

Erskine Dale — Pioneer

By John Fox, Jr.

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CHAPTER XVII—Continued.

Grey was cautious at first, trying out his opponent's increase in skill: "You have made marked improvement."

"Thank you," smiled Erskine. "Your wrist is much stronger."

"Naturally," Grey leaped backward and parried just in time a vicious thrust that was like a dart of lightning.

"Ah! A Frenchman taught you that?"

"A Frenchman taught me all the little I know."

"I wonder if he taught you how to meet this?"

"He did," answered Erskine, parrying easily and with an answering thrust that turned Grey suddenly anxious. Constantly Grey maneuvered to keep his back to the moon, and just as constantly Erskine easily kept him where the light shone fairly on both. Grey began to breathe heavily.

"I think, too," said Erskine, "that my wind is a little better than yours—would you like a short resting spell?"

From the shadow Ephraim chuckled, and Grey snapped:

"Make that black devil—"

"Keep quiet, Ephraim!" broke in Erskine sternly. Again Grey maneuvered for the moon, to no avail, and Erskine gave warning:

"Try that again and I will put that moon in your eyes and keep it there." Grey was getting angry now and was beginning to pant.

"Your wind is short," said Erskine with mock compassion. "I will give you a little breathing-spell presently."

Grey was not wasting his precious breath now and he made no answer.

"Now!" said Erskine sharply, and Grey's blade flew from his hand and lay like a streak of silver on the dewy grass. Grey rushed for it.

"D—n you!" he raged, and wheeled furiously—patience, humor, and caution quite gone—and they fought now in deadly silence. Ephraim saw the British officer appear in the hall and walk unsteadily down the steps as though he were coming down the path, but he dared not open his lips. There was the sound of voices, and it was evident that the game had ended in a quarrel and the players were coming up the river bank toward them.

Erskine heard, but if Grey did he at first gave no sign—he was too much concerned with the death that faced him. Suddenly Erskine knew that Grey had heard, for the fear in his face gave way to a diabolic grin of triumph and he lashed suddenly into defense—if he could protect himself only a little longer! Erskine delayed the finishing stroke too long and he must make it now. Grey gave way step by step—parrying only.

The blades flashed like tiny bits of lightning. Erskine's face, grim and inexorable, brought the sick fear back into Grey's, and Erskine saw his enemy's lips open. He lunged then, his blade went true, sank to the hilt, and Grey's warped soul started on its way with a craven cry for help. Erskine sprang back into the shadows and snatched his pistol from Ephraim's hand:

"Get out of the way now. Tell them I did it."

Once he looked back. He saw Barbara at the hall door with old mammy behind her. With a running leap he vaulted the hedge, and hidden in the bushes, Ephraim heard Firefly's hoofs beating ever more faintly the sandy road.

CHAPTER XVIII

Yorktown broke the British heart, and General Dale, still weak from wounds, went home to Red Oaks. It was not long before, with gentle inquiry, he had placed out the full story of Barbara and Erskine and Dane Grey, and wisely he waited his chance with each phase of the situation. Frankly he told her first of Grey's dark treachery, and the girl listened with horrified silence, for she would as soon have distrusted that beloved father as the heavenly Father in her prayers. She left him when he finished the story and he let her go without another word. All day she was in her room and at sunset she gave him her answer, for she came to him dressed in white, knelt by his chair, and put her head in his lap. And there was a rose in her hair.

"I have never understood about myself and—and that man," she said, "and I never will."

"I do," said the general gently, "and I understand you through my sister who was so like you. Erskine's father was as indignant as Harry is now, and I am trying to act toward you as my father did toward her." The girl pressed her lips to one of his hands.

"I think I'd better tell you the whole story now," said General Dale, and he told of Erskine's father, his wilderness and his wanderings, his marriage, and the capture of his wife and the little son by the Indians, all of which she knew, and the girl wondered why he should be telling her again. The general paused:

"You know Erskine's mother was not killed. He found her." The girl looked up amazed and incredulous.

"Yes," he went on, "the white woman whom he found in the Indian village was his mother."

"Father!" She lifted her head quickly, leaned back with hands caught tight in front of her, looked up into his face—her own crimsoning and paling as she took in the full meaning of it all. Her eyes dropped.

"Then," she said slowly, "that In-

dian girl—Early Morn—is his half-sister. Oh, oh!" A great pity flooded her heart and eyes. "Why didn't Erskine take them away from the Indians?"

"His mother wouldn't leave them." And Barbara understood.

"Poor Erskine!" she whispered, and her tears came. Her father leaned back and for a moment closed his eyes.

"There is more," he said finally. "Erskine's father was the eldest brother—and Red Oaks—"

The girl sprang to her feet, startled, agonized, shamed: "Belongs to Erskine," she finished with her face in her hands. "God pity me," she whispered, "I drove him from his own home."

"No," said the old general with a gentle smile. He was driving the barb deep, but sooner or later it had to be done.

"Look here!" He pulled an old piece of paper from his pocket and handed it to her. Her wide eyes fell upon a rude boyish scrawl and a rude drawing of a buffalo pierced by an arrow:

"It make me laugh. I have no use, I give hole dam plantashun Barbara."

"Oh!" gasped the girl and then—"where is he?"

"Waiting at Williamsburg to get his discharge." She rushed swiftly down the steps, calling:

"Ephraim! Ephraim!"

And ten minutes later the happy, grinning Ephraim, mounted on the thoroughbred, was speeding ahead of a whirlwind of dust with a little scented note in his battered slouch hat:

"You said you would come whenever I wanted you. I want you to come now."

BARBARA.

The girl would not go to bed, and the old general from his window saw her like some white spirit of the night motionless on the porch. And there through the long hours she sat. Once she rose and started down the great path toward the sundial, moving slowly through the flowers and moonlight until she was opposite a giant magnolia. Where the shadow of it touched the light on the grass, she had last seen Grey's white face and scarlet breast. With a shudder she turned back. The night whitened. A catbird started the morning chorus. The dawn came and with it Ephraim. The girl waited where she was. Ephraim took off his battered hat.

"Marise Erskine done gone, Miss Barbary," he said brokenly. "He done gone two days."

The girl said nothing, and there the old general found her still motionless—the torn bits of Erskine's scrawling deed scattered about her feet.

CHAPTER XIX

On the summit of Cumberland gap Erskine Dale faced Firefly to the east and looked his last on the forests that swept unbroken back to the river James. It was all over for him back there and he turned to the wilder depths, those endless leagues of shadowy woodlands, that he would never leave again.

At Boonesborough he learned from the old ferryman that, while the war might be coming to an end in Virginia, it was raging worse than ever in Kentucky. There had been bloody Indian forays, bloody white reprisals, fierce private wars, and even then the whole border was in a flame. Forts had been pushed westward even beyond Lexington, and 1782 had been Kentucky's year of blood. Erskine pushed on, and ever grew his hopelessness. The British had drawn all the savages of the Northwest into the war.

As soon as the snow was off the ground the forays had begun. Horses were stolen, cabins burned, and women and children were carried off captive. The pioneers had been confined to their stockaded forts, and only small bands of riflemen sallied out to patrol the country. Old Jerome Sanders' fort was deserted. Old Jerome had been killed. Twenty-three widows were at Harrodsburg filing the claims of dead husbands, and among them were Polly Conrad and Honor Sanders. The people were expecting an attack in great force from the Indians led by the British. At the Blue Licks there had been a successful ambush by the Indians and the whites had lost half their number, among them many brave men and natural leaders of the settlements. Captain Clark was at the mouth of Licking river and about to set out on an expedition and needed men.

Erskine, sure of a welcome, joined him and again rode forth with Clark through the northern wilderness, and this time a thousand mounted riflemen followed them. Clark had been stirred at last from his lethargy by the tragedy of the Blue Licks and this expedition was one of reprisal and revenge; and it was to be the last. The time was autumn and the corn was ripe. The triumphant savages rested in their villages unsuspecting and unafraid, and Clark led upon them like a whirlwind. Taken by surprise, and startled and dismayed by such evidence of the quick rebirth of power in the beaten whites, the Indians of every village fled at their approach, and Clark put the torch not only to cabin and wigwam but to the fields of standing corn. As winter was coming on, this would be a sad blow, as Clark intended, to the savages.

Erskine had told the big chief of his mother, and every man knew the story and was on guard that she should come to no harm. A captured Shawnee told them that the Shaw-

nees had got word that the whites were coming, and their women and old men had fled or were fleeing, all, except in a village he had just left—he paused and pointed toward the east where a few wisps of smoke were rising. Erskine turned: "Do you know Kahtoo?"

"He is in that village." Erskine hesitated: "And the white woman—Gray Dove?"

"She, too, is there." "And Early Morn?"

"Yes," grunted the savage. "What does he say?" asked Clark. "There is a white woman and her daughter in a village, there," said Erskine, pointing in the direction of the smoke.

Clark's voice was announcing the fact to his men. Hastily he selected twenty. "See that no harm come to them," he cried, and dashed forward. Erskine in advance saw Black Wolf and a few bucks covering the retreat of some fleeing women. They made a feeble resistance of a volley and they too turned to flee. A white woman emerged from a tent and with great dignity stood, peering with dim eyes.

To Clark's amazement Erskine rushed forward and took her in his arms. A moment later Erskine cried:

"My sister, where is she?"

The white woman's trembling lips opened, but before she could answer, a harsh, angry voice broke in laughingly, and Erskine turned to see Black Wolf stalking in, a prisoner between two stalwart woodsmen.

"Early Morn is Black Wolf's squaw. She is gone—" He waved one hand toward the forest.

The insolence of the savage angered Clark, and not understanding what he said, he asked angrily:

"Who is this fellow?"

"He is the husband of my half-sister," answered Erskine gravely.

Clark looked dazed and uncomprehending:

"And that woman?"

"My mother," said Erskine gently. "Good God!" breathed Clark. He turned quickly and waved the open-mouthed woodsmen away, and Erskine and his mother were left alone. A feeble voice called from a tent nearby.

"Old Kahtoo!" said Erskine's mother. "He is dying and he talks of nothing but you—go to him!"

Erskine went. The old man lay trembling with palsy on a buffalo-robe, but the incredible spirit in his wasted body was still burning in his eyes.

"My son," said he, "I knew your voice. I said I should not die until I had seen you again. It is well . . . it is well," he repeated, and wearily his eyes closed. And thus Erskine knew it would be.

CHAPTER XX

That winter Erskine made his clearing on the land that Dave Yandell had picked out for him, and in the center of it threw up a rude log hut in which to house his mother, for his remembrance of her made him believe that she would prefer to live alone. He told his plans to none.

In the early spring, when he brought his mother home, she said that Black Wolf had escaped and gone farther into the wilderness—that Early Morn had gone with him. His mother seemed ill and unhappy. Erskine, not knowing that Barbara was on her way to find him, started on a hunting-trip. In a few days Barbara arrived and found his mother unable to leave her bed, and Lydia Noe sitting beside her. Harry had just been there to say good-bye before going to Virginia.

Barbara was dismayed by Erskine's absence and his mother's look of suffering and extreme weakness, and the touch of her cold fingers. There was no way of reaching her son, she said—he did not know of her illness. Barbara told her of Erskine's giving her his inheritance, and that she had come to return it. Meanwhile Erskine, haunted by his mother's sad face, had turned homeward. To his bewilderment, he found Barbara at his mother's bedside. A glance at their faces told him that death was near. His mother held out her hand to him while still holding Barbara's. As in a dream, he bent over to kiss her, and with a last effort she joined their hands, clasping both. A great peace transformed her face as she slowly looked at Barbara and then up at Erskine. With a sigh her head sank lower, and her lovely dimming eyes passed into the final dark.

Two days later they were married. The woodsmen, old friends of Erskine's, were awed by Barbara's distinctness, and there were none of the rude jests they usually flung back and forth. With hearty handshakes they said good-bye and disappeared into the mighty forest. In the silence that fell, Erskine spoke of the life before them, of its hardships and dangers, and then of the safety and comfort of Virginia. Barbara smiled:

"You choose the wilderness, and your choice is mine. We will leave the same choice . . ." She flushed suddenly and bent her head.

"To those who come after us," finished Erskine.

[THE END.]

Greatly Interested.

"The milkmaids of Jamaica are one of the wonders of the island," reported a prominent Bradford (Pa.) business man, after a stay in Montego Bay, Jamaica, B. W. I. "They can carry large cans of milk from mountain ranges to markets on their heads, and never even move the cans as they sell and pour out the milk. They go upstairs and down, and are so adept that when they start up a flight they can begin to fill their pitchers, measuring the amount by the number of steps taken. I watched them many times with great interest and delight."

RIGHT CARE FOR DAIRY ANIMALS

Sire Should Not Be Allowed to Run With Herd, but Given Chance to Exercise.

IDEAL RATION IS SUGGESTED

Calves Should Remain With Dam for One or Two Days and Be Kept in Dry Clean Stall for Month—Grain for Heifer.

The following suggestions on the care and feeding of dairy cattle are made by the dairy division of Clemson college.

The Herd Sire.

1. Do not let the bull run with the herd.
2. Give plenty of exercise. Free run of open lot is best.
3. Feed little or no silage.
4. Feed no cottonseed meal.
5. Feed legume hays—alfalfa, clover and peavine.
6. A good grain ration of equal parts by weight of ground corn, ground oats and wheat bran is an ideal ration for a herd sire. Feed enough of this ration to keep the animal in good thrifty condition.

Feeding Dairy Calves.

1. Leave with dam one or two days.
2. Feed one quart of the mother's milk three times per day for first week.
3. Increase whole milk after first week from eight to fourteen pounds, depending on size of calf.
4. After four to six weeks, start substituting skim milk. Take one week to make the entire change.
5. Feed twelve to sixteen pounds of milk per day until six months old, if possible.
6. Keep calves in dry, clean stalls until a month old.
7. Start feeding grain and hay when three weeks old.
8. A good grain ration is equal parts by weight of whole corn and whole oats. Feed all grain and hay they



"Admiral Vale," Grand Champion Heifer.

will clean up. It is best to feed grass hay until four months old, as legume hays have a scouring effect on the calf.

9. Feed no silage until six months of age.
10. Keep off of pasture until at least three months of age.
11. Supply plenty of clean drinking water at all times.
12. Provide salt as soon as the calf starts eating hay or grain.
13. Scours are due to overfeeding, irregular feeding, feeding cold milk, sour milk, dirty milk, unsanitary pails.
14. When milk is not available after calf is six weeks old, the following mixture may be used as a milk substitute.

Feeding the Growing Heifer.

1. Feed two to three pounds of grain daily. A good grain ration is equal parts corn, oats, and bran, or two parts corn and one part oats.
2. Feed six to eight pounds of legume hay when not on pasture.
3. Feed all the silage the heifer will clean up. If no silage is available, increase hay and add a pound or more of grain per day to keep in good thrifty growing condition.
4. No pasture alone is sufficient for heifers under one year old.
5. Keep heifers growing continuously.
6. Feed one tablespoonful of ground limestone in grain mixture to heifers under breeding age.

SELECTING BREEDING GILTS

Good Depth of Body in Forequarters Means Vitality and Promptable Brood Sows.

In selecting gilts, besides the usual requirements for a good hog, the deep-bodied animal is the best. Good depth of body in the forequarters means vitality and strong heart and lung action. They are not quite so cheaply fattened as those with a well-sprung rib, but there will be more profit in them. A slightly slabby appearance is proper in gilts if they are to become really profitable as brood sows.

Keep a Poultry Record.

How many folks who raise poultry know what their flocks are actually doing? Only a few—yet it is essential to true success in any business that accurate records be kept, so that results may be checked in several different directions.

LIBERAL FEEDS BEST FOR FATTENING HOGS

Gains in Weight Should Be Made as Rapidly as Possible.

Self-Feeding is Most Satisfactory Method, While Hogging Saves Labor of Gathering Grain and Hauling It to Pigs.

Liberal feeding should be the rule when fattening hogs. To minimize the risk of loss from disease and to cut the labor cost, gains in weight should be made as rapidly as possible. The greatest gains are made in the least time by self-feeding, consequently this method is the most satisfactory for fattening.

These are the views of E. F. Ferrin of University farm, St. Paul, in charge of the swine production section of the animal husbandry division.

"Corn and tankage," says Mr. Ferrin, "are two of the cheapest and best fattening feeds. If each is given separately in a self-feeder, the pigs can se-



Fill Pigs at a Self-Feeder.

lect the amount of tankage they need. Instead of using a heavy allowance of the supplementary feed, the tankage necessary to make a hundred pounds gain is usually less than hand feeding. Hogging down corn is a variation of the self-feeding plan. It saves the labor of gathering the grain and hauling it to the pigs, but as a rule the hogs are not fat enough to market out of the cornfield but need finishing in dry lots.

"Salt is both a desirable addition to the ration and a poison for hogs. Care should be taken to avoid salt poisoning by gradually accustoming the pigs to the compound. When used to it, one of the best methods of supplying salt is to furnish the compressed blocks so commonly bought for cattle.

"To finish necessary to market hogs advantageously depends upon the demands of the market. Just now weights around 250 pounds are most acceptable. Not so much lard is wanted as in former years, consequently shorter feeding periods and less finish is the best plan.

MINIATURE BRIDGE BIG HELP

Seven-Foot Model of Reinforced Concrete Structure Built to Aid Solving Problem.

A model of a reinforced concrete arch bridge seven feet long has been constructed by the bureau of public roads, United States Department of Agriculture, to determine just how masonry arch bridges should be designed when built on a skew. A skew bridge is one in which the roadway is not perpendicular to the abutments, as when a bridge crosses a stream diagonally.

It has been found that the stresses in a skewed bridge are considerably different from those in a bridge of the same span built perpendicular to the abutments, and failures have occurred because this was not taken into account in the design.

The problem is so complicated that engineers of the bureau wish to check up their theoretical conclusions by making a faithful reproduction of a bridge, using similar materials and of such size that it can be tested in the laboratory.

Loads will be applied to the model, and the stresses at various places calculated from measurements of the lengthening and shortening of the concrete surface taken with very precise instruments as well as by other methods.

LIME CORRECTS ACID SOILS

Material Provides Available Calcium and Makes Manures and Fertilizers Effective.

Limestone corrects acidity in sour soils, provides available calcium to crops, makes manures and fertilizers more effective to the soils, favors bacterial growth and thus makes plant food more available, helps control certain plant diseases and insects and in time improves the texture of heavy soils.

ORGANIC MATTER DEFICIENT

Some Old Lands After Years of Cropping Require Application of Ground Limestone.

Some old farming lands after years of cropping have become deficient in organic matter and humus and so deficient in lime that alfalfa will not start and grow successfully until the soil is fertilized and the acidity corrected by the application of lime or ground limestone.

AILING WOMEN OF MIDDLE AGE

Mrs. Linton Tells How Helpful Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound is at This Period

Denver, Colorado.—"I have taken Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound for seven years and I cannot tell you the good it has done me. It is good for young and old and I always keep a bottle of it in the house, for I am at that time of life when it calls for Lydia E. Pinkham's help. My husband saw your ad. in the papers and said 'You have taken everything you can think of, now I want you to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound!' So I let him get it, and I soon felt better, and he told me 'I want you to take about six bottles.' So I did and I keep house and do all my own work and work out by the day and feel fine now. I tell every one about the Vegetable Compound, for so many of my friends thought I would not get well."—Mrs. R. J. LINTON, 1850 West 33d Avenue, Denver, Colorado.



After reading letters like the above, and we are constantly publishing them, why should any woman hesitate to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound if she is in need of help? It brings relief where other medicines fail.

SLOW DEATH

Aches, pains, nervousness, difficulty in urinating, often mean serious disorders. The world's standard remedy for kidney, liver, bladder and uric acid troubles—

LATHROP'S GOLD MEDAL HARPULS

bring quick relief and often ward off deadly diseases. Known as the national remedy of Holland for more than 200 years. All druggists, in three sizes. Look for the name Gold Medal on every box and accept no imitation.



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Removes Itch and Stops Itching
Restores Color and Beauty to Gray and Faded Hair
Sole and Best at Trenton, N. J.
Burgess Chem. Works, Paterson, N. J.

HINDERCORNS

Remove Corns, Calluses, etc. Stop all pain, ensure comfort to the foot, make walking easy. No. 1 by mail or by Druggist. H. L. Co. Chem. Works, Paterson, N. J.

Cuticura Soap

Imparts The Velvet Touch
Soap 25c, Ointment 25 and 50c, Talcum 25c.

Out Getting a Shave.

"Is your beauty doctor in?" asked a young woman at the newspaper office. "I'd like to see her and thank her for her recipes and advice."

"If you've great confidence in her recipes and advice," put in the sport editor, "perhaps you'd better not see her."—Boston Transcript.

FREEDOM FROM LAXATIVES

Discovery by Scientists Has Replaced Them.

Pills and salts give temporary relief from constipation only at the expense of permanent injury, says an eminent medical authority.

Science has found a newer, better way—a means as simple as Nature itself.

In perfect health a natural lubricant keeps the food waste soft and moving. But when constipation exists this natural lubricant is not sufficient. Medical authorities have found that the gentle lubricating action of Nujol most closely resembles that of Nature's own lubricant. As Nujol is not a laxative it cannot gripe. It is in no sense a medicine. And like pure water it is harmless and pleasant.

Nujol is prescribed by physicians; used in leading hospitals. Get a bottle from your druggist today.—Advertisement.

Smooth Running.

"Does gossip improve the mind?" "No. It merely oils the tongue."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

The easiest way to get away from yourself is to have a good laugh with your friends.

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Hair Thin?

You need Q-Ban Hair Tonic to stimulate the hair roots and stop hair falling out—fills bald spots rapidly. Try it! At all good druggists, 75c, or direct from HESSLE-ELLS, Omaha, Nebraska, Tenn.