

Widow Jason's Hogs

By PAUL CAREW
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Widow Jason was the relict of Farmer Jason, and she carried on the farm after his death with even more wisdom than he had shown himself possessed of. She was still on the brighter side of forty, fair to look upon and was at peace with all her neighbors until the one to the east of her sold out and a stranger moved in.

He was a man of middle age named Chisholm, and, being a widower, his sister managed the house for him. If the Widow Jason was one of those who wondered what sort of man he was, she was the first to find it out. Among her live stock that year were a dozen hogs, and it was the fault of her hired man that there were holes in the fences through which they made their way into the potato field of the new neighbor. She had just finished her breakfast one morning when Chisholm was announced. He had the courtesy to lift his hat and give his name, but he also had the bluntness to add:

"Madam, your internal hogs have rooted up half an acre of potatoes for me, and if you can't manage to keep 'em home I'll shoot every one of 'em!" She looked at him and saw that he was above the ordinary and felt that had she been introduced in the conventional way she would have been pleased to make his acquaintance. But his rude greeting angered her, and, being a woman with a mind of her own, she at once replied:

"I can pay for all the potatoes on your farm, and if you come here to threaten me you'll find a woman who don't scare."

"Well, you keep your hogs at home." "And you keep yourself in the same place."

That was the first tilt. The fences were mended and the hogs were in despair when a high wind blew a gate open, and the drove spent the night in the same potato field. Next morning Chisholm drove ten of them home and said to Widow Jason:

"Madam, there are dead hogs belonging to you in my field. Will you have them removed or shall I bury them?" "You killed them, did you?" she asked.

"I did. I told you I would, and I did."

"Then I'll have the law on you." "Go ahead."

She went to law, and there was a suit, and she was ingloriously beaten.



JOSH FOUND HIMSELF A LICKED MAN.

Womanlike she felt pretty bitter over it, but at the same time she had to give Mr. Chisholm credit for lack of any bitterness. He stated his case in the mildest manner and even spoke highly of her as a neighbor. When she returned home after the lawsuit, she said to her hired man:

"Josh, if that man Chisholm comes on my land again I want you to throw him off."

"Yes'm, I'll do it," replied the sturdy Josh.

It wasn't a fortnight before Chisholm came. He was on his way to the house when Josh headed him off and ordered him back. He refused to go, and Josh laid hold of him to do the throwing act, but found himself a licked man in about three minutes. While he sat on the ground with a handful of grass to his bleeding nose the victor passed on to the woman, who had witnessed the fracas from the front steps. Lifting his hat, he said:

"Madam, those hogs of yours have been at it again—this time in my cornfield—and I've had to kill another."

"Have you dared to kill another of my hogs?" she demanded as her cheeks flamed and her eyes flashed.

"I have. Shall I bury him?"

"Sir, you are a scoundrel!"

"And you are a charming widow!"

She drove to town at once to see her lawyer. There was \$10 in the case for him, win or lose, and he advised her to sue. She sued and got beaten again. The defendant referred to her in the highest terms, but he also proved that her fences were out of repair. The lawyer saw \$10 more in it, win or lose, and advised Josh to prosecute for assault and battery. Josh brought his swollen nose and black eye into court and was beaten by several lengths. He had provoked the encounter, and if he had got the worst of it the law couldn't help him.

It was a month before anything further happened. The fences around the

hog lot were thoroughly repaired, and for four weeks the porkers had to make the best of their sad lot. Then Josh left the bars down one night, and as the widow was getting breakfast she heard the crack of a rifle. Half an hour later Mr. Chisholm appeared to say:

"Good morning, Mrs. Jason. Those wretched hogs of yours rooted up my garden last night, and this morning I killed another of them. If you want another lawsuit, I'll drive you to town in my own buggy."

"And you—you've shot another?" she gasped.

"I have."

"Then I'd like to shoot you! You are the meanest man in the state of Ohio!"

"Yes'm," he replied, with a bow as he turned away.

Widow Jason drove to town to consult her lawyer again. There was \$10 in it for him, win or lose, but this time Mr. Chisholm was arrested for malicious persecution. In his testimony he referred to the plaintiff as "that lady" and exhibited no animus whatever, but he also proved that he was the one persecuted. The widow's hogs would not let him alone. She was beaten again, and this time a stout pen was built, and the hogs were shut up. The farmers had of course taken sides. Some contended that Chisholm had exhibited a mean and unneighborly spirit and others that the widow had been derelict in not mending her fences, and there was much talk and discussion. It occurred now and then that the two principals met on the highway or at the crossroads meeting house, but while Chisholm lifted his hat and bowed as if there was nothing on his mind the widow, except for her blazing eyes, seemed carved of stone.

That pen held the hogs for a long six weeks, but hogs have their weak points, and patience and perseverance will seek them out. The hot sun warped a board and made an opening, and the industrious swine enlarged it until one night they all passed out and headed straight for the next farm. They fetched up among the cabbages, pumpkins, squashes, melons and carrots, and during the long hours of darkness they ran riot. They were missed from the pen early next morning, and the widow sat down on the doorstep and cried. She cried because she was vexed, and she cried because she was a woman. Every minute she expected to hear the crack of Chisholm's rifle, and she fully realized that any further appeal to the law would be wasted. She was vexed at the hogs, at Josh and at Chisholm. Her tears were still falling when the new neighbor stood before her and bowed and said:

"Mrs. Jason, those blamed hogs of yours damaged me a hundred dollars' worth last night."

"And how many more have you killed?" she asked.

"None. I've just driven 'em home."

"But why—why?"

"Because I see how it is. I must either kill off your whole drove or build a pen myself. I shall come over tonight to talk to you about it."

He appeared an hour after supper, and it was 11 o'clock before he went home. Even then the "talk" was not finished. As a matter of fact it required a great many evenings and was only concluded one winter's night when she laid her head on his shoulder and said:

"If you are really sure that you love me, then the farm, the hogs and I are yours, and we'll be married New Year's day."

An autograph collector of Philadelphia has in his possession the following letter written by James Fenimore Cooper to his publishers in 1831:

"I hope you will be wrong in anticipating a bad reception for 'The Bravo.' I cannot tell you much of its reception in Europe, though Gosselin says it is very decidedly successful in France. America is, of all countries, one of the least favorable to works of the imagination. In Europe or, rather, in England, where there has existed a necessity of accounting for some success in the very teeth of their prejudices and wishes, it has been the fashion to say that no writer ever enjoyed so favorable an opportunity as I because I am an American and a sailor. As to the sailor part of the business, it is grossly absurd, for what advantage has an American sailor over any other? They know the falsehood of what they say in this respect, for I can get \$3,000 for a nautical tale that shall celebrate English skill tomorrow. For myself, I can write two European stories easier than I can write one American. Why, Europe itself is a romance, while all America is a matter of fact, humdrum, common sense region from Quaddy to Cape Florida."

German Students and Beer. To speak of the pleasures of the German student and make no mention of beer would be like the play of "Hamlet" with the part of the melancholy Dane left out. As the student strolls about the country or the city, in the music halls and theaters, at his social gatherings of all kinds, at dinner or at supper, he steadily drinks his beer. The code of health drinking and the etiquette of the drinking bout are complicated and most punctually observed.

All university functions include a great drinking bout—jubilees of renowned professors, club anniversaries, ceremonies in honor of a retiring professor. Any and every ceremony is incomplete without the formal kneipe with toasts. He has attempted to throw a poetical glamour around beer, to invest it with the charm of tradition and to hallow it with old associations of college days.

In Europe the American prefers to drink water, and this is a great mystery to the Germans, who cannot possibly understand how they can prefer this to beer.—Detroit Free Press.

NEGRO SOCIETIES.

THE SOUTHERN COLORED MAN'S LEAGUE OF POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE.

Wonderfully Named Organizations to Provide For Members' Sick Benefits and Funeral Expenses—How They Flourish in Charleston.

The southern negro's love of pomp and circumstance is nowhere exemplified more forcibly than in the manner in which he multiplies his charitable organizations. Inordinately fond of company, he has few societies founded with the sole view of promoting social enjoyment. For the most part, whatever foundations he makes have a semireligious trend, the dues entitling members to sick benefits and funeral expenses. There is usually an elaborate regalia and an intricate ritual. Not a few negroes of a southern city, such as Charleston, belong to no less than a score of these orders, the names of which are oftentimes curiously and wonderfully made. What, for instance, would the ordinary patron of secret organizations think of possessing membership in the Sons and Daughters of Charity or in the Sons and Daughters of I Will Arise?

The sons and daughters idea is worked to the limit of endurance. There is scarcely a well known name in Biblical history that is not tacked on to it. There are in Charleston alone no less than seventy-five of these societies with charters from the state of South Carolina, and how many there are that have no legal status no man may say with confidence.

Dues are paid weekly, and, strange as it may seem when the great poverty of the negro of the south is considered, the arrears list is a brief one indeed. Of course the charges are small, usually about 25 cents a month, but when it is remembered that many individuals belong to six or eight or even more orders it is little short of marvelous how the funds necessary to meet the demands of the collectors are found, and yet it is so deep a disgrace to be expelled that instances of the kind are very rare. To hold membership in a number of societies is regarded as a badge of honor.

Meetings are held monthly in private residences, in public halls or, more frequently still, in churches. These gatherings begin at the fashionable hour of 10 p. m. and continue not infrequently throughout the night. Refreshments are to be had for a small consideration, and as these are for the most part of a liquid nature the sons and daughters are prone to be conspicuous by their absence from their several places of employment next morning. Often the police have to interfere to restore that harmony in which brothers and sisters should ever dwell together.

Among the societies in Charleston are the Sons and Daughters of the Pilgrims, the Sons and Daughters of the Twelve Disciples, the Sons and Daughters of the Bearer of the Cross, the Sons and Daughters of the Evening Star, the Sons and Daughters of the Seventh Star, the Sons and Daughters of the Celestial Travelers, the Sons and Daughters of the Good Samaritan, the Sons and Daughters of the East, the Sons and Daughters of Lazarus, the Sons and Daughters of Christian Love, and there might be added to these fully twoscore of others. The devotion of the negroes to these organizations and their loyalty to their fellow members are absolute.

The funeral of a colored man or woman who holds membership in a half dozen of these orders is a spectacle worth witnessing. Occasionally bitter feuds arise between rival societies for the possession of a corpse, for the negro's love of a funeral is not second even to his love of melons. The ceremonies usually begin the night before the actual interment is to take place. There are sermons, prayers and personal experiences interspersed with wild bursts of incoherent melody, which arouses religious fervor to fever height. Men and women faint in the course of the exercises, many others fall into trances and talk of visions of their dead friends enthroned in glory. The ceremonies culminate in a formal procession. It is forming for an hour before the residence of the late lamented son or daughter. Negroes from the uttermost parts of the city gather in the streets. The occasion is a festive one. They run and shout and caper. The members of the organizations to which the dead person belonged stand in solemn order, clad in elaborate uniforms and bearing the banners and other insignia of their respective orders, and when the cortege finally moves, wending its way at times through miles of the city's streets, it is followed by a mad rush of men, women and children, who block the thoroughfares, and traffic for the time being has to be suspended. The hope of such a funeral is the inspiration of many a negro's whole life. He slaves and deprives himself of actual necessities for years to meet the demands of the collectors of the societies in order that he may go to his last resting place in the midst of such strangely weird pageantry.—Charleston Letter in New York Tribune.

Hymns at \$500 a Yard. A musical composer once said to Mr. Sankey with more frankness than courtesy that he could write such tunes as those of the "Gospel Hymnbook" by the yard if he were willing to come down to it. Mr. Sankey quietly replied, "Well, sir, all I have to say is that I am willing to pay five hundred dollars a yard, either to you or to anybody else, for all the tunes you can bring me like those in our 'Gospel Hymnbook.'"—Ladies' Home Journal.

Why He Didn't Jump.

Here is one that a young man who knows a good story when he hears it heard one railroad man tell another in a depot up the line the other day: "We picked up a new Irishman somewhere up country an' set him to work brak'n' on a construction train at 3 cents a mile for wages. One day when him an' me was on the train she got away on one of them mountain grades, an' the first thing we knowed she was fly'n' down the track at about ninety miles an hour, with nothin' in sight but the ditch an' the happy hunt'n' grounds, when we came to the end. I twisted 'em down as hard as I could all along the tops, an' then of a sudden I see Mike crawl'n' along toward the end of one of the cars on all fours, with his face the color of milk. I thought he was gettin' ready to jump, an' I see his finish if he did."

"Mike," I says, "for heaven's sake don't jump!"

"He clamps his fingers on the runnin' board to give him a chance to turn round an' look'n' at me contemptuous, answers:

"Jump, is it? Do yez think I'd be after jump'n' an' me makin' money as fast as I am?"—Portland Oregonian.

A Boston Translation.

Little Emerson—Mamma, I find no marginal note in elucidation of this expression, which I observe frequently to occur in my volume of "Fairy Tale Classics," "With bated breath." What is the proper interpretation of the phrase?

Mamma—"With bated breath," my son, commonly occurs in fairy tales. Your father often returns from piscatorial excursions with bated breath. The phrase in such instances, however, has no significance as applying to the bait employed to allure the fish, but is merely an elastic term of dubious meaning and suspicious origin, utilized, as I have already intimated, simply because of the sanction which it has gained by customary usage in fairy tales generally. Do you comprehend, Emerson?

Little Emerson—Perfectly, mamma.—Judge.

Coincidences of Dates.

Attention has often been called to the curious fact of the date Sept. 3 figuring so largely in the history of Oliver Cromwell. That very dominating man was born on Sept. 3, 1599; he won the battle of Dunbar Sept. 3, 1650; that of Worcester Sept. 3, 1651, and he died Sept. 3, 1658. But we have lately come across some coincidences of dates which, so far as we know, have not been noticed before. The number 88 seems to have had fatal influence on the Stuarts. Robert II., the first Stuart king, died in 1388; James II. was beheaded in Fotheringhay, 1588 (new style); James VII. (II. of England) was dethroned in 1688; Bonny Prince Charlie died in Rome, 1788, and with him died the last hopes of the Jacobites.

Feline Depravity.

"Oh, Horace," wailed his young wife, "I have just found out that Ajax, our beautiful Angora cat, has been leading a double life!"

"That makes eighteen, I suppose," said Horace. "What has he been doing?"

"You know I let him out every morning, because he seems to want to go and play out of doors. Well, I have discovered that he goes over to the Robinsons and lets them feed him and pet him."—Chicago Tribune.

The Betel Nut.

Betel nuts, the produce of the areca palm, are chiefly used as a masticatory by the natives of the east. They are too small to be applied to many ornamental uses, but are occasionally employed by the turner and wrought into beads for bracelets, small rosary cases and other little fancy articles. In the Museum of Economic Botany at Kew there is a walking stick made of these nuts, sliced, mounted or supported on an iron center.

A Zoo Discussion.

"You know," said the orang outang, "that man is descended from a monkey."

"Yes," answered the chimpanzee, "and his descent has been very great. But let us set it down to his credit that he tries to rise again. Every now and then you hear of some man who is doing his best to make a monkey of himself."—Washington Star.

Quick Work.

"That editor is terribly slow at reading manuscript."

"Think so? Why, I know the time he went through twelve stories in less than a minute."

"Gracious! When was that?"

"When the elevator broke."—Philadelphia Press.

Her Explanation.

"Do you mean to say such a physical wreck as he is give you that black eye?" asked the magistrate.

"Sure, your honor, he wasn't a physical wreck till after he gave me the black eye," replied the complaining wife.—Exchange.

Quite Technical.

"The reason he is so irritable is because he is teething," explained the fond mother.

"Indeed!" remarked Mr. Oldbatch, wishing to appear learned. "And when will it be hairy?"—St. Louis Republic.

Didn't Get the Credit.

"I was sorry I sent Ellen such an expensive wedding present."

"Why were you?"

"Why, she went and placed them on exhibition without the donor's cards."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

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