



Men Marooned

by George Marsh

A THRILLING TALE OF THE HUDSON BAY COUNTRY

He pictured the scenes at the Victoria station. Old comrades-officers, there with their Galloped, chatting in a group nearby, while he talked with family.

"To think that I can hear so seldom—that is what makes it so hard," Ethel was saying.

With a thrust of the old pain he remembered that the girl whose face bore the unmistakable marks of suffering even at parting, had, from habit, stood on his left side. A year had failed to reconcile her. The furrowed cheek was still a thing hideous.

"It is tough. There's only the Christmas mail and a summer packet up the coast from Albany," he had replied, "but there's always the chance of a canoe or dog team being sent through between times. So write regular and I'll get them in time. In France I'd often get five or six at once—and read them in their order."

"Oh, you mustn't expect the letters I used to write, Garth," she had swiftly replied.

"No," he said grimly. "I've learned not to expect that."

"You know why."

"Yes, I think I know why." They stood, avoiding each other's eyes, in their unvoiced misery.

The train was about to start. A wave to his friends; a grip of the hand of Charles; a hug for the tear-eyed girl. "Good-bye, dear. A year is not so long." He took her in his arms and kissed her. But the face he touched was cold. Her arms hung stiff at her side. "Good-bye Ethel," he repeated. "I'm sorry."

"Good-bye Garth," she faltered. "This, I suppose, is the end—I've lost you."

Down the Missinaibi to Moose, on the coast to Fort Albany, the man who had gone into the north to find health and the solution of his problem in separation, was accompanied by doubt and self-censure. It had been unfair—brutal—this wrenching himself from the sure appeal of her personal charm. But in fairness to the future, it was imperative. A year would clarify his vision—prove her hold over him unbearable to make him a free man. However, notwithstanding the bitterness of her farewell, the first mail to reach him in the early months of his apprenticeship in the fur trade had brought letters patently not those of renunciation. On the contrary they dwelt in detail on plans for his future homecoming and the wedding; were gay with gossip; related with frank pride the rumor of a knighthood for

services to the government during the war with which the name of Charles Guthrie was being coupled; at times, to his surprise, approached the warmth of the old days.

In the autumn Garth had been sent north with Etienne Savanne, a veteran servant of the company, to winter at the far post at the mouth of the Ekwan. When the Christmas mail from Albany was sighted on the white river trail, the mingled feelings with which Guthrie watched the approach of the dog-team bringing word from home—from her—were the cause of puzzled self-analysis through the months to follow. In July when he sailed into Fort Albany in his York boat with his fur packs, his year on the silent west coast was up. The mail he found waiting his arrival brought the news that he was now brother of Charles Guthrie; announced the decision of Ethel and Clara for an August wedding on the return of the exile; dwelt at length on the rise in Guthrie's steel; and disposed of his health in the casual surmise that it had been fully restored by the year in the open.

The last had drawn a bitter smile from the man who read. Pages for the personal affairs of the writers, and a line for the lungs he had brought back from the Hun drive for the Channel ports. So they were waiting in Montreal, were they, for his return, to bend him to their petty ways—shape him into a business like a machine. Like Charlie—when he had breathed the stinging air off the ice-fields of the bay; seen the caribou drift across nameless lakes at dawn; camped under a canopy of stars while the aurora blazoned the north; wakened to the raucous chorus of the Canadas and watched the "waxies" rally their legions in the autumn? How blurred, after this, the once poignant memory of Ethel Falconer was growing! How pretty seemed the obsession of Charles Guthrie for money and power in the man who had found in the peace of the west coast an opiate for his doubt and disillusion!

With no attempt at defense of his decision to remain for another year, Guthrie wrote home, and without regret, had sailed out of the delta of the great Albany with Etienne, bound for Elkwan.

Sailed out of the Delta of the Great Lake Albany.

The man who laid beside the sleeping dog with his thoughts while the wind roared through the alders, hammering the anchored tent, and the rain beat its intermittent tattoo, sat up, and placing the candle lantern at

his elbow, drew a letter from his pocket and read:

"Dearest Garth: "I don't know what to say—I'm simply stunned. Either you are still deceiving us, or take this method to humiliate me before your family and the world in hope that I shall voluntarily give you up. Of course, if you no longer love me, there is nothing to be said. Do you love me still, Garth, dear? So long as you do I shall wait."

"Devotedly—until you wish it other wise, ETHEL."

This had been her answer to the burning of his bridges—utter abandonment of her pride, and he had once thought her so proud.

Nevertheless, each new reading of the letter brought to Elkwan by the fall packet a fortnight before, had quickened the memory of what this girl, vibrant with life and physical charm, had meant to him—this girl whom he had humiliated. Often, standing before her vivid likeness in his quarters he had gazed at the alluring face, the faultless modeling of neck and shoulders, and marveled at the spell which held him in the north while such loveliness waited his return. She still had power to stir him, but his moods of self-censure and remorse were short-lived. The north had won.

CHAPTER II

At daylight the challenge of the airdale waked the sleeping man. With hair erect on mane and back, the dog squeezed through the lashed tent flap to break into furious barking.

"Shut up, Shot!" Etienne's dropped in for breakfast," called Guthrie.

Presently, weighed down with his load of wet geese, a bent figure pushed through the alders accompanied by the leaping airdale.

"Good morning, Etienne! You had a bad night of it in the bush."

The wiry half-breed cackled his load on the platform above his head, and grinned. "I mak good camp een de spruce wid beeg fire, an' roast some geese."

With difficulty the men boiled their tea and a kettle of goose; then, to avoid the flying sand, went into the tent to eat.

"We ought to be starting for Elkwan, Etienne. I don't like to leave her too long, sick as she is."

The swart face of Etienne Savanne grew grave as he nodded.

"She nevaire see de snow once more."

"That's what I hate to leave her alone with Old Anne. I'd never forgive myself if—" Guthrie passed to stare at the tent wall.

The black eyes of his companion softened. "You ben good man, m'sieu. Dat girl die long ago een de bush."

"Yes, the condensed milk has kept her alive—but she should have gone to the mission at Albany."

The other shook his head; then struck a match, and lit his pipe before replying.

"You are new man in dees coun-tree. You don' know Injun squaw. At Albanee—widout you—she not be happy."

Guthrie reddened under his deep tan. He knew only too well. "But they would have taken better care of her," he protested.

All day while the norther flayed the west coast, Guthrie and Etienne dressed and salted geese. Deep in the winter, when the caribou had drifted back from the coast, the geese, freed from the salt by boiling, would be a welcome change from the fat bacon of the company's stores. The wine turned out of their blankets at sun-held into the night, but when the men rise the blow was over.

To Be Continued.

A West Virginia darkey a blacksmith recently announced a change in his business as follows:

"Notice—De copardnership heretofore resisting between me and Mose Skinner is hereby resolved. Dem what owed de firm will settle with me and what de firm owes will settle with Mose."

Alkali Ike—What happened to the tenderfoot stranger wot was here last month?

Texas Pete—Poor feller. The second morning he wuz here, he wuz brushin' his teeth with some of that foamy tooth paste and one of the boys thought he had hydrophobia and shot him.

TIMELY MESSAGE ON FOREST PROTECTION BY HON. C. D. RICHARDS WAS BROADCASTED

The week of April 22nd to April 28th has been set aside both in Canada and in the United States as a period during which, in both countries, the attention of the public shall be focused upon the character and value of our forests and the imperative necessity of preserving these great national assets.

In Canada we are realizing more and more the value of our forests. It is not too much to say that our economic future depend largely upon their preservation. Forest products rank second today with agriculture. The forest industry in Canada represents a capital investment of \$675,000,000, with an annual salary and payroll of \$100,000,000. In addition to the primary forest industries, 50 per cent of our manufacturing industries depend upon wood, in a great measure, for raw material, and 20 per cent of the entire freight carried upon our Canadian railways comes from the forest. These figures speak strongly of the economic value of our forests in Canadian industrial life.

As with Canada, so with our own province. The capital now invested in our forest industries amounts to approximately \$45,000,000, divided at the present time about equally between the so-called long lumber and pulp and paper branches, and the annual salary and wage bill amounts to \$7,500,000. We have today about 300 saw mills and wood-working factories, as well as four pulp mills, and one paper mill in operation. Important developments are in progress which will soon mean the establishment of other pulp mills or the enlarging of present plants, which must necessarily result in a much greater utilization of our forest products in our own province.

N. B. Forest Lands.

In this province 65 per cent of our area is forest land, and a very large proportion of this is of such a character that it is not suitable for agriculture. This means, therefore, that it should be preserved for forest purposes. In this connection nature has been bountiful to us. We have a large variety of economic trees both hardwood and softwood, and the natural reproduction is very great, greater than in many other portions of Canada. It is our duty as well as our necessity to ensure the protection of the heritage which nature has given us.

But not alone in respect to the direct forest industries is it essential that our forests be preserved. Alike also must they be preserved because of their relation to our at present abounding fish and game resources. Our fish and game constitute an unfailing source of pleasure and recreation both for the resident and the non-resident, and as well an important source of revenue both for the province and citizens generally.

Their Scenic Value.

Nor must we forget the scenic value of forested hillsides and valleys, not merely as an attraction for the ever increasing number of tourists whose surroundings may be less favorable than our own, but for the value that they have in preserving our own natural environment which has contributed so much to Canadian character. The hillsides in the various shades of green of the summer season, or the many tinted blending of colours of autumn—such scenery is so commonplace to us that we perhaps do not fully appreciate its beauty or its value until a forest fire has changed to a dead and sombre desolation the familiar forest scenes of our younger days. Our forests complete the picture which prompted a noted American writer to state that "such a country is one of God's best gifts to the human race, better than bonanzas of silver or rivers whose sands run gold."

Great Depletion.

In the past the impression has existed that our forests were inexhaustible—nothing could be further from the fact. The natural depletion through lumbering operations has been great, the loss through insect pests and disease has been great, but the destruction by fire has been appalling. In Canada as a whole, of the original forest wealth estimated at 925 million cubic feet, 60 per cent has been destroyed by fire. Our position in this province is somewhat better, but is estimated that of the original stand, at least 50 per cent has been destroyed

by fire. In one fire alone, the Kedgwick fire of 1923, 640 square miles of forest land were destroyed with a stumpage loss, based on rates of that year, of \$3,500,000. But that is not the most vital feature. This lies in the fact that the burned over area will be unproductive for a period of from 70 to 80 years, with the resulting loss of annual revenue or reproductive value for that period. Buildings may be insured and may be rebuilt—forests must await the course of years.

A Correct Conception.

It is encouraging to note that during the past few years a more correct conception of our true condition in Canada has been created. More serious consideration is being given generally to the problem of forest protection, and more generous and sympathetic co-operation by the public. But there still remains to those who are charged with the administration of the forest service this fearful menace of the fire hazard. We have in this province what is believed to be an efficient forest service. The whole province is divided into five districts, each under an inspector. Each of these districts is subdivided into smaller districts in charge of a permanent forest ranger. We have twenty-six of these districts. In addition, we have fifty forest patrols, each equipped with a time clock, whose duty it is to patrol a certain forest area. Others employed in various capacities in the service bring the total up to about 140. We have thirteen fire towers, in addition to three others operated in conjunction with certain lumber organizations, each with telephone connection. In short, the Department of Lands and Mines is doing all that seems reasonably possible to be done for the protection of our forests.

All Must Cooperate.

But despite all that the forest service may do, despite all the energy and the efficiency of the members of that service, their work will be ineffective, will be almost useless without the co-operation and support of every citizen of the Province. Remember that a camp fire left burning, a lighted cigarette carelessly thrown by the roadside, may destroy hundreds of acres of forest and cause loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Our records show that 90 per cent of our fires in this Province are caused by carelessness, the lighted match or cigarette, the burning camp fire etc. This condition should not exist. It need not exist, if those who go into the forest would realize their own interest and their own responsibility.

To the fisherman, to the camper, to the hunter, to the tourist, to all who go into the forest, I desire to say with all the emphasis I can:—PUT OUT YOUR CAMP FIRE. DON'T GUESS. BE SURE. It costs nothing; it means much to you and to your fellow citizen.

In conclusion, may I say that I greatly appreciate the support and co-operation of the churches, the schools, the service clubs, the press and the various other organizations, as well as that of many private citizens who have assisted in promoting this Canadian Forest Week campaign.

TO BROADCAST ADDRESSES ON FORESTRY WORK

This evening, April 25th., Rev. J. D. MacKenzie Naughton will personally broadcast an address from station CFNB at Saint John, and this address will be broadcast from station CFNB, Fredericton, at the same time. On Thursday evening, April 26th., at 7.15, Dr. W. C. Kierstead, Professor of Economics at the University of New Brunswick, will broadcast from station CFNB, Fredericton, an address which he has prepared for the occasion, and it is expected that this same address will be broadcast from station CFNB, Saint John, at approximately the same time.

Each day throughout the week at each broadcasting period, each of the three New Brunswick radio stations will send out messages urging the people to consider the present state of our forests and to keep in mind measures for the protection and conservation of our forest resources.

CAMPAIGN FOR THE BLIND SHOULD BE SUPPORTED

The central executive of the campaign to raise an Endowment Fund of \$300,000 for the Maritime Division of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, has been receiving very encouraging reports from all sections of the Maritimes and Newfoundland. Wm. McT. Orr, General Chairman of the campaign announces that to date the following local chairmen have been secured: Dartmouth and Imperial, John S. Misener; Antigonish, R. H. Pethick; Mulgrave, Dr. Joseph S. Brean; Guysboro, C. L. Godfrey; Boylston, Stephen Pyle; Kentville, G. E. Graham; Windsor, W. J. Hunt; Sydney, Arthur S. Burchell; Bridgetown, H. B. Hicks; Middleton, Rev. Gerald Eulon; Annapolis Royal, Claude C. King. In Prince Edward Island, Walter S. Grant is the Provincial Chairman and the following are the local leaders: Charlottetown, H. Frank McPhee; Summerside, J. Frank Arnett; Kensington, Dr. A. A. Lockhart. In New Brunswick the following local chairmen have been enlisted: Saint John, T. H. Hestabrooks; Hampton, J. Wm. Smith; Welsford, Wm. H. McCrackin; Sussex, Percy Bolton; Chatham, S. D. Heckbert; Bathurst, E. P. McKay. In ten other communities committees have been formed and they will select their chairmen within the next few days. The task of organizing close to 150 communities throughout the Maritimes and Newfoundland is a formidable undertaking but rapid progress is being made, and the central executive has found that in every community where its representatives have been, the people evidence a very good feeling toward the movement and it has not been difficult to secure the right leadership.

Chairman Orr states that there seems to be a slight misunderstanding among some people regarding the purpose of the campaign. The Endowment Fund is not being raised for the Halifax School for the Blind. That institution is largely supported by Government grants and no appeal is being made for it at this time. The purpose of the fund now being raised is to finance the work among the adult blind. This group includes graduates of the School for the Blind and others who are past the school age.

Among the blind, as among the sighted, most individuals must gain their livelihood by manual occupations. It is obvious, that to one who is deprived of vision most of the ordinary occupations are closed. Most, but not all. There are certain well-known trades in which the blind can do and are doing expert work. But even in these trades the blind operatives must compete with sighted, and therefore, their more fortunate competitors. This simply means that the work of such blind manual operatives must be subsidized, and this is one of the reasons for the appeal now being made.

HOUSE CLEANING TIME

House cleaning time when the spring sunshine shows All of the dirt of the winter's repose; Floors must be scrubbed for the spring mud is deep, Furniture polished and piled in a heap; Windows are dirty and curtains awry, I must clean up by and by.

House cleaning time! And I'd much rather be Out where the sunshine and breezes and free Rather write verses and sing with the lark Than to be scrubbing from daylight till dark, But what's the use of my trying to rhyme Now it is house cleaning time? MARGARET H. TOMKINS in Chicago News.

When a piece of fiction doesn't make much sense at first sight and the great literary critic hasn't time to dissect it he says it has "subtle undertones."

Georgia Judge says a husband is merely a figurehead, but he doesn't need to tell everything he knows.