

THE RIVER of SKULLS

by George Marsh-

O PENN PUBLISHING CO.

WNU SERVICE

"His Indians came out at East

Main in December-deserted him,'

continued Dessane. "He had hired

them to go in with him to trade for

fur. They came out to get dogs and

supplies but he wanted them to go

SYNOPSIS

Alan Cameron, young trapper, Noel, his Indian partner, and Rough, husky Ungava sled dog, look in vain for the Montagnais trappers' camp in the deso-late Big River country of Northern Can-ada. Their supplies destroyed by wol-verines, they are forced to subsist on wolf meat until their country. verines, they are forced to subsist on wolf meat until they come, amazed, to a substantial log house in the wilderness of Talking River, where they are greeted by a big blond man with a gun. Introducing himself as John McCord, hunter, the big man asks Alan if he dares go with him next year to the River of Skulls beyond the Sinking Lakes, where no man is said to have been before. no man is said to have been before. Heather McCord, the daughter, who had come with him to the wilderness, wins the immediate devotion of Rough. On the eve of Alan's departure for Fort George, McCord suddenly tells him to bring him back some dogs, and to keep his mouth shut to questions. He gives the boy money, warning him not to show it at Fort George, and promises to ex-plain all later. Returned to Fort George, Alan meets McQueen and Slade, Pro-vincial police, with Arsene Rivard, clerk, and Alayie vivel for Portice Desane. and Alan's rival for Berthe Dessane, with whom he is in love. The two police are looking for a guide to the Big River wilderness. Accidentally Alan drops one of McCord's bills.

CHAPTER III—Continued

When the door of the trade-room closed behind Pierre, Noel turned to Alan. "Why you drop dat monee?"

"I've done it, Noel," groaned the other. "I forgot I had that bill in my pouch when I got the tobacco." "Mebbe dey not see eet," com-

forted Noel. "They saw it; they couldn't help it! Pierre didn't see from where he

they saw." "Dey spik togedder; mebbe dey

"If they did see it, how am I going to account for it? They'll learn that I drew no money here last summer-never touched our balance with Gabriel or the Hudson's Bay. Nobody takes money into the bush so they're bound to suspect we met somebody. He trusted me and this is how I repay him."

The return of Pierre from his cabin interrupted the conversation. Later, when the sound of voices outside the trade-house announced the return of Dessane and the strangers from supper, Alan slipped out of a rear door and went to the factor's house. A black-eyed mite of a girl opened the door to his knock and, with a shriek of joy, threw herself at the returned wanderer who caught and tossed her high in his arms.

"Petite Manon! What a great girl she has grown!" he cried, as the delighted child clung to him. "All winter long Alan has missed his playmate and wondered if she ever thought of him far away in the snow."

"Alee, Alee!" laughed the child. "We all miss Alee! Berthe she miss him too, but Arsene, he try to make her not miss him. How is Roughy?"

"Oh, Roughy's fine."

Kissing her on each of her brown cheeks as he held her in his arms. Alan suddenly reddened with selfconsciousness. Smiling in amusement at the man and child, in an inner room stood a girl of eighteen with large dark eyes and a wealth of blue-black hair.

"Welcome, M'sieu le voyageur!" Berthe Dessane ran to him and impulsively grasped his hands. Her straight, thick brows met for an instant in a frown as she noted the leanness of his face. "Oh, but you've not taken care of yourself, Alan, as you promised!" she protested. "You look tired and thin."

He laughed at her solicitude over his leanness. "We haven't starved. Berthe. I'm going to Pierre's for supper."

"Oh, I'm so glad," she said with relief. Then her face suddenly sobered. She sent her little sister protesting from the room, closed | around the room for the dog. the door and returned to the puzzled Cameron.

"Arsene saw you drop some money in the trade-room," she whispered. "I overheard him tell father just now at supper. They have

with the police." Alan Cameron went slowly gray. He themselves to him, and he had that suddenly felt weak and cold. These strangers who had arrived only the day before and of whose presence Duncan McNab, at the Hudson's Bay Company, seemed to have no knowledge; these men who wanted plied Alan. "We have no secrets to go to the head of the river were from each other." government men-Provincial Police! So Rivard had seen him drop that bill! And how was he to explain it?

"Alan, what is the matter?" Berthe demanded, shocked by his stricken face.

"Nothing, nothing at all!" With an effort he regained his self-pos-Rivard," he continued, forcing a pouch two years-got it at Whale from a bear." River when I went with the goose boats that fall."

"I'm glad, Alan. Arsene was so mysterious with father, I wanted you to know because-he-does not

like you." Seizing her by the shoulders Alan searched her dark eyes. "Do you still like me?" he demanded. "Has Arsene changed you?"

The long-lashed lids of her black | eyes winked hard as she smiled back at him. "You know I do-Alan. I'm so glad-you've come back-so early."

"Thanks for what you told me, Berthe! I'm going to Pierre's house -for supper," he said at the door. No, he reassured himself, as he walked away through the wet snow,

Over the hot supper at Pierre's the two boys talked with their host of the winter on the headwaters.

"Pierre," said Alan, at length, as he pushed back his chair and lit his pipe, "you are my friend and will tell me. What did Rivard say when he came back with those strangers to the trade-room?"

A smile lit the broad face of the head voyageur. His small eyes twinkled as he answered: "He pull Slade, here, is a corporal." dose poleece ovair een de corner and whisper. He know Pierre ees your fr'en'."

"So they're Provincial Police from Quebec? Who are they after?" Pierre shrugged. "I do not know; M'sieu' Dessane tell dem you know de headwater country, you and Noel, so dey want you to guide dem." "How did they get here?"

"Yesterday dey come een ovair de shore ice by dog-team. Dey got



"But father says the coast is not clear!"

two half-breed wid dem-bad lookin' feller." "And Gabriel told them I was the

man they wanted." "Ah-hah, dey say dey pay you well to guide dem."

"Well. Pierre. Noel and I are going up the coast for dogs. They'd better get someone else for a guide. I might lose the way."

Back in his own house at the Hudson's Bay settlement, Alan and Noel considered the situation.

Suddenly the great dog lying at their feet lifted his head. His throat swelled in a low rumble as he stalked to the door on stiff legs and sniffed at the crack. The eyes of the two men met as they nodded significantly. Shortly there were low voices outside which were answered by the sniffing dog with a snarl. There was a knock and a voice called:

"Tie up that man-eating husky, will you?"

Alan ordered Rough to lie down in a corner of the room, then opened the door. McQueen and Slade entered, casting furtive glances

"I don't like that dog," said Mc-Queen. "Put him outside, will you! He might jump on us."

"Yes, he might. He's a good judge of men-that dog."

Alan realized that he was going gone to the trade-house to talk pretty far. These men were Provincial Police, with wide powers. Police! The bronzed features of But they had not as yet identified excuse for his actions. He opened the door and let Rough out.

"We want a word with you, alone." said McQueen.

"Noel, here, is my partner," re-

"But you sometimes have a secret together, eh?" broke in Slade. Alan gazed blankly into Slade's leering eyes. Police or no, he didn't like the cut of the jibs of these two men. "Secret together, what do

you mean?" he asked. "Well, my lad, I'm kind of curious to know what a hunter just out session. "That's a good joke on of the bush is doing with a piece of Canadian paper money," said laugh. "I've had that money in my McQueen. "I suppose you got it

> To the horror of the watching Noel, Alan calmly produced his pouch from a pocket and drew out the bill. "You mean this?"

Cameron's cool audacity took Mc-Queen and Slade by surprise. The former hesitated, swallowed, then gave it to you?"

Alan yawned, then calmly surveyed the exasperated McQueen from head to foot. "When you show me what business it is of yours, I may tell you."

McQueen's pale eyes flamed with anger. "We're Provincial Police! Didn't you know that? You'd better keep a civil tongue in your head. young man!" Rivard hadn't poisoned her mind

"Why didn't you tell me who you were?" countered Alan, revelling in the discomfiture of the thick-set offi-"Rivard didn't say a thing about it when I met you, and neither did you! I suppose you've got something to prove it?"

McQueen threw open his outer and inner coats, displaying a badge of German silver on his heavy shirt. "That satisfy you? I'm a sergeant of Provincial Police, Province of Quebec. I thought they'd told you.

"I haven't seen Gabriel since l got in and Rivard said nothing about your being police," avoided Alan, truthfully. He realized the danger of further antagonizing his callers. They had wide powers in the hinterlands when in pursuit of wanted men. They might even force him to accompany them to the headwaters. But remorse over his carelessness flicked him as a whip flicks a harness-sore dog.

"Now will you tell us where you got that money?"

"I got that money from Neil Campbell, at Whale River, two years ago."

With a shrug and a smile of impotency McQueen turned to Slade. "Guess we'd better let these boys get some sleep," he said good-naturedly. "They're tired and cross, need plenty of rest and grub-then we'll have a talk with them."

"You'll have plenty of time to talk," said Alan, winking at the stiff-faced Noel. "After the ice from the upper river passes, the river will run high with snow water for weeks. You'll have plenty of time." "Well, good-night, boys, no hard

feelings! See you later!" Alan stood motionless in the doorway until the two callers disappeared in the gloom, then closed must beat McQueen to Neil Campthe door and turned to Noel.

"I've got to see Neil Campbell before anyone else from Fort George reaches him. As soon as the ice clears the coast we head for Whale River."

CHAPTER IV

The vanguards of the marching spring had reached Fort George and swept on up the East Coast of the great salt bay of the north.

It was late in May and two men waited while the lifting sun and the rain winds from the foot of James Bay warred with the floe-ice that blocked the bleak East Coast. Not yet might a canoe hope to pass the treacherous Cape of the Four Winds and reach Whale River.

And while the anxious Alan fretted to be off. Officers McQueen and Slade made repeated attempts to entangle him in the details of the story of how he happened to have

Canadian money in his possession. It had been bitter news to Alan when Gabriel Dessane told him the details of the mission of the police.

"Alan, I don't blame you for being a little stiff before you knew who they were," said Gabriel, "but the law requires that we give the police any help possible. Their papers order us to furnish guides, supplies, whatever they require. They're after a man who went in to Nichicun by way of Rupert House, last summer-a man charged with

Murder! John McCord with the straight gazing eyes and the big heart-a murderer!

into the interior, this summer, and they were afraid to go. That was his plan-to lose himself in the interior. That was why the police were suspicious when you dropped that bill you got from Neil Campbell," the stunned Alan heard Dessane say, as if from a distance. "They know there's no money used in the back country and they suspected you might have run into him." Alan's level eyes met the friendly gaze of the factor as he replied: "Yes, I understand. But I don't go up river with these police. I've got to get some good dogs from the Huskies. That will take me weeks." "Well, I'll tell Sergeant McQueen

that you must get your dogs from the Eskimos first, if he insists on taking you to the headwaters instead of some of our Indians."

But while the laggard spring touched the East Coast slowly with its magic, to Alan who chafed at the delay, harassed by his problem, there was one great consolation in his enforced idleness, Berthe. Far away, indeed, seemed the man and the girl on the Talking River. when he sat with the small Manon on his knees while he watched the busy fingers of her sister at her sewing. But equally far seemed the day when Alan Cameron, humble trapper of fur, could take this blackeyed girl in his arms and tell her

So the days passed while Alan and Noel made frequent trips to the mouth of the river to watch the condition of the floe-ice along the coast. Then, one day, they learned from Andrew Christie, Hudson's Bay factor, that McQueen had hired a York boat. That meant that the police were going to try to slip up the coast to Whale River to check his

"Noel," said Alan, as the two sat in Alan's cabin, "ice or no ice, we leave for Whale River tonight! We bell or they will know we met John McCord and compel us to take them to the headwaters."

"You t'ink Neil weel tell dem he geeve you de monee?"

"He'd die for me, Noel. I pulled him out of the river here when he was clerk at the Hudson's Bay."

Early that evening Alan walked with Berthe along the high shore of the river near the Revillon Freres post. He would not see her again in weeks for his quest for dogs would take him far north of the Whale.

"It won't be long, now, Berthe, before we can start," he said, watching the breeze whip a plume of her black hair across her face. "But father says the coast is not

clear!" she protested. "It would be very dangerous for you to start in a canoe in all that drifting ice." "I may have to go to Richmond Gulf, Berthe, before I meet the Eskimos. They won't reach Whale River until too late. I've got to find them, you know, if I want to

get good dogs." She laid her hand on his arm. "There's something I want to tell you, Alan. The police are going to Whale. I heard Arsene tell father."

"Yes, I know that. They don't believe I got that money from Neil and are going to find out."

"But I believe you, Alan, and so does father."

"I know you believe me, Berthe. You're a wonderful friend-you don't know what that means to me. And I can't sneak away without saying good-by. I may not see youagain-for weeks."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Forty-Acre "Fort," Inclosed by High Cliffs, Once Was a Cache of Bandits

St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

the present generation, is, accordthieves used as a cache for stolen low with broken necks. horses, cattle and other things. It 60 to 120 feet high all around exis a narrow winding way by which one may reach its top. Across this narrow way there is a tumble-down stone wall erected by unknown hands in the distant past.

Because the high-walled enclosure is well watered by an overflowing spring and heavily vegetated, catdemanded excitedly: "Where up riv- tle and horses could be held here from the skull of this monster and er did you get that money? Who for an indefinite period without fear of discovery.

Nestling in the hills near here, a | Many Indian graves are found infreak of nature, a high-walled cir- side the fort, from which numerous cular fort containing 40 acres, has relics have been taken. Some think been publicized by the Shawnee di- that the artificial wall on one side vision of the United States forest of the grounds was erected by the service to the extent that thousands Indians, and that the 40-acre tract of persons have visited the place or inclosure served as a herding during the last year, writes an ground for deer and other ani-Equality, Ill., correspondent in the mals. When deer wandered through the narrow passageway that leads The fort, a walled-in mystery to to the top, the Indians might close the gap and chase the deer off the ing to tradition, an inclosure that vertical cliffs, causing them to early Nineteenth century horse strike the rock-strewn hillsides be-

Since the forestry service has is almost round in shape and its improved the road that leads to this walls are perpendicular cliffs from | walled-in mystery, it has become a favorite sightseeing spot in the cept on the south side where there | Shawnee unit of the national forest.

The Achyranthes

Achyranthes is known in Hindu mythology. It is a plant indigenous to India. The legend attached to this plant is that Namuchi, a monster, was slain by Indra, one of the gods. The Achyranthes sprung with this plant Indra flogged all other demons out of existence.



Gone Forever They were both writing letters, but suddenly hubby stopped and looked worried.

"What's the matter, dear?" asked his wife.

"Why-er-I had it on the tip of my tongue and now it's gone.'

'Never mind," she said, "just think hard and it's bound to come

"Thinking won't bring this back. It was a stamp," said hubby.

WHY CHANGE?



Don - Don't you ever change your mind about anything?

Joe-Very seldom. I have found I was just as wrong the second after I had changed it as I was be-

Madness? Kulper-What reason have you for marrying my daughter, young

I'm in love with her. The following appeared some years ago in a wedding report: "Among the gifts of the bride to

Fogmore-No reason at all, sir;

Going Down Two cronies met at lunch.

dressing down."

"How's things?" one asked. "How are they? Rotten, old boy. it looks as though my last income

Spring Daze Mrs. Easley-Three moves are

as bad as a fire. Mrs. Harder-Yes, and one visit of the paper hangers beats a cy-

A Substitute Willie-While mother was sleeping the baby got sick licking the paint-

Caller-Off a toy? Willie-No, off mother.

When she thinks he's perfect, she's in love. When she makes up her mind to improve him, she means marriage.

Willing to Wait

The tiny brother of the bride was given a piece of wedding cake to put under his pillow. The following morning his mother said to him, "Well, Bobbie, did you sleep with the wedding cake under your pillow and dream of your future wife?"

"No, mummie," replied the boy. "I ate the cake, 'cause I wanted my wife to be a surprise."

Any Excuse-

One day a neighbor came over and wanted to borrow Grandpa's new rope. Said Grandpa: "No, I've got to use that rope today to tie up some sand."

After the neighbor had left a friend said: "Grandpa, you know you can't tie sand with a rope!" "Remember, my boy," replied the old man, "you can do pretty near anything with a piece of rope if you don't want to lend it." the bridegroom was a gorgeous

> An Operator's Dream "I'm sorry I gave you the wrong

number," said the operator. "Don't mention it," replied the caller, "I'm sure the number you Honestly, if they keep on like this gave me was much better than (coins preferred) for this pattern the number I asked for, only it to The Sewing Circle, Needlecraft

AROUND Items of Interest to the Housewife

As You Iron.—Stack your clothes | Pick Up Sharp Objects.—A vacin piles according to the rooms uum cleaner should not pick up popularity among the ladies. He in which they will be put away. pins, broken glass, tacks or other keeps notes on everyone he meets Then when you are finished the sharp metal pieces, for they may at lunches, dinners and recepclothes are sorted and need not be poke holes in the dust bag, or tions, indexed according to the handled twice.

of cookies is improved and they stay moist longer if one tablespoonful of jam or jelly is added to the cookie dough. Cream Cheese Substitute.-Cot-

Improving Cookies .- The flavor

tage cheese may be used in place of cream cheese if it is pressed through a fine sieve to remove the moisture. Outdoor Fireplace. - Backyard

ily recreation during summer months; steak roasts, corn roasts, atmosphere was lifted 600,000 and marshmallow toasts are only miles above the sun's surface. On a few of the many reasons for the earth there were clear skies building one. Line the Clothes Basket. -

Clothes baskets can be kept clean by lining them with washable material, such as oilcloth, muslin, or heavy paper may be used.

Mealy Baked Potatoes. - To

make baked potatoes dry and mealy, when they are tender put a fork at least twice into each potato to let the steam escape. Try This and Please Hubby .-

A tablespoon of borax in the wa-

ter in which white collars are

washed will take away that ugly yellow tint and make them as white as new. washes all the discarded silken in motion pictures. articles of the household, cuts them into tiny pieces and uses

ing nothing. Slow Oven for Sponge Cake .-Sponge and angel-food cakes should be baked in a slow oven so that the air which has been beaten into them has a chance to expand and lighten the cake before the eggs set and give the cake from.

fan blades.

Strange Facts Movies Catch Fire-Rain

A RAIN of fire, thousands of degrees in temperature, fell upon the surface of the sun. Sprays of flaming atoms shot up fireplaces are easily constructed 150,000 miles from the sun's surand provide a center for fam- face. A terrific explosion took place in which part of the sun's and cloudy skies, sunshine and rain. Even the most sensitive radio waves were not disturbed. Yet one instrument, made by man, recorded this rain of fire.

The spectroheliograph is the instrument invented by scientists which has made possible these amazing photographs of fire-rain. This instrument is essentially a spectroscope with a slit which transmits only one line of the spectrum. A photographic plate is moved across the slit at a rate equal to the sun's apparent rate of passage, the sun's light entering the slit through the object glass or mirror of a telescope. On September 17, 1937, the eye of the solar camera received Soft Pillows. - One housewife and recorded celestial fireworks

These solar pictures were shown for the first time in Philadelphia them to fill pillows. They are at the recent annual meeting of very soft and fluffy, besides cost- the American Philosophical society. They are the work of Dr. Robert R. McMath. The rain of hot fire falling upon the sun, revealed for the first time by improved solar photography, presents the greatest mystery. No one knows why it rains fire on the sun, or where the fire-rain comes Britannica Junior.

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HERE ARE THE SIMPLE RULES

HERE ARE THE SIMPLE RULES

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