THE TROLLEY RABBIT

AN EPISODE IN WOODS AND WATER EXPLOITS

By Ernest McGaffey

Author of Poems of Gun and Rod, Etc.

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There's more than a dozen ways of shooting rabbits, but the boys generally wait until there's snow on the ground. Of course a man runs across rabbits when he's quail shooting, hunting for ruffed grouse and prairie chickens, but the real time to shoot them is along about from November until say the middle of December. Then they are foraging around among the corn shocks and fattening up on different stuff, and the fat just lays in wads all up and down their backs, and their kidneys are simply smothered in tallow. Fact! You take a corn-fed rabbit in the middle of November, and he's as fat as a seal, and tender as chicken.

But that isn't what I started to tell about. The Nimrod Gun and Rod club was composed of about as crafty a bunch of jokers as ever sat up nights trying to "put it over" some unsuspecting devotee of the rod and gun. It was about an even bet that they would rather fool some fellow into doing something ridiculous than to make the record "bag" for ducks along the lakes. "Big Jack" Mullanphy was willing at any time to spend $50 for something that could take in a veteran "sport." And every winter, after the shooting had closed and the boys had lots of idle time on their hands, "Big Jack" always was working on some racket that was calculated to cover some hunter with confusion and cause him to set up quantities of cigars, or buy a supper for the members of the club.

And so this particular winter "Jack" had fixed up the slickest scheme you ever heard of. The club's headquarters were at a farmhouse about a quarter of a mile from the lake, and we used to go out there as soon as there was a good snow on the ground and take some beagles along and shake the country up for rabbits. Back of the sitting-room of the farmhouse was the kitchen, and it was built high up from the ground and boarded underneath. Back of the kitchen was the orchard, and it was on a side hill, with the trees pretty low to the ground; an old orchard pretty well gone to seed.

"Big Jack," who was a clever mechanic, and an electrician besides, went out there and built a little trolley track in the orchard that ran up and down hill and around among the trees, and that worked as slick as one of these little tracks that they use to send cash back and forth on in the big stores. Well, sir, he next shot a rabbit and got it mounted all stretched out, and then he fixes the rabbit on the track and gets the wires and pulleys arranged so that he could keep the rabbit on a steady swing around this track, up and down, in and out, by sitting under the kitchen and working the dingus from down there.

Well, say, now! Didn't that tame some of the real "wise" boys? I guess yes! Every Saturday night when we'd go out to the lake we'd take some hunter along, and after the boys would get to playing "cinch" in the sitting-room, some fellow would come in sort of excited and say: "Where's my gun?" and commence to fumble around the gun rack. The fellows who were in the deal would say: "What do you want with your gun?"

Then the Nimrod would say: "There's a rabbit out in the orchard."

By a little smooth work we could generally get the new arrival to dig out into the night with the fell intent of destroying the rabbit; and if he was a real hunter, even he would usually take a couple of shots at the trolley rabbit before he would "catch on" to the joke. But if he was a green hand he would stand there and bang away for a dozen shots. The boys always went along and fed shells to him and encouraged him to shoot, and after he had finally "tumbled" to the hoax, it was worth a supper next week in town.

One time we got word from "Jack" that he had a fresh victim in tow who would be on hand the next Saturday night at the depot, and for us all to be sure to come down and meet Wilbur. This Wilbur was simply sagging in his side-pockets with money, and it was figured that he would do the handsome thing by the boys when we gave him an interview with our rabbit. So a full attendance was there at the depot, and we had our four beagles along to give the meet the appearance of the genuine thing. Wilbur was there all right, and he seemed to be the most promising thing in the way of a "tenderfoot" that had been sprung in a long time.

He was just breaking into the shooting game, and "Big Jack" was helping him out and lending him books and going out shooting clay pigeons with him, and had put up his name for membership, and we all gave him the "glad hand" and prepared to hand it to him plenty when we got out to the lake.

All the way out we sat in the "smoker," and this Wilbur won about a dollar and 80 cents playing "cinch" with three of us. He was green enough hunting, but he seemed to know how to play "cinch" all right. We talked a lot about the rabbit shooting around the lake, but we didn't tip off our game by any remarks about rabbits in the orchard. Then "Big Jack says: "We'll make up a purse of five dollars for the fellow that gets the first rabbit," and everyone agreed to it and chipped in 50 cents apiece.

When we got to the station Old Man Carmody met us, and when we asked him about rabbits the old man says: "Slathers of 'em. I see 'em playin' 'round the yard on moonlight nights, and they're gnawin' at the old cabbages left in the garden an' chasin' each other in the orchard. You'll have fine sport to-morrow; there hasn't been a gun fired at 'em yet."

Well, of course this was a grand "steer" for Wilbur, and gave him an idea that there were rabbits by the million in the country, and he wanted to get his gun out of the case and stick in a couple of shells in case we saw any rabbits on the way over. But Old Man Carmody put a stopper on that by declaring that the team wouldn't stand for shooting from the wagon, and so we coaxed Wilbur to keep his artillery under cover until later.

WHY DON'T YOU FIRE?

We arrived at the house and Wilbur was introduced all around and we had an elegant supper waiting for us. We showed our prospective member the gun-racks, the mounted ducks, jack-snipe, woodcock, ruffed grouse, prairie chickens and other specimens in the front room, which was our "show room," and then we got together in the sitting-room for another session of "cinch." Well, sir, this here Wilbur was a lucky devil at "cinch." Seems as if he got the cards, and he knew how to play 'em. He kept winning steady, and by and by after he was about three dollars ahead "Buck" Swearingen went out doors and after padoling around in the light snow that lay on the ground, he comes in kind of sly and says: "Where'd I put my gun?"

This Wilbur fellow he'd just won a game, and "Big Jack" was shuffling the cards, and "Jack" speaks up and says: "What's up; is that old owl out there, 'Buck?'"

"No," says "Buck," "but I saw a rabbit running around in the orchard, and I thought I'd run in and nail him. I win the five if I get him, don't I?"

"Oh, no!" says "Big Jack;" "that's for a fair start in the morning, every fellow in the timber and the dogs loose. Go ahead and get him, though. Hold on, though," says "Jack," as a thought seemed to strike him, "what's the matter with our new member taking first crack at him?"

"All right," says "Buck," "we'll both go." So "Buck" and this Wilbur boy they snakes their breech-loaders out of the cases and out they put for the rabbit. "Big Jack" ducks out of the side door and in under the kitchen and away goes the rabbit.

"There he goes," whispers "Buck," as the rabbit sails away as slick as a cash basket, and goes down the hill. "Give it to him, soak him."

So this Wilbur fellow ups with his gun and aims for the rabbit, and then he drops his gun and takes a peek, and then he raises his gun, and still he don't shoot.

"Shoot, shoot," says "Buck;" "he'll get clear away if you don't hurry. What ye waitin' for?" says "Buck."

"I'm waitin' for some one to turn the power off," says this here Wilbur fellow. "I ain't shootin' any mechanical rabbits unless I get a crack at 'em settin'."

And "Big Jack" paid for that supper.

GOOD THINGS FOR THE EASTER TABLE

SUITABLE DECORATIONS AND SEASONABLE DISHES.

CRISP freshness, daintiness and brightness should be the dominating features of Easter dinners, luncheons or whatever special feast marks the passing from the meager regime of Lent to the gladsome time of rich plentifulness. Special flowers, fruits and vegetables at this season make it feasible to mark the change in a pecuniary attractive manner.

Pussy willows will give the right touch if one lives where they can be got so late in the season. The blossoms of fruit trees—apples, peaches, pears and plums—make extremely beautiful Easter decorations, and the florists anticipate nature sufficiently to provide them at this time. Equally beautiful are flowering shrubs, such as lilac, syringa, japonica and the like, which the accommodating florist also has in stock now. The most seasonable of flowers for decoration, and, therefore, the most desirable, are the bulbous plants like the narcissus, the daffodil, the jonquil, the fresia, the hyacinth, the iris, and, above all, the lily. Beautiful as are pure white lilies, many persons prefer not to use them because they have become so hackneyed. There is a turning to colored lilies of various sizes this season; flaming red ones, yellow ones and some that are striped or spotted. There is one thing to be remembered about the use of lilies—one must necessarily have a somewhat formal arrangement if they are used alone. This may be obviated to a certain extent by using them in combination with some other seasonable flower.

A Daffodil Luncheon.

A daffodil luncheon makes one feel as if the room were flooded with sunlight, and the table can be made to look like a veritable posy garden. Natural flowers are used for the center and corner baskets, with a bit of green asparagus or maidenhair fern. The candle shades may be fashioned in the form of the flower from yellow crepe paper, and little boxes for bonbons may be had to match. Yellow may be the predominating color of the food, too, if desired. The following menu includes much yellow and is appropriate for an Easter dinner:

Caviare Canapes, Garnished with Lemon.
Carrot Soup.
Broiled Shad, with Bechamel Yellow Sauce.
Filets of Chicken.
Glazed Sweet Potatoes.
Boiled Asparagus.
Lettuce Salad with Cheese Eggs.
Orange Baskets Filled with Jelly.
Pineapple. Cheese. Crackers.
Coffee.

Some of the prettiest of the new china is particularly nice for a yellow luncheon or dinner, having a narrow gold border as a foundation for a slight outline border of another color.

Details of the Menu.

To make caviare canapes take some small slices of bread that have been previously toasted and thoroughly buttered and spread them with caviare. Serve with a bit of cress and with lemon cut in fanciful designs.

Filets of Chicken.—Put the breasts and first and second joints of two young chickens in a saucepan and cover with water in which is an onion. When the chicken is soft take it from the stock. Also remove the onion. Thicken the stock with three tablespoonfuls of butter rubbed up with flour, and as soon as this comes to a boil add a half cup of cream and the yolks of three eggs. Season and pour over the chicken.

Cheese eggs are made by mixing a cup of grated cheese with a scant tablespoonful of flour, a little salt and a dash of cayenne pepper with the beaten whites of two eggs, then shaping them into the form of eggs, rolling in fine crumbs and frying in butter. Serve on a folded napkin.

Orange Baskets Filled with Jelly.—With a sharp pointed knife cut out a piece from each side of the top half of an orange, so as to leave a strip for the handle to the lower half, thus forming a basket. The pulp can easily be removed. Make jelly from this and fill the baskets, or some other flavoring of jelly may be used if preferred.

A lily luncheon may be carried out in green and white. It may be better to use a pot of white hyacinths or something of that sort for a centerpiece, as lilies are too tall to be managed well for the purpose. The lilies may then be made to radiate from this centerpiece. This is especially pretty for a round table. There is table linen that comes with a handsome lily design, and this may appropriately be used for the lily luncheon if one uses a cloth at all. Little baskets filled with painted eggs make a pleasing novelty. The menu given is suggestive and can be abridged or added to or modified according to taste and circumstances:

Spring Soup.
Shad Roe with White Sauce.
Cucumber Strips.
Broiled Birds on Toast.
Creamed Potatoes and Peas.
Mint Sorbet.
Mixed Salad.
Pistachio Ice Cream. White Cake.
Fruit. Coffee.

Small Birds.—Draw and wipe the birds, taking the skin from the neck. Truss the birds carefully, and dip them first in melted butter, then in crisp, fine bread crumbs and chopped parsley. Place the birds on their backs and bake them in a hot oven for about five minutes. Serve on toast, plentifully garnished with parsley.

A Sorbet and a Salad.

Mint Sorbet.—Bruise mint leaves, pour over them boiling water and let stand ten or 15 minutes. Add a cup of sugar and strain. When cool add the juice of two lemons and freeze. Serve in glasses with sprigs of fresh mint.

Mixed Salad.—Use lettuce as a foundation, or romaine will do, and add to it almost any kind of green vegetables liked. French beans and peas make a good addition. French dressing is used.

Pistachio Ice Cream.—Mix four cups of milk, one of cream, 1¼ of sugar and a pinch of salt with a junket tablet dissolved in cold water, and set away for several hours. Add a quarter of a cup of finely chopped pistachio nuts, a little green coloring and freeze.

SUGGESTION FOR CENTER-PIECE FOR EASTER DINNER.

IN VOGUE

Skirts are both longer and narrower than last year.

In new silks conventional patterns are the most prevalent.

The pretty and practical jumper dress still holds its own.

Charming are new linen collars with broad or narrow stripes on white or ecru.

Many early hats are of net with silk bound rims.

A big bow is the most usual adornment of the pioneer silk hat.

Exit the Plaits.

The plaited skirt is rapidly disappearing. New designs are cut circular and circularly gored. As for the trimming, the bias folds are disappearing with the plaits and circular folds are taking their place. This change is most remarked in the walking costume, which for so many seasons has been modeled on the plaited style with little or no variation other than in the grouping of the plaits and the width of the bias bands. Skirts are longer, too, and walking length now barely escapes the floor, while for a costume inclined at all to formality the skirt is long and trailing.

Snowdrop Oddity.

Some of the early hats are very charming in their combination of cheerfulness and warmth. For instance, there is a smart little three-cornered arrangement in cream-colored cloth, with a knot of brown velvet at one side, holding in place a bunch of snowdrops, violets and a high osprey of shaded hyacinth and jonquil.

A large picture hat in Parma violet silk is crowded all over the crown with white and colored violets tied with silver ribbon, and catching up at one side a cluster of marabout in shades of cream and mauve.

Then there is a little round toque with a crown of snowdrops put closely together, with about a quarter-inch of their stems wired erect beneath, so that they have almost the appearance of growing, and have none of the stiffness which spoils a good many flower toques.

Shirt Waist Tendencies.

With the return of the shirt waist fastened in front jeweled studs have revived in interest. A shirt waist set now consists of four of these studs, for the central box plait and cuff buttons, as a jeweled safety pin to fasten the linen collar.

The finer white waist fastening in back is closed preferably with little white crochet buttons and buttons of fine white braid.

To give color to the jabot worn with so many waists it is a Parisian idea to head the jabot with a little bow of inch-wide satin ribbon, an end of this ribbon running down the center of the jabot to the waist line.

Most of the lingerie waists are becomingly finished by a soft ruche edging the top of the high-boned collar, and also finishing the sleeves.

Jaunty Hoods.

The jaunty-looking hoods lined with bright-colored silks that are attached to the coat backs of the new spring suits are a feature that will be most popular this year. A costume with this new "touch" that has been much admired in one of the shops is a dainty white serge, with pleated skirt, the bottom trimmed with one fold and the jacket, in a semi-fitted half-length model, had the hood lined with pale blue.

HIS WHEAT WENT 22 BUSHELS TO THE ACRE.

HE REALIZED $18 PER ACRE FROM IT, WHILE OATS GAVE HIM $17 AN ACRE.

Moose Jaw, Sask., Nov. 18th, 1907. Writing from Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Mr. S. K. Rathwall says:

"I have much pleasure in saying that on my farm this year I had 500 acres in wheat, and 120 acres in oats. My wheat averaged about 22 bushels per acre, and I had 200 acres cut before the frost, which I sold at 85 cents per bushel, thus realizing on that wheat $18.00 per acre, not counting cost of twine, seed and labor. With regard to the other 300 acres of wheat, it got touched with frost but is worth 60 cents per bushel. It will net me $13.00 per acre, but I do not intend to sell it at that price, as I can make more money by feeding it to hogs.

"My oats turned out about 50 bushels to the acre, and at 35 cents per bushel will give me $17.00 to the acre, not counting seed, twine and labor.

"On account of the late spring, a percentage of the grain was touched with frost, but on account of good prices, farmers will realize a fair profit on their farms even this year. We are as usual up against a shortage of cars to get our grain removed."

PROBABLY HE WAS.

Doctor—Can't you put your tongue out a little further, Mrs. Mugg?

Mrs. Mugg—Are you one of those people, doctor, who believe that there is no end to a woman's tongue?

HOW TO APPLY PAINT.

Greatest care should be taken when painting buildings or implements which are exposed to the weather, to have the paint applied properly. No excellence of material can make up for carelessness of application, any more than care in applying it can make poor paint wear well.

The surface to be painted should be dry and scraped and sandpapered hard and smooth. Pure white lead should be mixed with pure linseed oil, fresh for the job, and should be well brushed out, not flowed on thick. When painting is done in this manner with National Lead Company's pure white lead (trade marked with "The Dutch Boy Painter") there is every chance that the job will be satisfactory. White lead is capable of absolute test for purity. National Lead Company, Woodbridge Building, New York, will send a testing outfit free to any one interested.

Leads Them All.

An instructor in the Military Academy at West Point was once assigned to conduct about the place the visiting parents of a certain cadet.

After a tour of the post, the proud and happy parents joined the crowd assembled to witness evening parade, a most imposing spectacle. The march past aroused the father of the cadet to a high pitch of enthusiasm.

"There!" he exclaimed, turning to his spouse. "Isn't that fine? But," he added, respectively, "I shall not be happy till my boy attains the proud position that leads 'em all." And he pointed in rapt admiration to the drum-major. — Illustrated Sunday Magazine.

The extraordinary popularity of fine white goods this summer makes the choice of Starch a matter of great importance. Defiance Starch, being free from all injurious chemicals, is the only one which is safe to use on fine fabrics. Its great strength as a stiffener makes half the usual quantity of Starch necessary, with the result of perfect finish, equal to that when the goods were new.

Evidently Strange.

"A gentleman to see you, sir," announced Mr. Struckitt Wright's new butler.

"Ah—tell him I'll be down in a minute. I guess it's my brother, probably. I'm expectin' him. Does he look anything like me?"

"No, sir—not at all. He is very gentlemanly in appearance."

Perils of Fence Mending.

"I understand that member of congress hurried home to mend his fences."

"Yes. But he doesn't appear to have made a neat job of it. His prospects look as if he had gotten into a tangle with a lot of barbed wire."

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The only failure a man ought to fear is failure in cleaving to the purpose he sees to be best.—George Eliot.

SADLY MISTAKEN.

Hubby (disgustedly)—The doctor is a fool.

Wifey—What's the matter, dear?

Hubby—He said I need exercise. Think of it! Exercise! Exercise for a man who has looked after his own furnace all winter, and is now contemplating the opening of the lawn mower season!

Less Apt to Break.

"There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip," quoted the moralizer.

"Yes," rejoined the demoralizer, "it's safer to drink out of a tin bucket."

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If better were within, better would come out.—Danish.

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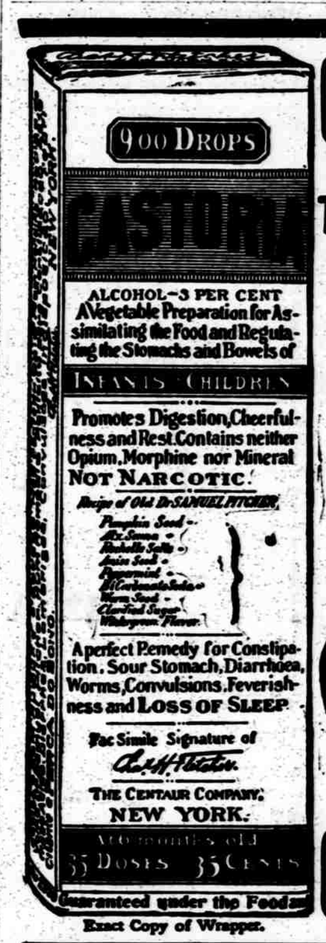

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