



A Few Days Before He Would Have Counted This Walk to St. James One of the Events of His Life.

# The COURAGE of CAPTAIN PLUM

By JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAGNUS G. KETNER

## SYNOPSIS.

Captain Nathaniel Plum of the sloop Typhoon, lands secretly on Beaver Island, Lake Michigan, stronghold of the Mormons. Obadiah Price, an eccentric old man and counselor of the Mormons, who has been spying on him, suddenly confronts him and tells him he is expected. Plum insists he has got the wrong man. Price ignores his protestations and bargains for the ammunition on board the sloop. He binds Plum by a solemn oath to deliver a package to Franklin Pierce, president of the United States. He agrees to show Plum the Mormon town, St. James. Plum sees the frightened face of a young woman in the darkness near Price's cabin. She disappears, leaving an odor of lilacs. It develops that Plum is in charge of the sloop with orders to bombard St. James if the captain does not return within a certain time. Price takes Nat secretly in the darkness to the king's house, and through a window he sees Strang and his seven wives, among whom is the lady of the lilacs. Price's actions lead Plum to believe that he is jealous of Strang.

## CHAPTER III.—Continued.

"You will stay—eh, Nat?" he cried, bobbing his head. "Yes, you will stay, and you will give me back the package for a day or two." He retreated to the trap and slid down it as quickly as a rat. "Pleasant dreams to you, Nat, and—O, wait a minute!" Captain Plum could hear him pattering quickly over the floor below. In a moment he was back, thrusting his white grimacing face through the trap and tossed something upon the bed. "She left them last night, Nat. Pleasant dreams, pleasant dreams," and he was gone.

Nathaniel turned to the bed and picked up a faded bunch of lilacs. Then he sat down, loaded his pipe, and smoked until he could hardly see the walls of his little room. From the moment of his landing on the island he turned the events of the day over in his mind. Yet when he arrived at the end of them he was no less mystified than when he began. Who was Obadiah Price? Who was the girl that fate had so mysteriously associated with his movements thus far? What was the plot in which he had accidentally become involved? With tireless tenacity he hung to these questions for hours. That there was a plot of some kind he had not the least doubt. The counselor's strange actions, the oath, the package, and above all the scene in the king's house convinced him of that. And he was sure that Obadiah's night visitor—the girl with the lilacs—was playing a vital part in it.

The longer he smoked the more his old confidence and his old recklessness returned to him. He enjoyed his adventure. The next day he would end it. He would go openly to St. James and have done his business with Strang. Then he would return to his ship. What had he, Captain Plum, to do with Strang's wife?

But even after he had determined on these things his brain refused to rest. He paced back and forth across the narrow room, thinking of the man whom he was to meet tomorrow—of Strang, the one-time schoolmaster and temperance lecturer who had made himself a king, who for seven years had defied the state and nation, and who had made of his island stronghold a hot-bed of polygamy, of licentiousness, of dissolute power. His blood grew hot as he thought again of the beautiful girl who had appealed to him. Obadiah had said that she was the king's wife. Still—

Thoughts flashed into his head which for a time made him forget his mission on the island. In spite of his resolution to keep to his own scheme he found himself, after a little, thinking only of the Mormon king, and the lovely face he had seen through the castle window. He knew much about the man with whom he was to deal tomorrow. He knew that he had been a rival of Brigham Young and that when the exodus of the Mormons to

Then he dodged cautiously along the edge of the bushes, keeping half within their cover, and moved swiftly in the opposite direction toward the center of the island. Nathaniel's blood leaped with a desire to follow. The night before he had guessed that Obadiah with his gold and his smoldering passion was not a man to isolate himself in the heart of the forest. Here—across the open—was evidence of another side of his life. In that great square-built domicile of logs, screened so perfectly by flowering lilacs, lived Obadiah's wives. Captain Plum laughed aloud and beat the bowl of his pipe on the tree beside him. And the girl lived there—or came from there to the woodland cabin so frequently that her feet had beaten a well-worn path. Had the counselor lied to him? Was the girl he had seen through the king's window one of the seven wives of Strang—or was she the wife of Obadiah Price?

The thought was one that thrilled him. If the girl was the counselor's wife what was the motive of Obadiah's falsehood? And if she was Strang's wife why had her feet—and hers alone—with the exception of the lilac smothered house to the cabin in the woods? The captain of the Typhoon regretted now that he had given such explicit orders to Casey. Otherwise he would have followed the figure that was already disappearing into the forest on the opposite side of the clearing. But now he must see Strang. There might be delay, necessary delay, and if it so happened that his own blundering curiosity kept him on the island until sundown—well, he smiled as he thought of what Casey would do.

Refilling his pipe and leaving a trail of smoke behind him he set out boldly for St. James. When he came to the three graves he stopped, remembering that Obadiah had said they were his graves. A sort of grim horror began to stir at his soul as he gazed on the grass-grown mounds—proofs that the old counselor would inherit a place in the Mormon heaven, having obeyed the injunctions of his prophet on earth. Nathaniel now understood the meaning of his words of the night before. This was the family burying ground of the old counselor.

He walked on, trying in vain to concentrate his mind solely upon the business that was ahead of him. A few days before he would have counted this walk to St. James one of the events of his life. Now it had lost its fascination. Despite his efforts to destroy the vision of the beautiful face that had looked at him through the king's window his memory still haunted him. The eyes, soft with appeal; the red mouth, quivering, and with lips parted as if about to speak to him; the bowed head with its tumbled glory of hair—all had burned themselves upon his soul in a picture too deep to be eradicated. If St. James was interesting now it was because that face was a part of it, because the secret of its life, of the misery that it had confessed to him, was hidden somewhere down there among its scattered log homes.

Slowly he made his way down the slope in the direction of Strang's castle, the tower of which, surmounted by its great beacon, glistened in the morning sun. He would find Strang there. And there would be one chance in a thousand of seeing the girl—if Obadiah had spoken the truth. As he passed down he met men and boys coming up the slope and others moving along at the bottom of it, all going toward the interior of the island. They had shovels or rakes or hoes upon their shoulders and he guessed that the Mormon fields were in that direction; others, more axes; and now and then wagons, many of them drawn by oxen, left the town over the road that ran near the shore of the lake. Those whom he met stared at him curiously, much interested evidently in the appearance of a stranger. Nathaniel paid but small heed to them. As he entered the grove through which the counselor had guided him the night before his eagerness became almost excitement. He approached the great log house swiftly but cautiously, keeping as much from view as possible. As he came under the window through which he had looked upon the king and his wives his heart leaped with anticipation, with hope that was strangely mingled with fear. For only a moment he paused to listen, and notwithstanding the seriousness of his position he could not repress a smile as there came to his ears the crying of children and the high angry voice of a woman. He passed around to the front of the house. The door of Strang's castle was wide open and unguarded. No one had seen his approach; no one accosted him as he mounted the low steps; there was no one in the room into which he gazed a moment later. It was the great hall into which he had spied a few hours previous. There was the long table with the big book on it, the lamp whose light had bathed the girl's head in a halo of glory, the very chair in which he had found her sitting! He was conscious of a throbbing in his breast, a longing to call out—if he only knew her name.

In the room there were four closed doors and it was from beyond these that there came to him the wailing of children. A fifth door was open and through it he saw a cradle gently rocking. Here at last was life, or motion at least, and he knocked loudly. Very gradually the cradle ceased its movement. Then it stopped, and a woman came out into the larger room. In a moment Nathaniel recognized her as the one who had placed a caressing hand upon the bowed head of the sobbing girl the night before. Her face was of pathetic beauty. Its whiteness was startling. Her eyes shone with an unhealthy luster, and her dark hair, falling in heavy curls over her shoulder, added to the wonderful pallor of her cheeks.

Nathaniel bowed. "I beg your pardon, madam; I came to see Mr. Strang," he said.

"You will find the king at his office," she replied.

The woman's voice was low, but so sweet that it was like music to the ear. As she spoke she came nearer and a faint flush appeared in the transparency of her cheek.

# PERILS OF ARCTIC HUNTING



SO fast does the world move nowadays that unless one stops to reflect a bit there seems nothing unusual in the fact that Harry Whitney, the New Haven sportsman, should have come hunting to the place which not many years ago marked the northernmost limit of polar exploration. For nearly a year he lived by choice alone in the shadow of that Cape Sabine, where the men of the Greely expedition starved to death in 1883. Many times he passed on his expedition after game the wreck of the steamship Polari of the Hall expedition of 1871.

The adventures Mr. Whitney had as a sportsman in this far north where men before him had met death as explorers he has set down in his book, "Hunting With the Eskimos," which has just been published, says a writer in the Montreal Herald. Though the author seems to consider himself primarily a sportsman and the love of hunting strange game was what kept him through all the Arctic night living with the Eskimos and as an Eskimo, his book is interesting not as a sportsman's tale, but as a record of a crowded adventure and as a portrayal of Eskimo types.

Since Mr. Whitney went as far north as Etah with the Peary expedition of 1908 and returned to civilization on the Peary relief ship Jeanie after having been the first white man to greet the returning pole finder under the shadow of the north, his book comes as a sort of epilogue to Peary's narrative of his achievement. As an amateur Arctic explorer this New Haven sportsman has at least one valuable qualification, the gift of direct and simple narrative.

In company with two other sportsmen the author went north on the Peary expedition's tender Erik, which followed the Roosevelt on its last and successful dash through the ice fields. His intention and that of his friends was merely to make the voyage to Etah on the Greenland coast, get a little incidental hunting and then to return to the world when the Erik put back and the Roosevelt continued on her way northward to Cape Sheridan.

## Captivated by the Arctic.

But once at Etah, away down under the foot of the mountains with the Greenland ice cap sparkling from the summit of the range, Whitney caught the fever of the north. Though he had not come prepared to isolate himself for a year and endure the hardships of the Arctic night, Whitney broached his determination to stick it out with the Eskimos at Etah to Commander Peary before the Roosevelt left for the north on August 18, and Peary made him an allowance of stores sufficient to keep him until the return of the expedition's tender in the following August should offer passage home.

So it was that with a shack built for him by the carpenter and the bos'n of the Erik at Etah and the two members of the Roosevelt's crew left to guard a cache of provisions at Annotok, forty miles away, as his sole white companions in the land of silence, Mr. Whitney saw the Erik steam away for the south on August 21. Then he realized that he "was marooned in the most desolate region of the earth, among a race who spoke a strange tongue. There was no escape for nearly a year."

Even the Eskimo companions left to the sportsman were not many. Peary had taken the pick of the tribe north with him on the Roosevelt, men, women and children, and the Eskimos who remained began early the grilling task of storing the community larder against descending night. Whitney threw his lot in with them absolutely.

## Lived the Life of an Eskimo.

He straightway became an Eskimo in his mode of life as far as he could, and before he got away from the ice-bound coast of Smith Sound, Whitney had reason to count among his best

## OLD SALEM LANDMARK SOLD

Place Where Nathaniel Hawthorne Courted Miss Peabody is "Dr. Grimshaw's House."

Romance in the life of Nathaniel Hawthorne is vividly recalled by the sale of the three-story house at 51-55 Charter street, Salem. Louis Demolsky has transferred the property to Jennie I. Linsky.

The house was erected about one hundred and fifty years ago. Within the dwelling Miss Sophia Amelia Peabody, daughter of Dr. Nathaniel Peabody, was born, September 21, 1809. Miss Peabody wedded Nathaniel Hawthorne, and it appears singular to readers of the great American romancer's works that, charming as his associations must have been with the house, he should have recalled it sardonically in the unpleasant "Doliver Romance," and later in the deplorable made in "Dr. Grimshaw's Secret."

That he did so is shown in the opening chapter of "Dr. Grimshaw's Secret," which reads, "Cornered on a graveyard with which the house com-

"A pessimist who constantly worries about the morrow would positively hypnotize himself to death in these lands in a very short time. Pessimism has been the real cause of many casualties among Arctic explorers."

The blizzards came continually to complicate the life that the white stranger had to lead during the darkness. Some of the most vivid passages in his book are those which depict the raging of the storms which swept down from the north, carrying snow as hard as shot, destroying and obliterating everything in their passage.

For days on end Whitney did not dare to leave his shack at Annotok to go fifty yards to the nearest igloo because of the blinding fury of the tempest. He would have been lost a dozen steps beyond his own tunnel entrance. Yet so pressing is the need of food among the Eskimos that between the ragings of the storms they made venturesome excursions after meat and Whitney accompanied them on many of these hunts.

On one occasion when a party of which the author was a member was out after walrus in the middle of Smith Sound, they barely escaped death on a detached ice floe. Finding themselves separated from the pack and drifting downward toward the open water, which would have meant starvation, the members of the hunting expedition frantically explored the boundaries of their temporary prison for a loophole of escape. Finally one of the Eskimos discovered where by utilizing small ice pans as ferries the party could escape to the solid pack. That was one of the many close calls that Whitney experienced.

## Eskimo Endurance.

The author never ceased to marvel at the endurance of his friends the savages. Life with them is so stern a matter of nip and tuck that the Eskimos seem to have been hardened in to almost superhuman strength and stamina. Their pursuit of game is never ending, and at times the life of a whole colony will depend on the success of one hunting expedition.

Whitney saw his Eskimo companions take chances with death which were nothing short of madness; he found them ready to go without sleep for three days on end, eager to be on the move as long as their legs would support them. "They cannot lean on others for support," Whitney comments, "and none among them is so poor that charity comes his way. He must work if he is to live, and no man in the world works so hard as the Eskimo or enjoys so little of life's comforts and luxuries."

With the return of the sun Whitney and a party of Eskimos crossed the ice of Smith Sound over to Ellesmere Land, where the author sought the single reward of all that winter's isolation, musk ox. With a hunter's pride he devotes several chapters of his book to the narration of this successful musk ox hunt. He knocked down more of the beasts than he could bring back to Greenland with him and the trophies in heads and hides that he secured amply rewarded his months of waiting.

## Says Little About Cook.

Whitney tells only in the baldest outline of the return of Doctor Cook to Annotok, reciting how three men, gaunt as skeletons and dirty almost beyond human semblance, came in over the ice of Smith Sound pulling their single sledge behind them. On the subject of what Doctor Cook may have told him as to his pole finding the New Haven sportsman pursues his consistent policy of silence. He simply says that the Bushwick explorer stayed a few days in Annotok and then started southward for a Danish settlement.

On August 16, within a few days of a year after Mr. Whitney had been marooned among the Eskimos, the Roosevelt bearing the Peary party returned from the north and the New Haven man took ship on her for civilization. He transferred to the Jeanie, which was met coming up at North Star Bay, and after some desultory hunting along the coast of Baffin's Land, during which time the author secured some coveted polar bear, the return to the world was completed.

## "Personal Item" Didn't Pay.

"I have a personal item." A reporter looked up from his typewriter at the baggage burdened woman who rushed up the stairs to deposit a small piece of news.

"Hurry!" she demanded. "My train is about to leave. Got a pencil?"

"Ready," said the reporter.

"I'm going to Omaha to spend a week with my sister."

"Well, your name, please."

"Mrs. George Mels of Highland Park—much obliged," and the woman darted out of the door with her luggage.

"Please don't publish that item about me," said a feminine voice over the Register and Leader telephone ten minutes later.

"Who's talking, please?"

"I'm Mrs. Mels. I gave you a personal article ago, and if I hadn't done it wouldn't have missed my train."

changed in appearance, yet the mutations will not destroy the history of the old landmark, or diminish interest on the part of people visiting Salem for the purpose of viewing buildings associated with Hawthorne. He was not wedded to Miss Peabody in the "Doctor Grimshaw house," as has been claimed, but in a dwelling then numbered 13 West street, Boston, then the home of Doctor Peabody.

## All Out of Bacon Again.

Senator "Bob" Taylor of Tennessee, tells a story of how, when he was "Fiddling Bob," governor of that state, an old negro came to him and said: "Massa Gov'na, we's mighty po' this winter, and Ah wish you would pardon mah old man. He is a fiddler same as you is, and he's in the penitentiary. 'What was he put in for?' asked the governor. 'Stead of workin' fo' it that good-fo'-nothin' nigger done stole some bacon.' 'If he is good for nothing what do you want him back for?' 'Well, yo' see, we's all out of bacon ag'in,' said the old negro innocently.

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State of Iowa, Clinton County, ss. On this 12th day of July, A. D., 1909, W. C. Cook to me personally known appeared before me and in my presence subscribed and swore to the above and foregoing statement.

DALE H. SHEPPARD,  
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In and for Clinton County.

Letter to Dr. Kilmer, 100 N. 3rd St., St. Louis, Mo., U. S. A.

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