

PATTERNS OF WOLFPEN



By Harlan Hatcher
Illustrations by O. Irwin Myers

SYNOPSIS

In the year 1785 Saul Pattern of Virginia came into the beautiful virgin country of the Big Sandy valley in Kentucky. Chief of the perils were the Shawnees, who sought to hold their lands from the ever-encroaching whites. From a huge pinnacle Saul gazed upon the forest and the endless acres of fat bottoms in its primeval quietude at the mouth of the Wolfpen, and felt an eagerness to possess it, declaring it a place fit for a man to LIVE in! Five years later he returned with Barton, his fifteen-year-old son, and built a rude cabin. In Saul's absence the Indians attacked Barton and wounded him so badly Saul was forced to return with him to Virginia. In 1796, when it was reasonably safe, Saul returned with his family and a patent for 4,000 acres, this time to stay. He added to the cabin, planted crops and fattened his stock on the rich meadows. Soon other settlers arrived. A century later, in the spring of 1885, we find Cynthia Pattern, of the fifth generation following Saul, perched on the pinnacle from which her great-grandfather had first viewed Wolfpen Bottoms. The valleys, heretofore untouched by the waves of change sweeping the Republic, are at last beginning to feel that restless urge. Her dad, Sparrel, and her brothers, Jesse, Jasper and Abrael, have been busy converting the old water-wheeled mill to steam power.

CHAPTER I—Continued

Now it was finally set up and adjusted, this evening it would be set in motion, and Cynthia was there on the ledge, by the overhanging bushes, to witness the triumph of her father. She was near enough to hear the talk of the onlookers who knew that this mad contraption of Sparrel's couldn't possibly work, and even if it did (which it wouldn't) the meal wouldn't be so good.

One group was particularly interested in the boiler where Jesse and Abrael were working.

"He sure ain't aimin' to turn them big grist stones with that puny black riddle now you don't reckon."

"Don't look near big enough."

"Who ever heard of a feller workin' a mill with a little of b'illin' water?"

"It sure beats me how it could,"

"What do you fellows know about a steam-engine when you never saw one in your lives, I don't reckon," Doug Mason said.

Cynthia, recognizing Doug's voice, liked him more because of the way he had spoken.

She heard Sparrel laugh at their incredulity and watched him go on with his work, inspecting the boiler as it began to exhaust little puffs of steam. Abrael was putting more wood under the fire-box; the pale blue smoke curling over the mill was thinned into the air before it could reach the rock where Cynthia sat; but the gentle bite of its smell came into her nose.

She could feel light puffs of hot air on her face from the column set up from the boiler. Sparrel watched the steam gage while Jasper and Abrael attached the belt. There was excitement in the crowd in the mill-yard as the boiler began to spunk and sputter under the expansion. Then Sparrel tooted the whistle. She saw it first as a puff of vapor which melted instantly into a sound which roared in her ears. All the horses, mules and oxen jumped and cavorted about. One of the Darten boys splashed across the creek to safety. The crowd moved back from the mill.

Sparrel was full of a great pride as he turned the steam into the cylinder of his new engine. It hissed and spewed, the piston began to move; then the belt jerked, the new timbers creaked, the old millstones began to whirl twenty revolutions faster than ever before; a monster from the outside had finally got into the mountains.

"Well, boys, there she is," Sparrel shouted to the crowd which was now pressing about the mill and peering through the doors and windows. A stream of yellow meal slid down the chute into a sack.

"Well, now, I'll be dogged," the skeptical neighbor said. "Who'd ever study up a contraption like that to turn a millstone with, anyhow?"

"It runs all right, but it makes a sight of fuss about it," Cynthia said, and arose from the ledge where she sat. "I guess I better get back now."

As she started down the path, she looked across the bottom to the weathered stone slab at the head of old Grandfather Saul's grave on the Cranestest Shelf, and she felt that something out of the old life had oozed to be buried with him.

Down the winding contours of the path to the creek, through the peach orchard, over the Long Bottom, up Sheepfold Hollow a few paces, then along the path and she was at

Cranestest Shelf. There was for Cynthia something intimate and old about these place-names which had grown out of the very stuff of her family's life.

What was spread about in the bottom-land was united in the small plot within the rails on Cranestest Shelf where lay at rest the earlier makers of the land. Cynthia leaned forward with her chin in her left hand and her eyes on Stack Bottom, but she was looking at nothing outside of herself. She made worlds of her own and went there to live when she wished.

For she was much alone, without being lonely. Jesse seemed nearer than her other two brothers, but even he was a man. Both of her sisters were gone. Lucy, the oldest of the family, was married years ago and lived over on the Sandy farm at the Pattern Landing; and Jenny, who was next to Jasper, already had two children and seemed miles away on the Horseshoe Branch farm. But to Cynthia they were no farther than her own home. She had always been of another generation from herself, the youngest of the children, save Abrael. Grandfather Saul seemed as close to her as Lucy, perhaps closer. For she could recreate him and his sons to please her own fancy; could dress him in his old buckskin breeches, handed down through the generations, which she would take from their peg in the wall by the staircase landing, stretching out their long legs as far as she could reach, swelling out her imagination until it brought to life a man seven feet tall, a whole foot higher than her own father, great enough to wear those incredible breeches, and go tramping in long strides over all Big Sandy, spying it out with sharp eyes, claiming a share of it for himself, planting a family on this particular spot.

There was something vital about him which refused to perish. She had always thought of him as living there in a cabin instead of dead in a grave. She fell to thinking of his son, her Great-Grandfather Barton, with the knot in his neck, hollowing out a poplar log to lay Saul's body in and imagining it being borne up to this Shelf which he had selected for himself, while the great shadow of the Pinnacle continued leisurely to space off the hours on the sun-dial of the bottoms which had gone down the river into the great world and brought back a steam-engine to make smoke and roar because the valley was filling up with people.

"I reckon that's just what you'd do yourself though if you lived now instead of then; only it seems different somehow."

Then she forgot the smoke of the mill to fancy in the ancient stillness the cloud puff and sharp report of Saul's long flint-like rifle which now hung above the fireplace on the antlers of the first buck he had shot at the mouth of Wolfpen in 1796. That gun with its bullet-pouch and powder-horn which he had bought from Boone in the autumn of 1785 when they met at Pound Gap, made more human for Cynthia the incorporeal Saul of the poplar log. She tried to imagine Daniel Boone and Saul Pattern sitting under a camp-fire trading stories of their adventures in the Big Sandy country when the Indians still held it.

Near Saul's grave but under smaller markers, lay her Great-Grandfather Barton and her Grandfather Tivis. They could hope to survive only as Saul's son and grandson. She wondered what Barton was like behind the legend of his strength, if he had really lifted those millstones and what he would think of the new engine.

Barton's son Tivis had built in the late 1820's the central body of the Pattern house. It stood there on a gentle rise a half-mile up the Wolfpen Bottom from this Shelf on the site chosen for it by Saul Pattern under the shelter of a wrinkle in the hill.

Julia was still out in her garden below the house.

"It is a good house for a body to live in. And I better be getting back to it instead of just mooning about here among a lot of grave-stones; for Mother will be going in soon soon to start supper and the menfolk will be coming home hungry and after while it will be dark again."

The house Cynthia looked at with the feeling that it was time to return to it, stood in 1885 as a monument to all four generations of Wolfpen Patterns. The sixteen-by-twenty-foot log room which had been Saul's first home, was now the kitchen. Barton had fashioned the stone chimney with the wide log fireplace, and had wrought out of his own anvil the crane which still

held the boiling pots. Tivis built on the dining-room, the sitting-room, the hallway and the up-stairs sleeping-rooms. Three years he labored to build his house, and, except for the glass windows and the wrought-iron nails brought across the hills from Mount Sterling to Wolfpen on the backs of mules, all the materials came out of the place and were fashioned by hand. The poplar logs and the pine were felled in the hollow above the orchard.

Her own father had carried on the tradition of his fathers. When, in 1858, he married the beautiful Julia Stratford from Scioto, he made her a wedding-present of the weather-boarded wing, the weaving-room overlooking the garden which Cynthia had left that afternoon, and the two-story porch with the ornamental banisters across the front of the house, all done by hand on the Wolfpen property.

When it was finished there was no better house in the Big Sandy Valley, outside of Pikeville or Prestonsburg, and it established for the remainder of the century the architecture for that district.

CHAPTER II

THE half distinct mood of foreboding began to leave Cynthia as she went with easy movement down the steep path and up the hollow to the house. It was almost the same as it had always been in early spring, everything alert with the feeling that the new year was coming again to these bottoms. A new mill that sprayed soot and smoke at the mouth of the creek would make no difference in the plowing and the planting that would soon join this spring to all the others that had passed over Wolfpen.

Cynthia crossed the wood-lot into the yard. Julia was still in her garden behind the picket fence moving the earth with her hoe, not working, but enjoying the smell of the soil, planning her beds, feeling the approach of spring and reluctant to go back into the house. Cynthia waved to her. Then seeing the empty water pail on the bench by the kitchen door, she carried it to the well by the pear tree under the sheltering portico of the cellar house. She leaned over the well box to watch the bucket rise with the end of the pole and to hear the jostled overflow splashing against the stones and echoing with a thin resonance as it fell back into the well.

Julia was hanging her eye hoe between two palings by the gate, and looking quietly over the bare ground that was nearly ready for Sparrel's plow. Cynthia went on into the kitchen. A center of fire still smoldered among the gray wood ashes in the open fireplace. She put a shovelful of red flakes into the stove and laid on some dry



"Mix That Up With Your Sour Milk and Soda, Julia."

wood. As the stove grew warm against the cool damp of the April evening, a sense of well-being spread over the kitchen which held in its walls the family intimacies of the years. Cynthia liked this big room in the evenings and its feel of having been long lived in. The center of interest was Barton's fireplace with the old clock on the shelf above it and the smooth worn hickory chairs gathered around it where the family sat in the evening. On the left of the mantel and behind the stove by the window was Sparrel's own corner; a desk and chair, a shelf of books, and the last and best of tools with which he cobbled shoes for the family. On the right of the mantel was Julia's rocking chair and work-basket.

"I wonder what it is about a kitchen that makes folks like to sit there instead of in a regular sitting-room?" She pushed the chairs from her path to the cupboard. "I reckon it's because it smells so good where the bread bakes and there is always a warmth on a cool evening." She took down the wooden mixing bowl from the shelf above the table.

"I'll make the bread," Julia said. "You get the things out of the cellar."

Cynthia brought the sour milk from the cellar and went to the smoke-house for the meat. Coming back with her hands full, she saw Sparrel entering the yard from the barn gate.

"You're early," she called. "Supper's just started."

"You're late. I've got a part of it

right here," he said, holding up a white meal sack with blue stripes on it.

"I can guess what it is."

Sparrel smiled at her the kindly recognition which seemed to begin out of sight and spread slowly into the corners of his brown mustache and beard. He went into the kitchen, reaching both arms around Julia from behind and placing the sack on the table beside her.

"Mix that up with your sour milk and soda, Julia. There's the first meal out of the first steam-mill in these hills."

Julia was pleased and proud and she showed it in her movements as she poured and mixed the meal while Sparrel and Cynthia looked on. But she only said, "The new mill pleased you right well, Sparrel?"

"Just about like I figured. Now I can grind any time and I can rig up a saw and it'll be handy to rip out boards. It'll be a big help on the place."

"I was wondering how a bit of steam can do things like that," Julia said.

"I'll have to show you one day for it's not possible to tell you with just words."

Julia poured the yellow batter into the deep skillet and put it into the oven. Sparrel went out to the wash rock, while Cynthia set the table, thinking of her father and all the things he did that distinguished him in her mind from the other men along the creek and how they always thought his ideas wouldn't work. There was the drying kiln with a fireplace under it so they could dry fruit in cloudy weather and not have to hurry shepherds of drying apples into the house at the first sign of rain. "You'll spike your fruit that way, Sparrel; takes sun to dry apples." Now most of them had kilns. When he built the tanning vat, the bark shed, the lye pits, and used opossum oil to soften the fine leather, they said, "You'll sure spike those hides, Sparrel. If you put 'em in that hole with that ground-up stuff." Now he tanned most of their hides in his vat. And when he built the brick plant down by the clay barrow, they said, "You can't ever make that kind of clay hold together, Sparrel." Now they got brick from his kiln to put in place of the old cats-and-clay chimneys.

She heard the three brothers coming in from the barn to wash for supper.

"Supper is a nice time. The dusk of evening begins to crowd the daylight out of the valley and force it up the mountains, bringing everybody and everything from around the place into the spot where it's warm and the food is cooking."

Cynthia was up and down during the meal, waiting on her father and the boys with buttermilk and fresh hot corn bread while they talked of the big day at the mill, of the men who had come, of the plans for the spring's work in the fields: Abrael still full of excitement, eating too fast; Jesse alert and entering too humorous comment; Jasper reserved and keeping silence; Sparrel in good spirits after his great success; Julia, still slender and beautiful with her smooth black hair parted in the middle and drawn back above her fair skin, crumbling the fresh corn bread into the stewed tomatoes and eating slowly, watching over the table and listening to her men.

"It made a real good run of meal, but I didn't get a very good do on the corn bread," she said, after her manner; but the bread was beautifully moist and flaky between the crisp brown crusts.

"You never made a better pone of corn bread in your whole life, I reckon," Sparrel said.

Julia was full of her pride because he said it, even though she knew he was complimenting her no more than the mill.

After supper while the boys were putting things in order for the night at the barn, and Julia was milking her cow and tending to the crocks in the milk-house over the spring, Cynthia was gathering the dishes and washing them in the big tin pan on the stove and Sparrel sat at his desk in the corner stretching his long legs and writing in his ledger.

"He always puts everything down in his books," Cynthia thought, watching him having his pleasure at the end of the day. "April 10, 1885 - Erected first steam-mill. Warm. Plenty of sun. Poplar Bottom ready to plow." The best part of him seemed to her to belong in that corner under the shelf of books; the old brown Bible with the family names in it; the complete files of the Franklin Almanac beginning with Number XX, 1838. A book of selections for reading aloud stood beside Duyckinck's Complete Shakespeare in one volume of nine hundred and sixty-eight double-column folio pages with a frontispiece of "OTHELLO" relating his adventures." At the mantel end of the shelf was the worn two-volume history of the United States beginning with the discovery of America and ending with the conquest of California and a page picture of San Francisco in 1846.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Record Pilgrimage Held
The largest single pilgrimage to the Holy Land from any country visited Palestine and other places from the Irish Free State. More than 600 started from Dublin. It was the first pilgrimage to sail direct from Ireland to Palestine, Haifa, Palestine, and Cairo, Egypt were also visited by the pilgrims.

Uncommon Sense

By JOHN BLAKE

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Grammar school, high school, college—if you were lucky to attend all three of them you probably think you have "completed your education." You haven't. You have just begun it. The real school begins now that your time of study is over, and you go to work.

Then you begin to find out things for yourself instead of half listening to instructors and skimming through text books.

It is meeting people, talking with them, finding out what they have in their minds that really educates you.

If you are keen and observant, you can learn at least a little something from almost everybody with whom you come into contact.

Among these people you will meet with many surprises and perhaps with many disappointments.

But they are the people with whom you must live and work. You must study them and come to understand them. You must bear in mind that few of them are "gated" as you are; that their ways are new to you, and that their minds work differently.

But you can't bother about that. It is your job to get along with them; to find among them those who will be your friends; to be wary of others who profess friendships that they do not feel, merely for the sake of getting something from you. Treat them as you would like to be treated.

You may differ with them in religion and politics, but you don't need to get messy about such things, and either hurt their feelings or arouse them to anger.

In this world Jew and Gentile, rich and poor, must live and work side by side.

If they have the gift of tolerance, and you have it too, there will be no trouble.

If you think they are bigoted and narrow minded, associate with them as little as possible.

Remember that many people you don't like and never could like have just as much right to life in this world as you have.

Be civil and considerate with them. Overlook such prejudices as you may think they have.

Prejudices have started most of the trouble from which this world has suffered.

If some of those with whom you may be thrown are pompous, or bigoted, or top lofty, still treat them cheerfully when you meet them.

But it is better to make your close associates with people who think as you do.

You probably will be going on a long road. So make your travel as pleasant as it can be made.

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Household Questions

Cut all dead blossoms from garden plants, cultivate soil and water plants frequently during the dry hot weather.

Lemon juice and salt will remove scorch from white clothes. Hang clothes in sun until stain disappears.

Celery, lettuce or almost any vegetable may be refreshed by adding a little lemon juice to some cold water and letting the vegetables stand in it for a few hours.

When lighting a birthday cake always light the candles in the middle first and those on outside last.

Potatoes to be French fried will be more crisp if allowed to stand in cold water for half an hour before frying.

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