



THE RIVER of SKULLS

—by George Marsh—

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WNU SERVICE

CHAPTER X

On the following morning, it was decided that Noel should hunt the barrens across the river for deer and Alan take the country behind the camp. Certain that they had put at least forty miles between themselves and the hills where they had seen the signal smoke, they felt reasonably safe in separating to hunt. Scrub of the spruce and tamarack leaved the sheltered valley Alan, with Rough at heel, where he had been trained to follow at command, came out on the shoulder of the barren. Here Alan hitched Rough to a tree by a thong, for the sight and scent of caribou would make him too excited to control.

Taking a deeply worn caribou path, Alan traveled inland. From a depression some rock ptarmigan, now in their mottled summer plumage, rose with a cackle for their short flight. A curious arctic fox watched him for a space from a rise, shortly to disappear. From a lift in the barren he saw what he had come for. Four caribou stood in the breeze of a neighboring hill. Below them, feeding on low deer-bush, were three others. Sweeping the country with his glasses, Alan saw scattered groups. They were the last stragglers of the migration drifting north to spend the summer on the cool barrens away from the fly pest.

Alan circled to bring his stalk of the feeding deer directly up wind and made a careful approach behind some lichen covered boulders. He was within short rifle-shot, when the deer became excited. They bunched, and two young bucks began to dance and rear on their hind legs.

Firing rapidly before they disappeared over the rise, the surprised hunter brought down two of the stampeded caribou. As he approached the deer, his eyes swept the tundra to windward but he saw only an empty reach of boulder-strewn barren, gray with caribou moss.

He unwound the leather tump-line from his waist, and rapidly skinned the two deer. When the best of the meat was rolled in a hide and lashed with his line, Alan followed the deer path over which he had come, back into a small swale where, sheltered from the wind, stunted spruce and deer bush fought for life.

As he reached a huge lichen covered boulder, he heard a noise behind him. Pivoting, with a side throw of his head, he freed his back of the heavy load to take a stunning blow on the forehead—followed by another. His gun slipped from nerveless fingers as the light slowly faded. He lurched forward, stumbled a few steps, then crumpled on the deer path.

The chatter of strange, high-pitched voices greeted his returning consciousness. Somebody talking—Indians. The whining voices again reached his ears as he lay dazed on the moss. Not Montagnais but like it—this talk. Who were they? What was the matter, anyway?

Then to the partially stunned hunter came the slow realization of what had happened. He'd been struck from behind. He was lying on his arms. They ached and he endeavored to move them, but they were tied behind his back. His feet, also, were fastened with deer thongs. Rapidly, now, his senses became more acute. He rolled on his side and squinted in the direction of the voices. Beside a fire squatted four skin-clad figures. Naskapi!

He had been caught hunting in their country. The tales of the old men of the Montagnais flashed through his consciousness. No man had ever returned from the land of the Naskapi.

In a surge of desperation, Alan strained at the thongs binding his wrists behind his back, but the pain that split his head at the effort stopped him. He managed to change to a sitting position and somewhat lessen the torture from the mosquitoes which swarmed about him. The eldest of the four Indians, roasting meat on sticks, turned to him with a snarl:

"Your head is hard, white man!" he exclaimed, in a peculiar shrill voice.

Alan, who spoke Montagnais fluently, thrilled to the realization that he understood the Indian, for the tongues are similar.

"Where do you come from? No strangers hunt in the land of the Naskapi," the Indian continued, while one of the younger men rose and picked up Alan's 30-30 which lay almost within his reach. As he did so, he spat at the man who sat on the moss with hands lashed behind his back.

"I pass through your country," Alan answered, in Montagnais. "I was hungry and needed meat."

"You go to the Fort near the Big Water, in the country of the Raw Meat Eaters—the Huskies?"

"Yes!"

"You will not see the fort by the Big Water. You will feel the ra-

vens and the foxes!" cried the older man fiercely, his small, evil eyes glittering, as he scowled at his prisoner.

When Alan's brain became clearer and his strength returned, he started some rapid thinking. The four Indians who had ambushed him were lean and hard but lacked weight and power. If he had half a chance, if he could once get his hands free and reach them before they shot him down, he would show these wild Naskapi how a white man could fight for his life, one against four.

"Many moons ago," went on the leader of the Indians, "white men came down this river. The Husky call it Kokoak, Big River. The Naskapi call it the River of the Naskapi. The white men fed the foxes."

Suddenly Alan had an inspiration. "The River of Skulls," he suddenly asked, "is it far?"

The mink-like eyes of the four Naskapi met in looks of stark terror. Their dark faces went gray. Alan watched the hands of one holding a chunk of roasted meat shake as he dropped the meat into the fire.

"You seek the River of Skulls?" he cried shrilly.

"Yes," cried Alan, blindly following up his advantage. "I go to talk with Matchi Manitou. I am a white

shaman. This summer the spirits make medicine at the River of Skulls."

The Naskapi instinctively started and moved back as if fearing the man on the ground would at once set in motion some supernatural power.

"A shaman!" gasped one of the younger men. "He says he goes to talk with the spirits at the River of Skulls."

"Why," leered the leader, "if you are a talker with spirits, did you fall when we hit you? Why did you go to sleep?"

"When I slept, I talked with spirits," countered Alan, playing for time while he worked the blood into his hands behind his back. "They are angry with the Naskapi."

But the Indians were gradually shaking off the panic into which they had been thrown.

"Oh Shaman," one cried, "show us you are a jessikid—a maker of medicine. White men do not talk with the spirits of the Indian."

"Lose my hands and feet and I will show you."

"If you are a talker with spirits you will break the thongs!" derided the leader, but Alan saw they were ill at ease. If he could only keep them uncertain of what to do—only gain a little more time—while he worked at the thongs on his swollen wrists!

The Naskapi withdrew beyond earshot and argued excitedly. While they ceased to watch him, he sucked in long breaths and with all the strength of his arms and shoulders strained at the deer thongs binding his wrists. Slowly he felt them ease.

The four men, evidently decided on their course, returned. Rapidly they trimmed with their knives a stunted spruce standing near to a height of six feet above the ground. Then they gathered a pile of dry twigs and branches. What was the meaning of this move? Alan wondered. In the meantime, the thongs holding his aching arms were stretching. The circulation was flowing in his hands and their strength had returned. He moved his toes and feet. They were all right.

Then his twisting right hand contacted something hard in the hip pocket below his belt. His jack-knife! But what was the idea of the trimmed spruce—the fire wood? Then the realization of the sinister purpose of the Naskapi reached the bound man who watched them. They were taking him at his word—had decided to test his powers as a sorcerer. His claims were to be put to the proof—by fire.

The Indians were approaching him. To Alan's surprise, the leader bent and cut the thongs binding his feet, keeping his small eyes avert-

ed. "Rise, sorcerer, and stand by the spruce. If you speak with a double tongue, the fire will eat you. If you are a friend of spirits, it will not burn you!"

A surge of hope speeded his heart, as Alan scrambled to his feet and stretched his cramped legs. But his hopes suddenly fell when he reached the spruce and one of the Indians wound a deer thong twice around his neck and made him fast to the tree.

"If your medicine is strong, the fire will not burn! Make your magic, oh Shaman!"

Instead of lifting a burning ember from the cooking fire and starting the kindlings at Alan's feet, the young Indian took the flint, steel and dry most tinder from his fire-bag, struck the flint with the steel, sending a spark into the tinder held in his cupped hands, which he blew into a flame and placed under the shredded bark and kindlings.

Alan looked long at the sun—his last sun. His tormented eyes, now swollen almost shut, dropped to the barrens toward the river and back to the caribou path he had followed from the fringe of the timber. Then his heart checked, to leap wildly as the blood pounded in his throat. There, on a rise, silhouetted against the sky stood a black animal with lifted nose scenting the air. Then it disappeared.

Time! Time! He must have time! He forgot the agony of the myriad flies that had spotted his face and hands with blood. He burst into a wild sing-song in imitation of a conjurer he had once heard at the Lake of the Snows. The Indians chattered twenty feet away, evidently disturbed.

Then as the kindlings failed to catch from the tinder he cried: "Tshipi! The Spirit! He has answered! See, he has ordered the spruce sticks not to burn! My spirit is strong! He is overhead, there, in the sky!"

The Naskapi followed Alan's eyes to where a raven circled low to the earth, above them. With a desperate heave, Alan freed his hands and still keeping his elbows stiff against his side, got the knife from his pocket and opened it behind his back.

A little longer! If he could delay the starting of the fire again until he was ready—ready to make his fight for life!

While the uneasy Indians till talked with awed voices as they watched the circling raven, Alan continued in the whine of a coast medicine man.

"Tshipi, my brother, is here. He has heard my call. He comes as a raven to make the spruce sticks smoke, but not burn!"

The four Naskapi stood, swart faces twisted with apprehension, watching the circling raven, when, with a roar, a great dog bounded into the fold in the tundra.

"Roughly! Come on Roughly! Get 'em, boy!" shouted the half-delirious Cameron, slapping the thongs at his neck and rushing headlong at the startled group of Naskapi.

"Atimwok!" shrieked the leader, picking up his gun and firing wildly from the hip at the bounding husky as Alan reached them from the rear and drove his short-bladed knife deep into the back of the nearest man. As he turned, a rifle roared in his face and, half-blinded, he dove headlong at the knees of the Indian holding the smoking gun, hurling him to the ground. But the impact drove the knife from his hand. Desperate with the thought that his wound would sap his last ounce of strength, Alan tore his right arm free from the grip of the writhing Indian, pinioned the other's knife hand to his side and found

his throat. With the strength of a madman, the Naskapi fought to free his neck from the white man's fingers that closed on his windpipe like a vise. But the hunter who fought against time—the instant his wound would suddenly slow his heart—would not be denied. Holding his enemy with the grip of a bear, he choked him into insensibility.

Behind Alan, raging like a fury, the husky, escaping the two shots from the muzzle loaders, leaped and slashed at the two retreating Indians who fought the frenzied dog with their empty guns and their knives. Avoiding by a side leap the clubbed gun of one, Rough catapulted into the older man who slashed the air in a wild thrust as the canny Ugava again dodged. Then as the Indian stumbled backward, the dog leaped in and struck with his long tusk at the exposed throat, ripping the flesh like paper. As the Ugava made a side spring away from his enemy, a gun butt crashed on his skull. With a roar of rage, the great dog staggered, shook his head, then leaped back as the gun butt again arched through the air. But as the clubbed gun missed its mark, Rough leaped, carrying the Indian beneath him to the moss. A knife flashed in the sun, as the maddened husky's tusks snapped and tore, struck again and again. The thrashing shape beneath the dog suddenly relaxed. Mad with rage, the Ugava shook the Naskapi with a ripped jugular, like a rabbit.

Near him, the panting Alan lay across the limp body of the Indian, still pinning his throat with his closed fingers. The swollen tongue and bulging eyes told their story. But in the face of the man who had won, there was a look of blank amazement. He was still strong. He felt no pain. He sat up and ran his hand over his chest. There was no blood! Then he found a tear in his powder-burned shirt close to his ribs. Missed!

With a glad yelp the husky left the enemy he was worrying and sprang to nuzzle his master's face. Alan opened his arms to circle the blood-smeared mane of his whining dog.

"Roughly! Roughly! You chewed the leash and came looking for Alan! Bless your shaggy, old head! You were just in time, boy—just barely in time!"

The love-snuffle of the white muzzle in Alan's face merged into a low whine as Alan's arm rubbed the slashed shoulder of his dog.

"Why, they got you!" Alan carefully examined the knife thrust in the shoulder from which blood oozed. "I knew they missed you with the guns for you kept right after them—that rush of yours! This cut is not so bad, boy, but we must get back to camp before it stiffens and cripples you."

Toward evening, down on the river shore, two men and a girl waited for the return of the man and dog who had gone into the barrens.

"He must have found the deer," observed McCord, "or he'd have shown up before this."

"Plentee tam. He pack de beeg back load of meat," said Noel, who had wandered all day on the tundra to the west without seeing a caribou.

"I'm wondering if anything has happened," suggested Heather, rocking nervously back and forth on the gravel beach and hugging her knees. "I've been feeling sort of spooky all day—as if something was wrong." She rose, running her fingers through her mass of tumbled hair and turned to gaze long at the shoulder of the barren above the valley.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



His gun slipped from nerveless fingers.

Jacksnipe Visit Many Sections of the United States; Once Called "Crazy Birds"

There isn't a section of the United States, from Alaska to Florida, where there is bogland that the jacksnipe doesn't visit, writes Ding Darling in the Indianapolis News. It breeds from right up close to the arctic circle through a wide belt of country down into New Jersey, then spends its winters over an expanse of territory that takes in North Carolina, California and the southernmost part of Brazil.

With its swift, weaving flight and its plaintive cry of "Scalp, scalp!" as it takes wing, the jacksnipe is the familiar sprite of the lowlands, the damp pasture, the muddy shore of lake and stream.

The jacksnipe comes and goes mysteriously on its migration journeys. The farmer finds a colony of snipe busy probing in his meadow on an October morning where he has never before seen a snipe, and as abruptly, they're all gone.

"Crazy birds," the old marshmen used to call them; some days they'd be tame and trusting, other days wild and wary. In the spring the jacksnipe does a mating song and dance act in the air, at night mostly, and when you've heard the

performance you've been right close to the spirit of the marsh. Woodcock have a similar mating exhibition. In fact, woodcock and snipe have a lot in common, in appearance and habits, except that snipe keep to open country and woodcock haunt the brushy bogs.

Jacksnipe have sadly decreased in the last quarter century due to the craze for changing marshes which once yielded profitable crops of fur, fowl and fish into sour, unproductive farm lands on which the new crops were never able to pay the drainage bonds.

Voltaire Changed His Name

The great French poet, dramatist, and philosopher known to the world as Voltaire, was Francois Marie Arouet, born in 1694, the son of Francois and Marie Marguerite Daumart Arouet. At the age of twenty-four he was imprisoned in the Bastille for writing verses that displeased the regent of France. During this imprisonment he changed his name to Arouet de Voltaire. But as time passed the "Arouet" was dropped and he became known simply as Voltaire.

WHAT to EAT and WHY

C. Houston Goudiss Discusses the Food Value of Ice Cream

Nationally Known Food Authority Describes Its Place in the Diet

By C. HOUSTON GOUDISS

6 East 39th Street, New York City.

ONE of the most significant contributions of modern nutritional science was the discovery of the importance of the protective foods—milk, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables. These foods abound in the minerals and vitamins that help to insure normal growth and health, and safeguard us against the deficiency diseases.

In this group, milk and dairy products made from it assume a commanding position because milk is the best and most practical source of calcium and vitamins A and G. These substances should be consumed in much greater proportions than at present if we are to increase health and efficiency and improve our chances for longevity.

The first rule in providing adequate amounts of the protective foods is to allow daily a quart of milk for every child and at least a pint for each adult. This amount of milk need not always be consumed as a beverage, however. It may be used in cooked dishes or eaten in the form of cheese and ice cream.

Composition of Ice Cream

Ice cream is often regarded as a confection, but it deserves to be classed among our most nutritious foods. It is composed of varying proportions of cream, milk, sugar, flavoring and frequently a binder or stabilizer such as gelatin. The composition varies somewhat between the home-made and the commercial product, and the commercial product differs in various states. That is because standards governing the butter fat content differ widely so that the requirement ranges from 8 to 14 per cent. Most large commercial companies produce an ice cream with about 12 per cent fat.

Guard Against Contamination

Some states require the pasteurization of the milk or cream used in manufacturing ice cream; others stipulate that the entire mix must be pasteurized before freezing. These measures are desirable, as ice cream requires the same scrupulous care that should be given to milk and cream.

Because of the possibilities for contamination, several precautions should be observed in buying ice cream. Choose cream manufactured by a reputable concern. Be sure to buy from a dealer who keeps it well frozen, for ice cream that has been melted and frozen again may be dangerous, owing to the opportunity for the multiplication of bacteria while it was melted. See to it, also, that the dealer uses sanitary methods in dispensing.

Home-Made Ice Cream

An easy way to make certain of the purity of the ice cream you serve is to make this delicious dessert at home. Motor-driven freezers are available, as well as those that are manually operated.

THIS FREE BULLETIN REVEALS THE SECRETS of a—**BALANCED DIET**

SEND for the Home-Maker's Chart for Checking Nutritional Balance, offered free by C. Houston Goudiss, and discover that a balanced ration is not a puzzle. This useful chart lists the foods and the standard amounts that should be included in the daily diet. It contains skeleton menus for breakfast, dinner and lunch or supper to guide you in selecting the proper foods in each classification.

Just ask for the Nutrition Chart, addressing C. Houston Goudiss, 6 E. 39th Street, New York City.

And the homemaker with an automatic refrigerator finds it easier to make ice cream than to prepare many less interesting and nutritious desserts.

Ice cream powders which simplify the preparation of home-made ice cream, can be obtained unflavored, or in a variety of flavors, including lemon and maple, in addition to the popular vanilla, chocolate and strawberry. The ice cream powders may be used with milk or a combination of milk and cream to produce a healthful dessert suitable for every member of the family. They also may be used for less rich but equally refreshing milk or buttermilk sherbets.

A canned freezing mix is likewise available and is especially nice in a fruit flavor as it contains pieces of the whole fruit.

A Comparison With Milk

If we regard one-sixth of a quart of ice cream as an average serving, and compare it with one cup of milk, we make the interesting discovery that there is a close relation between the two. The ice cream provides about 24 more calories and only a trifle less protein, calcium, phosphorus, iron and vitamin A. There is considerably less vitamin G, but ice cream is nevertheless considered an excellent source of this important vitamin.

A Healthful Food

It then becomes apparent why ice cream is considered as an excellent food, not only for adults but for children and convalescents, and why one outstanding authority urges the liberal use of ice cream as a means of increasing the vitamin A content of the diet.

Plain ice cream may be used interchangeably with simple milk puddings. Rich mixtures, such as those filled with nuts and crystallized fruits, rank with the heartier desserts and should follow a lighter meal.

Ice cream is so rich in nourish-

Send for this Free BULLETIN on Keeping Cool with Food

You and your family will enjoy better health and greater comfort during the scorching days of summer that remain, if you send for "Keeping Cool with Food," offered free by C. Houston Goudiss. It lists "cooling" and "heating" foods and is complete with cooling menu suggestions.

A post card will do to carry your request. Just address C. Houston Goudiss, 6 E. 39th St., New York City.

Effect on Digestion

One frequently hears the question, "Doesn't the eating of ice cream retard the digestion of other foods consumed at the same time?" The answer is that it does slow up slightly the emptying time of the stomach but this delay is without significance and is more than compensated for by the important nutrients it provides.

Many people believe that it is injurious to follow ice cream with hot coffee. But it has been demonstrated that just the opposite is true. The coffee raises the temperature of the food in the stomach and thus modifies the cooling effect of the ice cream.

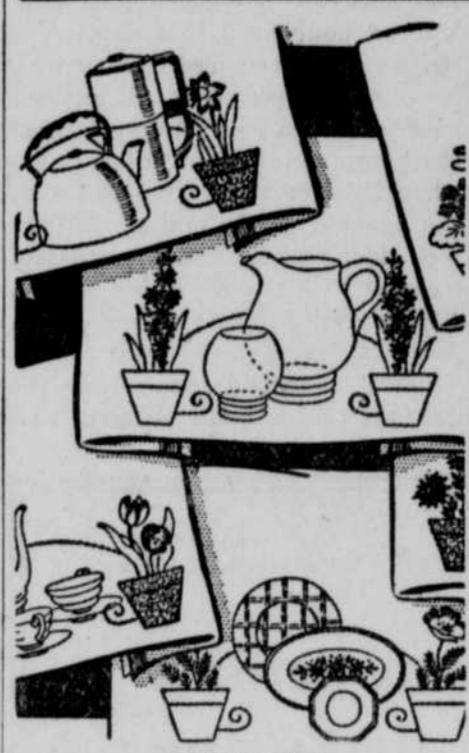
Another common question concerns the effect of cake or pie a la mode. Experiments indicate that eating ice cream with cake or pie produces a more satisfactory gastric juice than when either of these foods is eaten alone. One must take into consideration, however, that cake or pie a la mode is a rich combination and plan the remainder of the meal accordingly.

Use More Ice Cream

It has been estimated that five billion pounds of milk are used each year in the production of commercial ice cream, which provides about three gallons of ice cream per capita. The amounts of ice cream made at home will raise this figure somewhat. But the amount consumed may well be further increased, because when properly made from pure ingredients, ice cream deserves to rank with other dairy products among our most wholesome and nourishing foods.

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Gay Kitchen Lightens Tasks



Pattern 1783

Brighten your kitchen and lighten your tasks with decorative towels. Use up scraps for the applique flower pots—or do the entire motifs in plain embroidery. Pattern 1783 contains a transfer pattern of 6 motifs averaging 5 1/4

Time to Hold On

When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you, until it seems as if you could not hold on one minute longer—never give up then! That is just the time and place that the tide will turn. —Harriet Beecher Stowe.

by 9 1/4 inches and pattern piece for applique; illustrations of stitches; materials required. Send 15 cents in stamps or coins (coins preferred) for this pattern to The Sewing Circle, Needlecraft Dept., 82 Eighth Ave., New York City.

HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONS

For Privacy.—If you live so close to the highway that passers-by can look into your home, try painting the screen doors with a very thin coat of white paint and you can look out, but people passing cannot see into your living room.

Fruit Juice Ice Cubes.—If you have a gas or electric refrigerator, try using fruit juices for ice cubes instead of water. They are very pretty in fruit beverages. Lemon cubes are lovely in iced tea.

When Cooking Rice.—Try adding a few drops of lemon juice to rice the next time you are cooking it. It makes it beautifully white and keeps the grains whole.

Napkins From Tablecloths.—When tablecloths wear thin in the center, cut up the outside into 12 or 16-inch squares and hemstitch them. These make napkins which will wear for some time.

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