pay every farmer on earth to try Speltz. Write to Salzer to-day about it. [K.]

Theodore—"He went so far as to call me a puppy!" Harriet—"And at your age! The idea!"—Boston Transcript.

### Begin with the Baby

and give Hoxsie's Croup Cure for Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis and Pneumonia, go through the family ending with the grandmother.

"Yes," said Charles, "I have had some very trying experiences in my time. I was struck senseless once."—Chicago Journal.

The Mexicans allay their thirst by chewing Chicle, which is the main ingredient of White's "Yucatan" Gum.

"Say, ma!" "What is it, my daughter?" "When shall I be big enough to have a chaperon?"—Town Topics.

### Coughing Leads to Consumption.

Kemp's Balsam will stop the Cough at once. Go to your druggist to-day and get a sample bottle free. Large bottles 25 and 50 cents. Go at once: delays are dangerous.

The best education in the world is that got by struggling to obtain a living.—Wendell Phillips.

Piso's Cure is the best medicine we ever used for all affections of the throat and lungs.—Wm. O. Endsley, Vanburen, Ind., Feb. 10, 1900.

The astronomer is a space reporter.—Chicago Daily News.

### Lane's Family Medicine.

Moves the bowels each day. In order to be healthy this is necessary. Acts gently on the liver and kidneys. Cures sick headache. Price 25 and 50c.

There are no harmless sins.—Ram's Horn.

### To Cure a Cold in One Day

Take Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. All druggists refund money if it fails to cure. 25c.

Wise is the man who can pick out a good melon or a good wife.—Chicago Daily News.