The Young Guardsman
Or
With Washington in the Ohio Valley

By John De Morgan

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul Revere</td>
<td>By John De Morgan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The First Shot for Liberty</td>
<td>By John De Morgan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fooling the Enemy</td>
<td>By John De Morgan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Into the Jaws of Death</td>
<td>By John De Morgan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hero of Ticonderoga</td>
<td>By John De Morgan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On to Quebec</td>
<td>By John De Morgan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting Hal</td>
<td>By John De Morgan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marion and His Men</td>
<td>By John De Morgan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Young Ambassador</td>
<td>By John De Morgan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Young Guardsman</td>
<td>By John De Morgan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cruise of the Lively Bee</td>
<td>By John De Morgan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tory Plot</td>
<td>By T. C. Harbaugh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Buff and Blue</td>
<td>By T. C. Harbaugh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington's Young Spy</td>
<td>By T. C. Harbaugh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under Greene's Banner</td>
<td>By T. C. Harbaugh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain of the Minute Men</td>
<td>By Harrie Irving Hancock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Quaker Spy</td>
<td>By Lieut. Lounsberry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting for Freedom</td>
<td>By Lieut. Lounsberry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Order of the Colonel</td>
<td>By Lieut. Lounsberry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Call to Duty</td>
<td>By Lieut. Lounsberry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Glory's Van</td>
<td>By Lieut. Lounsberry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The King's Messenger</td>
<td>By Capt. Frank Ralph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dashing Paul Jones</td>
<td>By Frank Sheridan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Midshipman to Commodore</td>
<td>By Frank Sheridan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cruise of the Essex</td>
<td>By Frank Sheridan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“I felt for my pistol, and was looking at the priming, when the door was burst open.”

(See page 34)
THE

YOUNG GUARDSMAN

OR

WITH WASHINGTON IN
THE OHIO VALLEY

BY

JOHN DE MORGAN

AUTHOR OF


PHILADELPHIA

DAVID McKAY, PUBLISHER

610 SOUTH WASHINGTON SQUARE
THE YOUNG GUARDSMAN.

CHAPTER I.

I MAKE MY BOW.

When my revered friend, Patrick Henry, asked me to write the history of the campaign with Braddock I confess I was blushing like a schoolgirl, for I never thought I had the qualifications necessary to write history, and I said so; but my friend said, and I think he was in earnest when he did so, that I had told the story so often that I had only to write as I talked and I should succeed.

Still I hesitated, but when the greatest man of any age, George Washington, indorsed all that Patrick Henry had said and also urged me to write, I could not refuse; but I would ask all my readers to be indulgent, because I am not used to writing, and have used the sword so much more than a pen that I may forget much
and, it may be, put the cart before the horse, as good Master Franklin has often said that I do. I will only promise one thing, and that is, I will "nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice," as the immortal William Shakespeare hath said.

I suppose I ought to make my bow and properly introduce myself, seeing that there is none to do it for me, so I will begin my story by saying that I, George Lee, am a nephew of Thomas Lee, who was at one time president of the Virginia Council and a director of the Ohio Company, and in my youth had a great advantage over many, seeing that I was constantly listening to the words of wisdom from the mouths of such men as my uncle, Gov. Dinwiddie; Lawrence and Augustus Washington, and Thomas Randolph. I have a sweet whisperer at my elbow as I write, who suggests that I was obliged to put in the last name, because if I did not I should have my ears boxed by Thomas Randolph's daughter, who is now perfectly proud to be known as Mistress George Lee.

I had to stop after writing the last sentence, for Amy Lee, who was Amy Randolph, did very prettily say that
she was not proud to bear my name, but that I was proud to have her do so, and the argument did last quite a time, and was only settled by each agreeing that the other was right.

In my young days I was a little inclined to be romantic, and I am afraid that I was an adept at drawing the long bow, as Master Franklin calls it; but after a campaign with my dear friend, Straight-Tongue, I learned to bridle my tongue and adhere to the strict truth, for which I give him all the credit.

I will not tell about my journey to the far North with Washington on his mission to Gen. St. Pierre, because that has already been well told in the story of "The Young Ambassador," but will rather commence my narrative with what took place a few days after we returned to Williamsburg.

It was about the second of April, in the year of our Lord 1754, that I was seated by the side of Mistress Amy Randolph in her father's house, discussing affairs of great moment and, I am afraid, telling her stories of great peril, which she delighted to hear, when there was a loud rat-tat at the door, and soon I heard my
name mentioned in a voice which was well known to me, being that of Christopher Gist.

“Well, what a day?” I asked the good scout.

“The chief hath said that a few words with you would be good, and so he bade you go to him at the house of Master Custis with all speed.”

“Tell the chief that thoughts fly to him, and that my feet would willingly go as fast, were it not that nature forbids such quick movement.”

I am sorry to say that in this speech I did somewhat allow my tongue to get the better of my judgment, for, though I might wish, as I certainly did, to be with Col. Washington without delay, still the nearness of Mistress Amy Randolph was so fascinating that I knew I could not tear myself away without a prolonged good-night.

I was reluctant to leave, though I knew that a movement of much importance was on foot, in which I hoped to have some part. It may perchance occur to some who read my story why I should be so reluctant when I tell them that I was deeply in love with a maiden who possessed all the attributes of perfection, and who,
when my friend, Gist, had left the house, whispered in my ear:

"Must you really go?"

What could I do? Duty said "go," inclination bade me "stay," and, added to that yearning of my soul, the dearest girl on earth pouted a little and said:

"It is a shame! Why will not to-morrow do?"

I sank down on the low cushioned chair and agreed that to-morrow would be time enough, but, with that strange perverseness of woman, my Amy changed her mood and rapturously wished she were a man, so that she could go out into the wilderness to fight the enemies of her race, and wondered how anyone could hope to win the favor of the fair sex by hesitating to do his duty.

I thanked her for calling me back from fairyland to earth, and told her that I would never hesitate again.

"You will always do your duty, George," she said, very prettily, and with her hand resting on my arm.

I told her that when I had such a good prompter I could not fail.

"George, I hope that you will do your duty for duty's
I Make My Bow.

sake—not because I wish it," she answered, and that was enough. I bade her good-night and left the house, but I had no sooner reached the garden bed of early spring flowers, which were just beginning to open their buds, when I heard the lattice open, and, looking back, saw my Amy waving her hand from her chamber window.

I might have stayed there some time—in fact, I verily believe I should have been riveted to the spot until the sun rose next day—had it not been for Gist's voice rousing me.

"I am well nigh tired waiting for you," he said.

"Why, Master Gist, I did not know that you were here."

"I promised to take you to the chief, and Gist will never go back on his word."

I told him I was ready, but I turned round and waved once again, and I am sure that Gist, hard-headed fellow as he was, actually looked another way so that he would not see our adieux.

I am not going to cross out that French word, though I have every reason to dislike everything French, but
since Independence we have got into the habit of using quite a number of foreign words, and my pen followed my thoughts and the word was written.

I asked the scout whether he knew the object of my visit to Washington, and he told me very bluntly that if he did he would not tell me, for he was not commissioned to do so.

I admired his blunt manner, and I have since learned that the best friends are those who speak plainly, even though at times the truth may be a little unpleasant.

We walked in silence to the house of Master Custis, and when my name was taken in to the master Gist turned on his heel and walked away. He had done all that was expected of him and so went his way.
CHAPTER II.

MY ASSIGNMENT.

Six-Chimney House was one of the pleasantest places in the city, not only because of its charming hostess and her husband, but in all its appointments.

I had not often been across its threshold, though my family was distantly related to the Custis family; but our paths had diverged somewhat, my father being more staid and religiously inclined than the father of Daniel Parke Custis, and, for another reason, old man Custis was a cranky creature, not much loved by anyone.

Amy, my wife, says that it has nothing to do with my story, but I cannot help writing it, so if you do not like to hear about the old man Custis you can skip part of this chapter.

Col. John Custis was a very eccentric and erratic gentleman, who married a shrewish, though fair, lady, who led him a merry dance, though not to his liking.
He commanded his son, upon pain of disinheritance, to have engraved on his tombstone:

"Under this stone lies the body of Hon. John Custis, Esq., aged seventy-one years, and yet he lived but seven, which was the space of time he kept a bachelor's home at Arlington."

Col. Custis loved his son, and determined that he should make a brilliant marriage, and therefore chose for him a cousin, Mistress Evelyn Byrd, whose father was as eccentric as John Custis himself.

It was whispered that neither Mistress Byrd nor Daniel Parke Custis favored this marriage, and so they drifted along in single blessedness until they were near their thirtieth year.

Evelyn Byrd was filled with a hopeless love for an Englishman of royal birth, and Daniel Custis had fallen under the spell of the bewitching eyes of sweet little Patsy Dandridge, who was only fifteen years old when she became the reigning belle of Williamsburg society.

I recall how Martha Dandridge had her praises sung by every hearth for her skill in playing on the spinnet
and dancing the minuet, and my mother used to tell how she could "cross, tent and satin stitch, hem, fell and overseam," about which I know nothing, but which my Amy says are ladylike accomplishments.

When the old colonel frowned and threatened, his son went his way and courted Martha, winning her love and obtaining her father's consent to their engagement.

When Martha was eighteen Mistress Byrd solved the question of her marriage to Custis by dying, and then the old colonel was turned away from opposing Martha and gave his consent to his son's wedding her.

The young couple spent their winters at Six-Chimney House, in Williamsburg, in the midst of court gayeties, while their summers were passed at their country home, on the banks of the York, a place always spoken of as the "White House."

This was the story of the courtship and marriage of Martha Custis, and, however winsome she was before she was married, there was not a young man in all Virginia who would not have drawn his sword to fight for her, even though she had then, at the time of which
I am writing, been a wife for five years and had two lovely little children.

I was made very welcome by Master Custis, and he, with all the gallantry of that polished time, introduced me to his wife in the courtly fashion, though I had known her for some time personally, and since my boyhood by sight.

Col. Washington was sitting by the side of a big open hearth, on which the logs blazed pleasantly, for there was a cool and nipping wind quite unusual for that time of the year at the capital.

"I am glad you came," he said, as he grasped my hand.

"Your word is my law," I answered, brusquely, though I did not mean to do so.

"It was not a command I sent you, but a loving message, my good George Lee, for I would not have thee do aught because I commanded."

"Forgive me, colonel——"

"Nay, nay, I am not colonel to you, but George, as thou art George to me. Dost thou hear?"

"Yes, and I am proud of your friendship."
"Not more so than I am of thine."

This may seem to be a very self-laudatory incident, especially as I am writing at a time when the name of George Washington is held in high esteem all over the world; but there are many still living that will bear me testimony that I was always George to him and he was George to me.

"I pray thee, let us have some music," said Master Custis; "it will be time for affairs of state afterwards."

I felt the hot blood surge to my face, for I had torn myself away from Amy Randolph's side, and only to listen to some music; but as Martha Custis crossed to the spinnet she turned her hazel eyes on me and smiled so sweetly that I gave a sigh of contentment and only wished that Amy could have been by my side to hear her play.

Martha played and sang, and then her husband joined her, and together they sang a pretty lilt, whose words I have quite forgotten, though they stayed in my mind a long time.

Some hot drink was served; it was a kind of wine
which Martha Custis had made herself, and which was mulled and spiced to perfection, and then, after she had partaken of it, Master Custis and his wife withdrew and left Washington and myself alone to talk business.

"I leave for Alexandria to-morrow," he said.

"What for, colonel?"

"If thou darest to call me colonel again, by my truth, I'll not talk with thee."

"I will not disobey again, save when others are with us."

"I go to enlist recruits for the Ohio. Trent will never be able to hold the post, and I am commissioned to go to save him."

"And if too late?"

"Then to recapture the place."

"It is a work of much danger," I ventured to remark.

"I appreciate the difficulty; the danger does not trouble me."

"May I be one of the party?"

"That is why I sent for you. I have very great confi-
dence in you, and I want you to undertake a particular thing:"

"Whatever you say is law to me; command me to the death."

I spoke with boyish enthusiasm, and Washington smiled with satisfaction.

"You are young, but I have tried you, and you have not been wanting."

I thanked him for his confidence, and my heart beat quickly, for I knew that I was to be singled out for a work which should make or mar my entire life.

"I want a score of youths of your age to enlist—nay, do not interrupt; I have reason for my action. I have found that youth is impetuous, and will often do things which older men might question."

"I do not know whether to take that as a compliment," I ventured to say.

"There can be no question of compliment between us, George; we are going on a very hazardous expedition, and many a man of mature age might hesitate, but if I have a score of enthusiastic boys they will carry all before them."
Washington told me his plans, which I need not dwell on now, as my story will the better reveal them; but suffice it to say that a company of Virginian Guards was to be formed, with me as captain.

I doubted my ability, but he was very kind to say that he had watched me and knew of what I was capable.

"I shall ask no questions; you will recruit those you think can be trusted, and, while acting under my orders, you will have a latitude which is not often given to a captain."

"You want me to go with you to Alexandria?"

"No; meet me there with your company, say, in two weeks' time. Will you undertake the work?"

"I will."

"Spoken like George Lee. Go where you like, recruit where you can, and draw on Gov. Dinwiddie, through me, for your supplies and expenses."

"I accept the offer, George."

"One word before we part. I know how fascinating certain bright eyes are, but do not let them draw you away from your duty. If you accept my offer, you must
be prepared to face death, to suffer privation, to part from those you esteem and lead a lonely life, your only compensation being that you have served your country and fought her enemies.”

My heart was too full for utterance, and, as the hour was getting late, I left Six-Chimney House and wended my way to my own home.

I did not know whether I was walking on air or the ground, I was so happy.

I did not sleep that night, for I was too excited, but ere the sun rose next morning I had counted up a dozen young men on whom I thought I could count, and I was glad when the morning was far enough advanced to allow me to commence my work.
CHAPTER III.

RECRUITING.

I do not know how it happened, but before I reached the governor's residence, which was to be my first recruiting station, I was accosted several times by youngsters who were anxious to join my company.

Some little birds had whispered my mission, and I could easily have found twoscore men at once, had I been ready to take all who offered.

I found a message from Washington awaiting me, in which he told me that I could take either Straight-Tongue or Surefoot as a scout, and I at once sent for Straight-Tongue, for whom I had a great liking.

When the trapper and scout came to see me he was accompanied by Joanna, who was as beaming as a rose and as happy as a butterfly.

"I came, you see," she said, as soon as she entered the room.

"I am always pleased to see you, Joanna," I answered, rather coldly.
"Then, if you are pleased to see me, I want to be always with you."

"That is impossible."

"Do not talk like that, captain; I do not want you to think of me as a girl, but as a boy."

"How can I?"

"I am going to join your company, isn’t that so, father?"

"I’m afraid that’s what you want to do," Straight-Tongue replied.

I told her, as nicely as I could, that we were going to fight, and that it was quite impossible for a girl to become a recruit. She was very indignant and, I am afraid, said some very unpleasant things; but I was firm and refused to receive her, though she insisted that she was as strong as any male of her own age, and that she could endure hardship as well as any, all of which I had to admit; but still I could not endure the thought of a girl fighting, it was so contrary to feminine nature.

I gave her a letter to Mistress Amy Randolph, asking
that Joanna should be cared for while her father was away, for the girl would be left alone, as her sister, Karana, had gone North with some friends, leaving Joanna with her father.

I very soon had ten youths ready to go with me through any danger, fearless, daring and brave as any that ever drew the breath of life.

There was Frank Vernon, tall, sprightly and as strong as an ox, even though he had only seen sixteen birthdays; then came Kenward Mason, two years older, but no braver nor stronger, and Harry Willis. These three, I well remember, were my first recruits, and each of them had been chosen while I was reclining on my bed, because I knew them well.

I had a special reason for having them as my first recruits, for they belonged to the best families of Virginia, and their influence would be good and great. I have found all through my life that if you wish to succeed you must have character, and, young as I was, I knew that these boys were upright and honorable, and
Recruiting.

would never do anything to bring reproach on their families.

With my ten recruits I left Williamsburg and journeyed north.

Wherever there was a chance of obtaining recruits I stopped. A wise action, so I have been told, for it is not well to have all from one district.

One evening, tired with drilling my little company of guardsmen, I was sitting in my room at the roadside house, which was my temporary headquarters, when I became conscious that some one was looking through the window at me.

I never was nervous, but I well remember that I felt a strange coldness all over me. I was ashamed, and got up and crossed to the door.

I looked out and saw a boy skulking away. I ran after him and, taking him by the ear, led him back into the room.

“What were you doing?” I asked.

“Nothin’ at all, cap’n.”

“You were looking in the window, were you not?”

“Can’t a cat look at a king?” he asked.
"You are not a cat, neither am I a king," I replied, becoming interested in the boy.

"I'm a poor boy, an' I wanted to look at you."

"What for?"

"'Cause I would like to go with you an' fight; but I'm only a poor boy, an' you don't want the poor."

"Don't make a fool of yourself! What do I care whether my men are poor or rich? All I want is men who are brave and can fight."

"I can fight. Just you stand up an' I'll show you."

This strange boy doubled his fists and began to spar as though boxing with an imaginary foe.

"That is not the kind of fighting we shall have to do."

"I can shoot."

"With a gun?"

"Cert. Anyone will tell you that Nimble Ned hasn't an ekal with a gun."

"Is that your name?"

"What?"

"Nimble Ned."

"I reckon so."
"Who gave you that name?"

"All the boys round about, cap'n."

"What other name have you?"

"Never had any other."

"What's your father's name?"

"Never had a father. I was found in the woods, an' all the people round helped me grow."

I became very interested and forgot how tired I had been—so tired that I could scarcely keep awake, but now I was wide awake.

"You say you can shoot. What else can you do?"

I heartily wished I had not asked the question, for never before had I seen such an exhibition of wild contortions and strange capers. Ned stood on his head, walked on his hands with his feet in the air, turned somersaults, made cartwheels, as I think they are called, and one followed the other so quickly that my brain began to swim with the delirium of his movements.

"Stop, stop, I say, or I shall go crazy."

When I spoke Ned was standing on his head, and, to
my amazement, he remained perfectly stationary, not moving a muscle.

"Get on your feet, quick, or all the blood in your body will go to your head."

"There's plenty of room for it, for Ned's head is empty," he said, with a grin, as he righted himself.

"So you want to be a Virginian Guard?"

"I dunno. I want to be with you an' fight."

"You can go with me for ten days, and if you behave yourself and do as you are commanded you may be allowed to enlist."

The boy caught hold of my hand and kissed it, and acted so strangely that I really do not know what he would have done to show his gratitude if Straight-Tongue had not come into the room.

"Get out of here, you young spalpeen, quick, or I'll lay a whip on your back."

"Stay, Straight-Tongue; Ned is one of my recruits."

"You don't mean to say that a——"

"He stays with us ten days. I have given my word, and he is to be the company's servant during that time, at the end of which I will decide what to do with him."
Straight-Tongue saluted in true military fashion and did not say another word.

"Come to me to-morrow morning, Ned, and I will provide you with quarters."

When the boy left I asked Straight-Tongue what he knew of him, that he should have spoken as he did. He told me that the boy had followed us for two days and had tried to keep out of sight, a sure sign that he did not mean any good.

"Is he crazy?" I asked.

"No, he is bright and intelligent, though he has no learning."

"Do you know him?"

"Not a bit. I asked the people round about who he was, for I didn't want any followers of a suspicious character loafing about, and they all said that he was honest and bright, but a lump of impishness."

"He ought to make the better soldier."

"If he can be made to obey orders."

"I think that can be accomplished; anyway, it will do no harm to let him stay with us for a few days, at least, until we reach Alexandria."
“What you say, captain, goes.”

I could see that the trapper and scout did not like the idea of having Nimble Ned as one of the company, and I had resolved that the boy should only stay with us until we reached headquarters, for I had implicit confidence in Straight-Tongue’s judgment.
Nimble Ned, to call him by the only name to which he cared to answer, was one of the strangest creatures I ever met. He was very erratic, full of mischief, given to fits of sulks at times, and at others showing the most sunny disposition, that the guardsmen never knew how to take him.

I took a strong fancy to him, and his affection for me amounted to something akin to adoration.

One afternoon he had offended me by some of his pranks, of which I received numerous complaints, that in a fit of temper I said I wished he would go and drown himself. Of course, I did not mean it, and in an hour Straight-Tongue came running after me to tell me that he had fished the boy out of the river, and that unless I went to see him he would surely try and drown himself again.

I went to the guardhouse, a log cabin, which had been
placed at our disposal, and saw Ned seated on the floor, crying as though his heart would break.

“What is the matter, Ned?” I asked.

“I tried”—sob—“to do it, but”—sob—“that man would not let me.”

“Tried to do what?”

“What you told me?”

“What was that?”

“You said”—sob—“that you wished”—sob—“I would go an' drown myself”—sob—“an' you told me that a good soldier always obeyed orders”—sob.

“You stupid fellow, I did not mean it. I was vexed.”

“Then I am not to drown myself?”

“No. You are to live just as long as you can.”

“You forgive me, then, for failin’?”

“I should never have forgiven you if you had succeeded.”

It required a great deal of coaxing to make him feel that I was satisfied with him, and I have often thought that he was only reconciled to life because he thought I had forgiven him for failing. This is one instance which shows how strong was his affection for me. I do
not know any stronger evidence than when a man will kill himself when told to do so.

We organized the company on very democratic lines, for the recruits elected their own officers, and I was very pleased to find that Kenward Mason was elected first lieutenant, Frank Vernon, second lieutenant, and Harry Willis, sergeant. I should have selected them myself for those positions, and therefore you can readily understand that I was pleased with the choice made by my young guardsmen.

We spent several days drilling and getting into shape, for I wanted my company to present a favorable appearance when I took them to Alexandria.

It may be well to describe our camp, which was about a mile from the nearest town. I had received word from the capital that two or three log houses had been erected at that point by some pioneers, who had thought to build a village there, but the supply of game and furs had fallen below their expectations, and they had moved farther up country, deserting the houses they had built.

The clearing was only about an acre in size, and was in the midst of a dense forest, through which there were
Nimble Ned.

only the narrowest trails. It was lonely enough to please anyone, and we had no thought of being disturbed.

Lieut. Mason, Straight-Tongue and myself occupied the smallest of the houses, using only the front room, there being another room in the rear, but the roof leaked and the wind seemed to have an affection for a big hole in the wall, making the place far from comfortable.

In order to accustom my men to all sorts of conditions I planned a night march through the wood, and we looked forward with pleasure to it, but just at the last moment I was stricken down with a chill and could not stand, so I had to remain behind.

Nimble Ned wanted to stay and keep me company, but I preferred being alone, and after the guardsmen had started on their march I rolled myself up in my blanket and tried to sleep.

I was awakened by a peculiar noise in the rear room, and I raised myself up on my elbow to listen. I thought it might be rats, but the noise was too loud for the little rodents; then I fancied it might be a wolf,
for there were still a few wolves roaming the forests of Virginia.

I felt for my pistol and was looking at the priming, when the door was burst open, and before I could make a move three men had pounced upon me and wrenched the weapon from my hand.

I was gagged and my hands bound behind my back, then a dirty handkerchief was tied over my eyes, and I was a prisoner safe enough without the power of moving, speaking or seeing.

I instinctively felt that a light was flashed in my face, and I heard a voice say:

"There is no mistake, we have the right one."

I listened to catch every word, but my captors were very cautious, and I only caught a word here and there, not sufficient to enable me to make any sense of it.

"He is sick," I heard one say.

"So much the better."

"He has fainted."

It was true that I had fallen back exhausted with the effects of the chill, and I took the hint and laid as quietly as though I had really become unconscious.
One kicked me, but I never stirred; then another flashed a blazing torch in my face to make me draw back, but my strength of mind enabled me to bear it calmly, and it was well that I did so, for the kidnappers threw off all reserve and talked freely. Every word was borne to my ears, and I learned that I was to be taken to Red Wolf, and given to him on the express understanding that after he had taken my scalp my body was to be left in a certain place to be claimed by them, and sent to my friends with a message that all who fought against the French would be treated in the same manner.

I accidentally stirred, and the conversation ceased, but not before I heard the name of Leroy mentioned, and then I knew that he had been pursuing me, and had watched an opportunity to get me out of his way.

I wondered why they remained in the house so long, but hoped that they would stay until my guardsmen returned. I secretly wished that Lieut. Mason would shorten the march, as I was not with the company, and return earlier than expected.
In a few minutes I heard a strange bird calling, and I thought it might be the signal of some confederate of my captors. In this I was evidently right, for I heard one say:

"I will lead the way, you carry him, and at the first attempt at resistance stick your knife into him."

I was lifted up, one man taking my shoulders and another my feet, and in this way was carried to the door, but not much farther, for I escaped in a most remarkable manner, the details of which I learned later.

I found that Nimble Ned had incurred the displeasure of Lieut. Mason early in the march, and was ordered back. He reached the camp just as the three men entered the room. Ned knew that he was powerless to help me by open resistance, so he managed to crawl into the back room and listen to what was said.

His quick and original brain formulated a peculiar plan to rescue me.

He climbed to the roof of the house, taking with him a large stone. I never understood how he was able
to lift it, let alone carry it up to the roof, but he managed it.

The roof was flat and covered with a thatch of pine boughs, and over this roof Ned climbed until he was exactly above the door. Here he waited until the first man stepped outside, when instantly down came the heavy stone, causing the man to fall to the ground, nearly crushed to death.

It was too dark to see much, and Ned was guided by instinct, or was possessed of the cat's gift of being able to see in the dark, for as soon as the man who had me by the shoulders appeared through the doorway, Ned jumped down and alighted on the man's head, bearing him down by the side of his comrade.

I was dropped very quickly, for the third man imagined the company had returned, and thought the old saying, which Master Franklin had printed in Poor Richard's Almanack, was true, that

He who fights, and runs away,
May live to fight another day.

So, without thinking of his companions, he ran away as fast as his legs could move, only to be followed
by the others, who, it happened, were more frightened than hurt.

The guardsmen did not return for half an hour, and therefore I may truthfully say that Nimble Ned had saved my life, for had it not been for his ready wit, and, I must confess it, his disobedience on the march, my scalp would have gone to grace the girdle of my foe, Red Wolf.

In the morning we knew how well Ned had done his work, for a trail of blood was found leading through the wood for nearly a mile, and then we saw a pool of blood, which Straight-Tongue said indicated that the man had been badly hurt, but did not stop until he was beyond a chance of being overtaken, and then his companions had dressed his wounds, and enabled him to continue his journey.
CHAPTER V.

FORAGING.

I thought that it was time for us to march to Alexandria, and join the main body of our little army, for if Leroy had set his heart on capturing me it would be better to delay that capture as long as possible, not that I thought myself of sufficient importance to cause serious injury to our cause by being driven off the field.

We left our comfortable quarters on the morning of the twentieth of April, 1754, and marched through the country to our destination.

Washington gave me a hearty welcome, and when he inspected my young guardsmen he expressed not only his pleasure, but his surprise.

"I have twenty-one, including myself," I said, proudly, "and not one of us has reached his twentieth birthday."

"A more soldierly lot of men I never saw," the colonel remarked, and then added: "Our country need
not fear the future when such young men will rally to her standard.”

We stayed in camp for three days, and then received orders to go out as a foraging party.

I was glad of the order, for camp life was too lazy for me, and I knew all my guardsmen felt the same way.

Foraging in an unsettled country was exciting, for we had to hunt our game and secure what we could as nature provided it. If we had been mounted on good horses the fun would have been greater, but Washington had only six horses with him, and they were heavy draught beasts for drawing the cannon, and altogether unfit for the saddle.

Nimble Ned was so excited that I got angry with him, but my anger was only wasted, for he could not control his exuberance of spirit.

We had reached the hilly part of the country, and had not succeeded in getting any game, and were feeling discouraged. Lieut. Mason suggested that we divide into three parties and scour the country more
effectually. This seemed a good proposition, and the idea was carried out.

We had not seen any hostile Indians in our march, and had lulled ourselves into a state of almost indifference.

"Where is Ned?" Straight-Tongue asked, suddenly.

"I do not know, and I am beginning to feel that I do not care," I answered.

I had hardly got the words out of my mouth, before I heard a strange noise, which attracted my attention because of its peculiarity.

"Look there," exclaimed the trapper, pointing to a high rock.

On the top of the rock we saw Ned waving his arms about in the most frantic fashion, and evidently beckoning us.

"I will go and see what he wants," said the trapper.

"I will go along. You stay here until I return," I added, turning to Sergt. Willis.

We reached the foot of the rocky eminence, and then began to wonder how we could climb it.
The rock was fully thirty feet high, and for more than half the height apparently inaccessible.

All the time Ned was waving impatiently and urging us, by signs, to hurry. It was all very well to do so, but that did not overcome the difficulty. Even Straight-Tongue, who was never daunted, found it difficult to make the last ascent.

He had climbed up a few feet, and then his foot slipped, and he was by my side again quicker than he had ascended. Ned was lying at full length on the top of the rock and reaching down with his hand to us. That gave us the idea which we adopted.

I braced myself by the rock, while the trapper climbed on my shoulders, then he called out:

"Stand firm, I am going to jump."

I thought my neck was broken, and was sure that my collar bones had been reduced to a pulp, but was reassured by hearing the trapper say:

"All right, look up."

I obeyed, and saw that Straight-Tongue had caught Ned's hand, and was being slowly drawn up. When
he reached the top he took off his leather coat and lowered it down the side of the rock.

"Can you reach it?"

"No, but I can jump."

"Take care, you must use your strength, or you will go to the bottom."

I closed my lips tightly, and sprang upward. It seemed to me that I should keep on going higher and higher, but my hand closed on the sleeve of the jacket, and the trapper shouted:

"Hold tight."

Slowly, oh, so slowly, I felt the jacket being drawn up, and the thought came to me that if the sleeve should break away from the body I should be thrown down and killed. I held my breath, and it was well I did so, for, as every man knows, the body offers less resistance when the breath is held.

My hands were gradually losing their hold, I was sick and faint, the exercise had been unusual for me, and I had not recovered from my attack of chills and fever.

I had just made up my mind that it would be better
to let go and meet my fate, when I felt the hard, bony fingers of the trapper close round my wrist, and I knew I was safe.

Each of my men had a small quantity of rum served out to them in the morning, and while some drank it others had saved it for any emergency that might arise, and Straight-Tongue was one of these. He opened his flask and bade me drink some rum. I was feeling in need of the spirit, and had just been wishing that I had brought some with me. I drank and felt better.

When I had regained my breath and my nerves had grown stronger, I asked Ned why he had called us up there. Instead of replying he pointed to another rock a little distance farther, and uttered the one word:

"Come!"

He started off like a stag, and Straight-Tongue after him. I followed as fast as I could.

It was easy enough climbing the next rock, and when we got to the top, Ned pointed to the valley on the other side. Down below us a small herd of deer was calmly browsing. It was worth the climb, for I knew that the trapper could kill at least one of the
herd from where he stood, and that would repay us for our exertion.

Straight-Tongue had raised his gun, and was taking aim, when he suddenly lowered it, and pointed to a clearing some two hundred yards away.

"What do you see?" I asked, almost angrily, for the deer had seen us and scattered.

"Indians!"
"Well?"
"Can't you see?"
"What?"
"They have a fire, and a victim is going to be burned."

"What of that?"
"Don't you know it may be one of our guardsmen?"
"It may be some one from another tribe."
"No, it is a white man."
"What are we to do?"
"It is not like you, captain, to ask such a question. I fear that it may be one of our men, and, if so, he must be saved."
“Come on, then; I will follow.”

That was the first moment I missed my gun. Straight-Tongue had strapped his securely on his back before he climbed the rock, I had laid mine on the ground when he got on my shoulders, and never once had I thought of it until that moment, when it was needed.

I explained this to the trapper, and Ned started off on a run to the edge of the rock. I could not think the boy could get down the steep side, but I saw him lie down and then push himself over until he was hanging by his hands.

I heard a dull thud as he struck the ground at the foot of the rock, and my heart stood still. I really think I am a coward at heart, though I have a character for courage.

Straight-Tongue gave me another drink of his rum, and I felt better, but was worried over Ned. I had no reason to give him a second thought, for he was able to take care of himself, as I found very quickly.

“Thar it is, cap’n,” he exclaimed, as he reached my side with my gun.
"How did you get up the rock?"

"Didn't, I came round," and he chuckled at the thought of us getting up the steep side of the rock when close by was a path leading up to the top, far less difficult to climb.

Armed with three guns, for Ned had his ready for use, we descended the rocks and crept along in the shade of the trees towards the Indian camp.

When we got close enough we laid down flat, and crawled along in the grass, which was fully two feet tall.

We reached a point where we could see without being seen, and I knew that the trapper was right. In the middle of the clearing stood a tree, and round it a quantity of dried brush and wood, but what attracted my attention most was that tied to the tree was a young white man; I thought he was young because his frame seemed so frail.

Standing a little distance from the tree three Indians with tomahawks raised above their heads were ready to deal out death to the victim.

"Shall we fire?" I asked, for I realized that the
trapper was more of an authority on Indian fighting than I was.

“No, they will not kill him; they only throw their weapons to frighten the victim.”

“Will they throw them?”

“Yes, and the one who can get nearest without touching the boy will be a great brave in the tribe.”

“It is not one of my guardsmen?”

“No.”

There was a glint of light as the bright blades cleft the air.

“Fire, and then charge them!”

Three muskets were discharged at the same time, and two of the Indians fell. Before the smoke cleared we were halfway across the space, and were striking right and left at the Indians. We did not fight in any order, but just fell to and did all we could.

“Save the prisoner,” I cried to Straight-Tongue, who was nearest the tree, for I had seen one of the redskins set fire to the brush, and I knew that the fire would kill the victim before we could render much assistance unless the trapper could do something quickly.
Straight-Tongue leaped into the burning brush, and trampled it down with his feet, fighting those who pressed close to him at the same time.

Ned had lost his gun, it had been knocked out of his hand. He, however, was as good as either of us, for he used his head as a ram, and several of the enemy fell from a butt received in the stomach. One man had me beaten to my knees, and my last moment had come, I fully believed, when Ned stooped down, and, catching the redskin round the legs, threw him over my head with such force that I heard his skull crack against a tree.

I rose to my feet just in time to defend myself from a savage attack. I had no time to think of the fire or the victim tied to that tree, for I had my work cut out for me in fighting three savages at once.

Ned managed to secure his gun, and laid about him with vigor, but the Indians pressed us so closely that it was difficult to raise the long guns and use them as clubs. At the very moment when I was hardest pressed and needed Ned's assistance he failed me. He ran away, leaving me alone to fight three vigorous sav-
ages. I was losing breath, and knew that my blows were getting feeble each minute, and it was only a question of a few moments before I should have to fall.

With a wild yell one of my foes fell in front of me, and then another shrieked horribly as he, too, fell to the ground. I looked round, and saw Ned crawling on the ground, a tomahawk in his hand, striking the savages at the back of their knees, and so hamstringing them. It was not war, it was murder, but his act saved my life.

Where was Straight-Tongue?

I looked at the tree, but no victim was bound to it; I glanced round, and only disabled and dead Indians could be seen. Was it possible that the trapper was dead?

The Indians who were able to escape had left, only to return later, most likely, to avenge their fallen brethren.

Ned danced about like a crazy creature, he threw up his hands, and then indulged in a lot of strange antics which seemed out of place on that battlefield.
Foraging.

I was ashamed of him, but could not forget that he had saved my life.

Three of the foe were dead and five injured, a pretty good showing, seeing that for most of the time only Ned and I had been fighting.

I heard a loud shouting, and turning round saw my guardsmen coming at double quick towards us. How pleased I was to see them, and I knew that the faithful trapper had managed to reach them, and bring them to our aid. He had calculated that we could hold out until they arrived.

"I saw Lieut. Mason in the woods yonder," the trapper explained, "and I fetched him. Glad you are safe. I knew that Ned could save you if he hamstrung a few."

"Did you save the prisoner?"

"Yes, thank Heaven!"

"Did you know him, you speak so fervently?"

"Know him. Why, it was Jo-an, and in another hour she would have been roasted alive."

"Joanna; how came she in their power?"
"She has followed us all the way. I did not know, believe me."

"Is she injured?"

"No, but the gal nature had to come out, and she fainted. She's over there by the creek."

"I seed 'em draggin' him along, an' I seed the deer; I wanted the cap'n to get a deer, so I called, I reckoned one white boy more'n less made no difference, but a deer 'u'd be good eatin'."

Straight-Tongue grasped Ned's hand, he was so overcome that, old weather-beaten trapper as he was, he could scarcely speak. When at last he did find use of his tongue, he said:

"'Twarn't a boy at all, it was my girl, my Jo-an, and you saved her life. Ned, you've got old Straight-Tongue a slave for life."
CHAPTER VI.

THE STORY TOLD BY JOANNA.

We lost no time in returning to camp, carrying the girl with us. She was so thoroughly upset that it was impossible for her to walk, and so we made a litter of tree branches, and two of my guardsmen carried her on it.

We had succeeded in getting a fine buck and two does, besides a quantity of small game, which had been gathered in by Lieut. Vernon.

I reported to Col. Washington, and he thanked me for the excellent work my youngsters had done, but his face clouded when I told him of the rescue of the trapper's daughter.

"I am sorry she followed us. I am afraid she is going to be a difficulty," he said, after some thought.

"Straight-Tongue seems to have no power to compel her obedience," I remarked.

"It is the wild way in which she has been reared, it has to some extent unsexed her, and she thinks and
acts as a boy; we must not blame her too much. How came she to fall into the hands of the Indians?"

"I have not questioned her, I left that duty until we reached camp, and then subject to your order."

"When she is strong enough I will see her."

Straight-Tongue was at the door asking an audience, and the colonel at once bade him enter. The trapper had come to ask forgiveness for his daughter, and to express a hope that he would not be blamed for her indiscretions.

"I would like to talk with her," Washington said, and the trapper was delighted, for he knew the colonel's kindness of heart too well to doubt the result.

Joanna had recovered her usual spirits, and her nerves were as strong as ever. She entered the presence of our colonel with as little ceremony as though he had been only one of her own rank in life.

"Joanna, I hear from Capt. Lee that you wished to become a soldier."

"Yes, chief; but he would not let me."

"No, he did quite right; war is bad enough for men, and no woman should ever even hear its details, let
alone take part in them. Why did you not stay in Williamsburg?"

"Didn't want to. The captain gave me a letter to Mistress Randolph, and she nearly killed me with what she thought was kindness. She made me take off my—these clothes, and put on petticoats and such like; but what good were they? I fell downstairs and fell upstairs. I caught my foot in the long things every time I moved, and I told her that I should never be able to walk in any such like things.

"She only laughed at my awkwardness, and told me I should soon learn; but I didn't, for when the room was full of such fine people, and I got tired of listening to their talk, not understanding what it was about, I got up from the chair to leave the room. I forgot I had a long dress on, so of course I found I was stepping on the back of it; I pulled myself free, and walked three steps very cleverly, but then my bad fortune returned, and I stepped on the front of the dress, and fell forward against a young man who was handing some wine to a lady. Over he went, and I on top of him;
the wine went flying across the room, and everyone
laughing. I know they could not help it.

"I tried to get up, but my feet would somehow get
tangled up in the petticoats, and I fell half a dozen
times before I got on my feet, and then it was only
with the help of Master Randolph himself.

"I wasn't going to take any more chances, so I
gathered up the things round my knees, and ran from
the room.

"I got to my bedroom, and, father, you never saw
such a room, it was good enough and fine enough for
a king, and as quickly as I could I tore off the hateful
things and put on these. I wonder Mistress Randolph
doesn't wear the same kind as I do, for it is so much
easier.

"I could hear the people laughing downstairs, and
I knew that it was about me, so I got out of the house,
and have never been in it since.

"I heard just which way the guardsmen had gone.
so I followed."

"But how did you live?"

"I am a trapper, and can live anywhere; but often—
you won't whip him, will you—Nimble Ned brought me part of his food—"

"He knew, then, that you were following us?"

"Of course he did, but I made him cross his throat and swear never to tell anyone."

"How was it that you lost sight of us, and was captured by the Indians?"

That was the story we were anxious to hear, and even though I felt a certain amount of anger at the girl for the way she had treated Mistress Amy Randolph, I forgot it all when she began her story of her capture and its nearly fatal termination.

"It was this way: I was afraid to get too close to the camp, for the chief might send me back, so I found a cave in the rocks and made that my home. I had a few small pelts, which I sold to hunters for food, and so managed very well until I got rid of the last pelt and was very hungry. I thought I would try and reach Nimble Ned, even if I did get caught and whipped by the chief—"

"My girl, no one shall ever be whipped by my orders unless guilty of some offense, and no woman shall ever
be treated with such indignity," Washington said, with much fervor.

"Go on with your story," I added, for I saw that Joanna was inclined to remain silent.

"I started towards the camp, but lost my trail. I walked for some way, and then I saw a fire in the distance, and thought I should find friends there.

"I was so hungry that I could not run, but I walked very fast, and saw, when it was too late, that instead of friends I had run right into the village of some French Indians.

"I threw myself down, and began to make tracks back, but I had been seen, and as I could not resist I was taken prisoner."

"When was that?"

"Four times the sun has risen since they took me to the tepee of the chief.

"He knew me; it was Se-aam, father."

"Se-aam, the grizzly bear. I wonder you escaped from him."

"He asked me where you were since you had left the hunting ground, and I said that you were with friends."
Then he told me that he knew that you were with the Yenglese, and that you were heap bad man. I laughed and treated it as a joke, but soon Se-aam led me to see what he was after. He told me that I was in his power, and that my life would be lost unless I gave him the information he wanted. I asked him what that was, and he replied that he knew that the white chief, Washington, and another white chief, George Lee, were going to make war on the French, who were good friends of Se-aam, and if I would tell him where these chiefs were I should be allowed to go free.

"I told him I did not know, and to myself said that if I did I would not tell him, but I asked what he wanted to do with the chiefs, and he laughed, and said that their scalps were worth having.

"I asked for food, and said I was so hungry that I was starving. Se-aam ordered food to be brought to me, but he would not allow me to eat in the tepee, for then I could have claimed I was his guest, but I was really so near being famished that I was ready to eat anywhere."
"It was near sunset, and I was told that in the morning I should be killed unless I betrayed the white chiefs. I thought I might get a chance to run away during the darkness, but they tied my legs together and my hands behind my back, then fearing that I might use my teeth they put a gag in my mouth, and I was helpless.

"The next day they tried to get me to tell all they wanted to know, but I wouldn't, for my own father's scalp would have been taken.

"That day they would not let me have anything to eat, and when night came I heard one of the braves say: 'Better burn her to-night, she doesn't look as though she'd live till sunrise.'

"Se-aam said he would wait another day, and then—I did not hear what he would do, but I was sure it meant my death. I slept well again that night, and the next, but then I began to grow faint, and I heard them talking about me; they said I should not be able to cry out and shriek with pain unless they gave me some food, so I got plenty to eat."
"A brave came to the village, and powwowed with Se-aam for a long time, then there was a council, and I knew that my fate was being decided.

"I had not to wait long, for I was dragged away from the village to the clearing, and was tied to the tree.

"As my wrists were fastened to the tree, Se-aam stepped before me, and again said that I should live if I would betray the white chiefs. I refused, and he stepped back, and taking from one of his men a bunch of arrows, he began shooting at my face. The first arrow struck the tree not an inch from my ear, the second entered the bark above my head, and so on, until all the arrows were used. I then knew that it was not intended to shoot me, but only to make me frightened so that I should cry out in agony. I did want to, but I closed my teeth tightly and kept all the sound down in my throat.

"Three braves were now selected to face me, and with their tomahawks go through the same performance. The first tomahawk struck just above one of the arrows and the handle rested on my forehead. I
do not know how long this would have continued for
the braves were getting tired as I would not give them
the pleasure of shrieking for mercy. Then it was that
brush was gathered and a fire got ready to burn me,
but just as I felt that my time had come, the white
chief appeared and I was freed. That’s all I’ve got to
say.”

“Do you know this Se-aam?” asked Washington.

“Yes, he is one of the worst of the chiefs who have
allied themselves with the French; I even think I would
prefer Red Wolf himself,” Straight-Tongue answered.

“How did he get his name?”

“Se-aam means grizzly bear, you know, and this
savage won the name by prowling about in the woods
at night securing scalps from those who were caught
napping.”

“It is a pity he was not killed.”

“He will cause us lots of trouble, and I am sorry
that Jo-an should have been the cause of his being so
near us.”

“You wrong the girl, Straight-Tongue, for it seems
to me that she may have saved us, by drawing the grizzly bear's lair, and dispersing his men for a time."

"Well, I reckon we've got to face it whatever it may be, and I don't believe in pulling a long face, no matter what happens."
CHAPTER VII.

TRENT'S RETREAT.

Washington had now a regiment of one hundred and ten men all told, including, of course, my young guardsmen, of whom I was very proud. He had sent a special messenger to William Trent, to inform him that in a short time reinforcements would reach him; the return of the messenger was looked forward to with interest, because Washington had orders to remain at Will's Creek until he had communicated with Trent.

Our time was occupied in marching and drilling, and we soon had an efficient body of soldiers.

Surefoot and Kenton had been sent forward by different routes to the important point occupied by Trent, and on the twelfth day of May Kenton was seen limping along towards the camp.

He was lame, and when he got near enough we saw that he had been injured somewhat, but not very seri-
ously, for he had marched all the way, and reached the
camp before the scout, Surefoot.

"Well away, Kenton?" I shouted, and I saw him
quicken his steps at the sound of a familiar voice.

It may not have been dignified in a captain to run
and meet a scout, but I did not care; I liked Kenton,
dear old fellow, and I was glad to see him returning
safe.

"Wounded?" I asked, when he was still some dis-
tance away.

"No."

"You are lame, or tired, which?"

"Both, George. I fell out of a tree, and put me
ankle out of joint, but I soon put it back, though it
has pained me bad enough."

Col. Washington was soon by our side, and giving
the Virginian such a hearty greeting that made him
feel well repaid for all that he had passed through.

"I have not much report——"

"Don't say a word, Kenton, until you have had a
bath, and got some food into you, for you look half
starved——"
"I am."

"And then you can talk."

"But Trent——"

"Not a word. I am your superior officer, and our cause must wait until you are refreshed. Captain, take charge of Kenton, and see that my orders are obeyed."

It did not take much urging to induce Kenton to strip off his clothes and jump into the Potomac, and after a few minutes in the water he felt quite refreshed. Some clean clothes, which I loaned him made him feel another man. I handed him my flask of rum, and he took a good drink, which made him ready for some food.

I have seen life since that day, and I have noticed what a difference some food, a good bath and a little rest makes in a tired, jaded man.

"It is a miracle that I am here to tell the story," said Kenton, when the colonel sent for him to his shelter; tent it could not fairly be called. I was honored by the colonel by being allowed to be present.

"Yes, a miracle, for I had not been away three days when I caught my foot in a tree root and fell headlong
into a nest of rattlers. Fortunately, the sun had not been powerful enough to rouse them thoroughly, but they were just lively enough to give a nasty dose of their poison if I had not got out of their way quite smart.

"Another time I ran right into the midst of some Indians, and they were going to scalp me, but I overheard them say they were helping the French, and I hoodwinked them into the belief that I was on the way to guide the French to the river. I succeeded so well that I was made the bearer of a message to Gen. St. Pierre. At the time I left, however, the chief, old Grizzly Bear, thought it safer to send one of his braves with me, so I trailed alongside an Indian for several days, wondering all the time how I could get rid of him."

"How did you, for I suppose you had to?"

"Of a certainty I had, and my poor head ached many a time as I worked out all sorts of schemes, but at last the savage solved it himself.

"He was very fond of firewater, and I gave him my flask, which he soon emptied, with the result that he
became very light-headed. Nothing would satisfy him but he must show me how he had won his name for daring. He climbed a tree, and jumped from one tree to another in the most remarkable manner, but one jump was too long, and he fell to the ground, and that was the end of him.”

“He was killed?”

“I reckon so, or at least a good imitation, for his neck was broken.

“I am not going on spinning yarns, for they are not interesting, but rather let me tell you that I got into a nice mess when I arrived at my destination, for there at the joining of the Monongahela and Alleghany was a fort being erected, and at once I knew that it was being done by the French.

“I put on my thinking cap, and soon decided what to do. I had the sign, and knew the countersign, for I got both from Grizzly Bear, though I thought he was fooling me all the time. I advanced boldly, and was challenged. As bold as brass I answered, ‘La Belle France,’ and back came the countersign and the permission to pass.
"I asked if St. Pierre was there, and was taken into his presence. I gave Grizzly Bear's message, altered you may be sure, but still plausible enough, and the French general thanked me and commissioned me to return to the Indian and give him certain instructions.

"I pleaded that I was weary and begged a rest, which was granted.

"I kept my eyes open, and parley-voused with the soldiers like a Canadian. I learned that St. Pierre, at the head of over five hundred men, with eighteen cannon, had come down the Alleghany as soon as the ice gorges broke with the first sun of spring, and that Ensign Ward, who was in charge, had but forty-one men able to fight, and so offered no resistance, and was allowed to retire with all the honors of war."

"Then the English had really seized the key to the Ohio valley?" Washington asked, with flashing eye.

"Yes, and built a stockade; but the French have made the place strong, for they have built barracks, and are erecting a fort, having felled a quantity of big
trees with which to make it. They have given the place the name of Fort Du Quesne."

"When did Trent surrender?"

"On April seventeenth."

"Where was Trent?"

"He had gone up the river seeking another point of vantage, leaving Ensign Ward in charge."

"Did you see Surefoot?"

"No."

"We must recapture that place. How many men are there?"

"At Fort Du Quesne?"

"Yes."

"The day I left reinforcements arrived, and I should say that the French must have nearly a thousand men."

Was it any wonder that the young commander should sigh? He had one hundred and twenty raw soldiers with which to capture a fort, being made stronger every hour, and defended by a thousand picked soldiers.

But after that one sigh, the brave Virginian hesitated not; he quickly mapped out his plan of campaign,
which included sending to Williamsburg for reinforcements and making overtures to the friendly Indians to come to the assistance of the English.

Before his plans were completed night had covered the earth with an inky pall, and most of the men were fast asleep. It was soon after midnight that Surefoot appeared, rather crestfallen at being unable to give better news. He had fallen in with Trent's retreating force, and had tried to induce them to join Washington, but failed. He had learned of the surrender from Trent himself, who was on his way to the capital. Surefoot had been stricken down with a deadly chill, and for four days had lain uncared for and alone by the side of a creek, unable to move hand or foot.

What brave men we had in those days! Nothing seemed to daunt them.
CHAPTER VIII.

FORT NECESSITY.

The march westward commenced on the following morning, and such a march!

No roads, for much of the distance, and those that were in existence were miserable.

Then the rain fell in torrents, and the soldiers were tentless. Every man was drenched to the skin for several days, and at night they dared not attempt to sleep for fear of the terrible ague, so night and day the march was continued, slowly, true, but still we kept moving until nature was exhausted.

We had to wade rivers, holding our ammunition cases above our heads, and drag the cannon through the water.

At one river, which was too deep to be waded, we had to stop to build rafts for our guns; but, alas! one raft capsized, and we lost two of our small cannon.

Washington shared every peril and fatigue with us, even Nimble Ned fared as well as the young colonel.
After twelve days of march, during ten of which it had rained incessantly, the colonel addressed his men.

"Virginians, we are pledged to our country's service; I have no hope that any will return alive; I have no right to ask you to continue with me. You are free men, and have liberty to return if you so desire. I want you to know that from this time on only half rations can be served, and our supply of rum is exhausted.

"You know what is before you—peril, misery, starvation and death! What say you? Will you go forward with me, or go back to your homes?"

My guardsmen sent Lieut. Mason to me to answer for them, and I said that we would stay with the colonel. If he went forward so would we, if he retreated we would follow him.

There was a loud cheer from all, and one big Irishman, who towered above all the other recruits, shouted:

"By Saint Patrick, sure an' we'll die before we start back."

That was enough, no one noticed the absurdity of the speech, it was enough that it breathed the right
patriotism, and every man declared that he would stand by Washington.

The Great Meadows were reached on the twenty-sixth of May, and a halt was called.

Here we met Tanacharissou, the Half-King, and chief of the confederacy of the Delawares, Shawnees, Mingoes and Miamis.

Tall, stately, and looking every inch a king, the Indian saluted our commander.

"Our lives are in danger," he said.

Then he paused to watch the effect.

No one spoke.

We had known the Indian character so well that silence was eloquent.

"Our people, who were here before the white man set his foot on our land, are in danger."

Again he paused, and folding his arms looked at Washington.

"The French hate the red man, and will kill him."

He drew himself up until he towered above Washington, who was above the average height.

"We have sworn to fight the enemies of our people
to the death. We have put our trust in you, what say you?"

"Mighty chief of the Delawares, Shawnees, Mingoes and Miamis; the great Half-King of the good Indians, I give you my answer. We will save you or die with you."

"You have answered like a brave. My people will hail you as their chief. But do not delay. The French are within a few miles, and we shall all die unless you fight soon, and fight with us."

"Trust us, as we trust you."

"Come with me and meet the enemy," the Half-King suggested.

"No, let the enemy come here, we will defend this place, and shall be between your people and the enemy."

Tanacharissou was not pleased, he was in favor of meeting the enemy and not waiting for a more favorable opportunity.

Washington could not be moved even though his resolve should alienate the allied Indians.
All hands were set to work building a stockade, and the new exercise did us good.

I mounted the stockade, and asked that it should be named Fort Washington, but the colonel would not allow it, and suggested that it should be known as Fort Necessity.

The scouts of the Half-King brought us word that the French company in the vicinity of the Youghiogheny was only a scouting party, and we felt rather sad, for we wanted glory, and that could not be had by fighting a handful of men no more in numbers than ourselves.

Washington and the Half-King met again, and the Indian reported that the French were hiding in a rocky ravine, and that it might be possible to surround and capture them.

Orders were given to march with caution.

Washington and Surefoot led the way, gun in hand, then came my guardsmen, having the post of honor.

The French were on the alert and flew to arms.

"Fire!"

The clear voice of Col. Washington rang out through
the forest, and the first volley of a great war through which I am proud I went, was fired.

The enemy retreated, but it was only a feint. That I did not know.

"Follow me!" I shouted, and my young guardsmen rushed forward, almost knocking me over in their excitement.

Nimble Ned was by my side, then in front of me, everywhere except where he should be, and I was getting angry with him.

He had his gun at his shoulder, and called out:

"See that Frenchy, watch me wing him."

He fired, and sure enough the bullet struck the soldier in the right arm, making him drop his gun.

"Nimble Ned did that," shouted the boy, as he reloaded.

We fought desperately.

Sometimes we were at such close quarters that we locked our guns together.

Nimble Ned saw one man aiming at me, and he sprang forward and leaped onto the man's shoulders,
clinching him round the neck with his legs until the Frenchman shrieked with pain.

Capt. Jumonville, the French commander, seemed to think that I was the colonel, for he made for me, and we came together with a clash that nearly landed us both on the ground.

We grappled and wrestled together, each seeking the other's life, until we were almost exhausted.

I was within a hair's breadth of killing him, when two of his men seized him, and dragged him away, throwing me to the ground.

I was trampled on by my own men as well as by the enemy, and nearly lost my life, but again I was saved by Ned, who threw himself on the ground and crawled to me. Then he arched himself over my body, thus giving me room to get my breath. It was a strange thing for him to think of, but he seemed always quick-witted when there was danger to be averted.

"Are you all right, cap'n?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Then get up, an' we will fight 'em."
I rose to my feet and picked up my musket, which fortunately was loaded.

The battle was being fought with vigor, though the forces were some distance away from where I had fallen.

Ned and I ran to within firing distance, and we both fired at the same time, and then dropped down so that we could load with less danger of being a target.

Again we rose, and I saw the colonel fighting in the very thickest of the battle. His commanding presence overshadowed all the others.

He seemed to have a charmed life.

I thought again of what we had said about his luck, and how Gist had insisted that there was some power watching over and protecting Washington.

It seems queer to me that such thoughts should come during a battle, when all energies were directed to killing our fellow men.

Jumonville had drawn a line on Washington, and instinctively I knew that in a moment, unless something unforeseen happened, the bullet would crash into the brain of our beloved commander.
Ned saw it as I did, and again the boy's gun and mine rang out at the same time.

Jumonville threw up his arms and fell, dead.

The fight had been desperate, but decisive.

Nimble Ned insisted that it was my bullet that killed the French captain, but I was quite sure in my own mind that he was the one who aimed straightest and therefore saved our colonel.

Ten French were killed and twenty-one made prisoners.

It was a glorious victory, and my young guardsmen did wonders; they were in the thickest of the fight and not one of them even got a scratch.
CHAPTER IX.

NIMBLE NED'S SORRY JOKE.

Owatomie, chief of the Mingoes, was, in his own estimation, the most important of all the Indian allies on our side. He strutted about as proud as a peacock, a bird whose feathers he wore as a headdress. He imagined that his word was of greater value than that of the Half-King, though in the presence of that worthy he dare not so express himself.

While we were waiting reinforcements and supplies after the battle with Jumonville, Owatomie came to the camp with a message from the Half-King.

Washington received him with his usual courtesy, but did not pay that deference to him which he expected, and the Indian snorted and grumbled, and declared that his people were insulted.

Washington hearing this, sent for Owatomie, and talked very earnestly with him, making the red man feel quite ashamed of his conduct.

"Heap big chief have lot sense," he declared, but it
was known not whether he referred to Washington or himself as the "heap big chief."

I am sorry to say that my young guardsmen did not show Owatomie the respect to which he was entitled, though they offered him no indignity.

It was to Nimble Ned that we owed a quarrel with the Mingoes which nearly caused a severance of our friendly relations with that tribe.

Ned waited until the chief was asleep, wrapped in his blanket, and, as was the custom, far away from the white soldiers.

When the camp was silent, save for the almost noiseless tramp of the sentries, Ned crawled through the grass towards the sleeping chief.

Owatomie looked well as he lay upon the ground, for he was really a fine specimen of the red man. His left arm was over his breast, and in his right hand, which was by his side, he held his knife.

The peacock feathers on his head seemed to lie naturally on the grass, undisturbed by his sleeping.

Ned watched him for some minutes to see if he was really asleep. The snoring, which is common to white
and red men alike, was eloquent testimony to the unconsciousness of the chief.

With cautious movement, Ned got close to the chief, and slowly and with great deliberation removed the peacock feathers from the headpiece, and in their place he adroitly adjusted some leaves of the skunk cabbage, a weed held in great abhorrence by the Indians.

This did not complete Ned’s mischief, for he next attempted a most daring piece of work, which was nothing less than removing the knife from Owatomie’s hand.

Once the Indian raised his hand as though he instinctly scented danger, but Ned succeeded in untwining the fingers and taking the knife from his grasp; but knowing that the Indian would miss it, he put in its place a piece of iron hooping taken from a powder barrel.

Across each of the Indian’s cheeks was a broad line of chrome yellow, a mark of chieftainship and a badge of courage, this Ned daubed over with some whitewash which he found in an old cabin a little distance from the camp.
Owatomie moved uneasily, and Ned dared not stay longer. He crawled away, and was soon occupying his accustomed place among my guardsmen.

So silent had he been that only one of his fellow soldiers knew of his pranks.

In the morning when reveille was sounded, Ned was the first to his feet. A few minutes only elapsed before a loud whoop was heard, followed by a series of noises hard to understand, and still harder to write down.

Owatomie had found the piece of hooping instead of his knife, and all unconscious of any other changes in his appearance he gave vent to ear-splitting noises.

A burst of laughter greeted him.

Shouts of derision fell upon his ear, and some called out:

"Where are your feathers?"

The Indian raised his hand to his head, and then his wrath broke forth anew, for the hated skunk cabbage had taken the place of the splendid peacock feathers.

"What does a white mark on the face mean?" asked
one of the youngsters, loud enough for the Indian to hear.

“Cowardice,” was the reply.

“Owatomie is the brave chief of a brave people, and yet he wears the white.”

The Indian dashed across the clearing to the side of the creek, whose clear water acted as a mirror. He saw the white over the yellow, and his language was such that no one would want to repeat.

He resumed his usual calm, and with stately tread wended his way to Col. Washington.

Without a word he pointed to his face, then held out a leaf of the skunk cabbage, and by gestures told him how his knife had been taken and a piece of rusty iron substituted.

“Who has done it?” asked Washington.

No answer was given; in fact, everyone in the entire regiment was inwardly laughing over the comical situation, but the stern face of the great Virginian silenced any open approval or any mirth.

“Big chief tell Mingoes. Mingoes no help Yeng-lese; Frenchies no treat big chief like this.”
There was more dignity displayed by Owatomie at that moment than we had heretofore seen, and I felt sorry for him.

Washington ordered an inquiry, and each captain had to answer for his men.

When I called my guardsmen together I did not think any would confess guilt, but as soon as the question was asked, Ned stepped forward.

"I did it," he said.

"You?"

"Yes, cap'n."

"What for?"

"It was fun, cap'n."

"It will not be fun for you, Ned. I am afraid the colonel will order you to be shot."

"Not that, cap'n."

"Owatomie is the chief of the Mingoes, and he threatens that his tribe will go over to the enemy."

"If so I'll kill him," exclaimed Ned, excitedly.

"Please, captain, say that I did it," Tom Early said, as he raised his hand to his head in salute.

"But you didn't."
“Yes, I did; at least—”
“No, lies, Tom. Tell me all about it.”
“I saw it done, and I did not interfere.”
“But why do you want to bear the blame?”
“I should have done it only—”
“Only what?”
“I didn’t think of it. My brain is not as quick as
Ned’s.”
“But Ned did it,” I asserted, questioningly.
“Yes, but I could have stopped him, and didn’t.”
I felt sorry for Ned, and almost as much so for Tom,
who was one of my bravest boys, though nearly the
youngest guardsman in the company.
I reported to Washington, and then made a personal
appeal, but I saw that he meant to punish the perpetra-
tor of the joke, and all I could do was to argue in
favor of mitigation.
The order went forth that Ned was to receive twen-
ty-five lashes on the bare back, and the punishment was
to be inflicted by anyone selected from the entire regi-
ment by Owatomie.
The Indian asked to be allowed to administer the
castigation himself, but that Washington would not al-
low, and so the biggest and heaviest man was chosen.

Ned was stripped to the waist, and tied to a tree,
with his arms above his head. The whip used was a
strip of rawhide which would cut into the flesh.

Just as the first blow was about to descend Tom
Early threw himself in front of Ned, and received the
blow on his shoulders.

"Get out of the way you young fool," roared the
castigator. "I'll not hurt him, but I will you."

Sergt. Carter dragged Tom away, and Ned received
his whipping, much to the happiness of the Indian,
who admired the stolid way in which he took his pun-
ishment, for not a cry left his lips.

When he was released, Owatomie went up to him,
and patted him on the shoulders.

"White man brave as a Mingo. Mingoes will make
him a brother."

Ned laughed, and stepped back to the ranks.

"You were brave," said Lieut. Mason.

"I never felt a blow; at least, not one hurt me. They
would not have killed a bug."
Nimble Ned's Sorry Joke.

It was true, the big burly castigator had allowed all the strength of his blow spend itself before the lash touched the boy's back, and yet to the onlookers it appeared as though the punishment was severe.

Ned was admonished not to play any more jokes on Indians, and he promised to obey, but less than ten minutes later he had run up to the Indian, and presenting him with a leaf of skunk cabbage, said:

"One of your feathers which you threw away."

Owatomie raised his foot, and the next moment Ned's body was performing some eccentric evolutions in the air. Never had I seen a kick so effective, and I feared for Ned's bones as his body struck the earth.
CHAPTER X.

THREATENED MUTINY.

While we were waiting for reinforcements, the French were gathering in great numbers at Fort Du Quesne, and strengthening their position.

Surefoot had been sent back to the French lines to obtain all the information possible, and the news he brought back was far from encouraging.

There was considerable discontent among our men, for they did not like being kept at Fort Necessity so long, and I had great difficulty in holding my guardsmen, who plainly told me that they had enlisted to fight, and not to squat on their uppers at a fort in the middle of the Great Meadows.

Early in June, Lieut. Vernon came to me, and after saluting fumbled about in a very unsoldier-like fashion.

“What is it lieutenant?”

“Captain, I hardly like to tell you.”

“Out with it, Vernon; some new piece of practical joking?”
"No, worse than that."
"You astonish me. Come, man, what is it?"
"The guardsmen are dissatisfied."
"So am I."
"But they are talking of—— You had better read that."

He handed me a big piece of paper on which was a lot of writing and underneath the signatures of some twenty men, written in a circle, in other words, a round robin.

"What is this about?" I asked.

"Read it, captain, and—well, I may as well admit I signed it with the rest."

I read the document, which practically was a threat to desert unless the guardsmen were sent at once against the French.

It recited how they had left their comfortable homes to go across the country to fight the enemies of the Indians and English colonists, but they had been kept for weeks in a miserable fort, without proper food and almost without shelter.

"Lead us against the enemy, and we will give a good
account of ourselves, or if that is impossible then let us return home," the round robin concluded.

"Vernon, you know well enough that a soldier's duty is to obey his superior; you expect your men to obey you, just as you obey me, and I obey Col. Washington's commands. Go back, tell the men that I will release anyone who asks for his discharge, but on no account will I allow you, as a company, to dictate what shall be done."

"Forgive me, Capt. Lee; but I feel sorry for the men."

"Don't you think I do?"

"Yes, I know you are for action."

"Shall I present this to Col. Washington, or will you take it back to Lieut. Mason for him to deal with it as he thinks fit."

Vernon saw in this a rebuke as I intended it to be, for it was the duty of the second lieutenant to approach me through the first lieutenant and not directly, but we had not been heretofore sticklers for strict military discipline.

"I will take it back."
Threatened Mutiny.

"I have a better plan."

"You will act on it?"

"Ask Mason to muster all the guardsmen together, and I will discuss this with them."

Vernon hesitated, and I looked at him, and asserted my authority.

"Go. Do you not understand a command?"

A few minutes later the guardsmen had assembled, and I stood in front of them holding the round robin in my hand.

"Young guardsmen, I have read what you have to say, and to a certain extent I sympathize with you.

"If you desert it will be my duty to capture you, and as we are at war, the penalty will be death.

"You are not cowards, but the death you wish to die is an honorable one, and not that of a deserter.

"You agreed, with me, to face whatever might be in our way; our colonel knows what he is doing, and I shall obey him without question; you may do as you please. Any guardsman who wishes his discharge in the face of the enemy can have it, and can carry back
Threatened Mutiny.

to his home the brand of coward indelibly stamped on his brow.

"What say you? Which shall it be?"

"We will stay, captain."

"I want to hear from each one of you. Lieut. Mason, what say you?"

"I did not sign that paper. I shall stay, whatever anyone else does."

"And you, Lieut. Vernon?"

"I shall stay."

"Sergt. Willis, your answer?"

"I enlisted for the war, and if I die waiting for the war to commence that is not my fault."

I asked each one of the men separately, and not one would take the responsibility of saying that he wished to leave the company.

The threatened mutiny had been averted, but for how long?

While I was addressing my young recruits, of whom I was proud, we heard the strains of a drum corps in the distance, and the same hope passed through each
of our hearts that the enemy might be on the march, and that a battle would be fought shortly.

In the distance we saw a company of soldiers marching in our direction, and when they were near enough we distinctly recognized the English flag.

Reinforcements and not an enemy!

For a moment our hopes were dashed to the ground, but only to rise again, for all we were waiting for was an addition to our fighting force.

We soon learned that it was only a small company of volunteers from South Carolina, with a drum corps of three pieces.

Capt. Wilson, the commanding officer, asked for the headquarters of Mr. Washington.

"There is no Mr. Washington here," I replied, tartly; "perhaps you mean Col. Washington?"

"Where is he?"

Col. Washington, with his tall body erect, his head thrown slightly back, came to welcome the new soldiers.

"Have I the honor of speaking with Mr. Washington?"
"No, sir; but I am Col. Washington; what do you wish?"

"I have been commissioned to command a company of South Carolinians, sir, and have done my duty so far. When will it be your pleasure to report the condition of affairs?"

Washington was not easily surprised, but I saw that he was at that moment.

"Explain, sir!"

"I thought that you could understand the English language, for you obtained your diploma as a surveyor from the College of William and Mary, as I understand."

Impertinence and insult were contained in every word uttered, and Washington had difficulty to control his temper.

"What is your rank in the army?" he asked.

"I am a captain, my commission being signed by his gracious majesty, the king."

"And I am lieutenant colonel, and therefore your superior."
Threatened Mutiny.

A cynical smile passed over the face of the English captain, as he replied:

“Very true, sir; but the king hath decreed that no colonel can have any rank when a commissioned officer of the English army is present.”

“Then go back to your king, and tell him that Lieut.-Col. Washington will remain in command until removed from his position by the colonial authorities.”

“You do not recognize me as your superior officer?”

“No.”

“Then, sir, I shall so report, and the consequences will be great.”

“I accept them, and now, Capt. Wilson, I ask for your report, and shall expect your obedience to my orders, until such times as it is proved that a captain is ranking officer over a colonel.”

The English captain knew that he had to submit, for the king was three thousand miles away, and the governors of the colonies were nearer, and they had acknowledged the rank of Washington.

As he moved away, Capt. Wilson muttered something which sounded very like a threat.
The next day Washington ordered Capt. Wilson and his company to garrison Fort Necessity, while he would take his men and cut a road through to Fort Du Quesne.

"Do you call this a fort?" asked Wilson.

"It is the best we have, but it will be your duty to strengthen it and add to the earthworks in case of assault."

With this injunction Washington left Fort Necessity, and we started on our work of cutting a road through the rough country.

The Mingoes were to have joined us, but Owatomie had evidently advised them not to do so, or something extraordinary had happened, for neither Mingoes nor the Muskingum joined us.

Our whole fighting force was less than four hundred, but not another sign of discontent was manifest; we were doing something, and that was better than idleness.
CHAPTER XI.

JOANNA REPORTS A CONSPIRACY.

We cut a road twenty miles towards Fort Du Quesne and met with no adventure worth writing about.

We had encamped for the night, my guardsmen being fully a quarter of a mile in advance of the others, for to us had been assigned the more difficult task of felling trees, moving rocks out of the way and generally clearing the roughness off the surface, leaving the road-making to the others.

We had sounded taps and, wrapped in our blankets, were sleeping soundly, when I was aroused by hearing a challenge.

I was quickly on my feet and listening.

I recognized the voice, and again Joanna was with us. It seemed impossible to get rid of her. After the last rescue from the Indians her father had persuaded her to join her sister, and he found an escort for her, and now she was here again.

I called to the sentry to allow her to pass.
“Joanna, what brings you here?” I asked, angrily.

“To see you.”

“Your father has gone on a scouting expedition.”

“I know it. I saw him.”

“You saw him?”

“Yes, but he didn’t see me.”

“How was that?”

“I was up a tree, and didn’t want a scolding.”

“What do you want?”

“To see you, but I want no one to hear.”

I led the way some distance from the lines and then sarcastically said:

“Now let me hear this terrible conspiracy.”

“It is most frightful.”

“Explain yourself.”

“One Leroy is at the head of it.”

“Oh! And he wants to kill me, I suppose.”

“It does not concern you, Capt. Lee; it is the colonel.”

“What menaces him?”

“They want to carry him off.”

“How will they do it?”
"He exposes himself often outside the lines, and never has more than two attendants."

"Well?"

"They will kill the attendants."

"Impossible; that would give the alarm and the abduction would fail to be effected."

"You are like all men, very stupid."

"Thank you. There was a time when you wished you were a man."

"That was before I knew so many. I only knew my father then."

"Why did you not go to the colonel with your story?"

"He might not have believed me."

"But I am so stupid that I will, eh?"

"Will you listen to me? I tell you that there is great danger, and even now I may be too late."

"Is Leroy near here, then?"

"He is. I have spoken to him not an hour ago."

"Are you in league with him?"

"How dare you?" The question was emphasized by such a smack on the face that I fairly reeled. I knew that I deserved it, so did not say anything about it.
"What am I to do?"

"Join the colonel, and, if he will not take your warning, watch him."

The girl was so much in earnest that I agreed to at least acquaint Washington with what I had heard.

"I will tell you more," she said. "Gerald de Villiers is on the march with a large body of men, and the plan is to arrive as soon after your colonel is captured as possible, and then there would be no resistance."

"Are you sure of this?"

"Positive."

I gave my orders to Lieut. Mason, and, taking Sergt. Willis and Private Moore with me, commenced to cover the distance between my camp and that occupied by the colonel.

Joanna pulled my arm so violently that I was about to cry out; but she clapped her hand over my mouth and whispered quickly:

"Don't make a sound. I hear something."

"What?"

"Hush!"
We hid in the shadow of the trees, for the moon was casting its light over the meadows and woods, and I soon saw five men slinking along as though trying to escape detection.

Just then the moon emerged from behind a cloud, and I recognized the well-known form of Leroy.

"Come on, men; we must face them!"

At double quick the four of us started, for Joanna kept close to our heels for a time, and then suddenly, without warning, turned round and fled to the wood, for which I was heartily pleased.

"Halt!"

We had succeeded in getting in front of the five men, and, to their astonishment, challenged them.

"Halt! Give the word, or you cannot pass."

"Stand on one side, or your blood be on your head," cried Leroy.

"Oh, so we have met again, have we?" I asked, sneeringly.

"Yes, George Lee, we have met; but I have no desire to talk to you. I have weightier matters on hand."
"So have I," I exclaimed, as I flung myself on him and bore him to the ground; "and this is one of them," I added, as I battered his head on the hard earth.

I found myself dragged off my old foe, and I wondered why no shot had been fired; but I soon satisfied myself that no noise was wanted.

I had not given the order to fire, and Sergt. Willis took the hint and used nature's weapons and his gun as a club, an example followed by Private Moore.

We fought almost savagely, and I was getting the best of it, when one of the guns went off, and instantly the alarm was given at both camps.

Leroy and his men took advantage of the opportunity and ran away as fast as they could, and, though several shots were fired after them, they succeeded in escaping, much to my regret.

I had but one satisfaction, and that was the knowledge that Leroy had less teeth than when I challenged him that night.

Washington heard the alarm and hurried with his men forward. I told him of the warning, and he ad-
mitted that he had expected something of the sort, for he had been warned several days before by an Indian.

Joanna had disappeared, and so we had no opportunity of thanking her.

"She certainly watches over us," I said, and Washington answered, solemnly:

"She has saved my life more than once. I only hope she may not lose her own."

Her report that De Villiers was on the march at the head of a large body of men caused Washington to relinquish his road-making and order a march back to Fort Necessity, which we hoped had been strongly fortified.

In two days we arrived back at the fort, and found, to our great dismay, that nothing had been done.

Capt. Wilson was so engrossed with the desire to supersede Washington that he had spent all the time in sending messengers to the governor of Carolina to urge him to ask for the recall of the Virginian and the appointment of himself, having an English commission, as commander. This occupied all his time, and he
fondly imagined that the enemy would wait until he was ready to meet and fight on advantageous terms.

The return of Washington upset all his calculations, but he sneeringly accused the great Virginian of being tired of hard work and of having manufactured a scare to excuse his retreat to safe quarters.
CHAPTER XII.

HEROISM.

We reached Fort Necessity on July 2d and commenced at once to throw up earthworks, working most of the night, so as to be prepared for attack.

The fort stood in an open space, midway between two eminences covered with trees. If the enemy gained these hills our chances would be slight.

Our few cannon were placed at points of advantage and everything was made ready for a struggle.

Ammunition was served out to each man and a war ration of half a pint of rum was given them.

Early on the morning of the third scouts reported that the regiment of Villiers, numbering at least six hundred, and as many Indian allies, was approaching.

In an hour the fort was completely surrounded, and, to our dismay, we saw half the French stationed on one of the hills, at a distance of less than sixty yards.

The rain began to fall in heavy torrents, and everything seemed to depress the spirits of the defenders.
Washington was cool and calm through it all, and even when an incessant shower of bullets fell within the stockade he moved about, cheering his men and setting a wonderful example of courage.

The Indians climbed into the treetops, and many of them, having learned the use of firearms, used them to deadly advantage.

I urged Washington to allow me to take my men and try to force a way through the ranks of the enemy, if only to open up a road by which we might retreat, if necessary.

For a long time he would not give the order.

"It looks like murder, Lee," he said.

"We are ready to face whatever it may be," was my answer.

At last came the word:

"Make a sally and see what you can do."

My young guardsmen almost went frantic with joy at the prospect of such a fight in the open.

I have often wondered since whether they realized what it meant. Perhaps some of them were too young to do so.
“Follow me, boys,” I shouted. “I will not ask you to go where I do not lead.”

We marched out of the stockade as though on parade, but no sooner were we clear than we got our guns ready and went at double quick to within forty yards of the surrounding enemy.

I gave orders to my guardsmen to fire in battalions, ten each volley. By this means one battalion could be loading while the other fired.

“Fire!”

I fired with the men, and before the smoke cleared away a second volley went crashing into the ranks of the enemy.

We moved forward a few yards and again fired, and then I gave the order to charge with fixed bayonets.

With bayonets at “guard” we dashed headlong at the line of the enemy and forced a way through, with a loss of only one of my guardsmen, who fell wounded, but not killed.

The enemy closed up, but we mowed away through the lines by a rapid volley of musket shots, and then
we charged again with the bayonets, and once more had made a passage through the thin line of the enemy.

De Villiers, seeing what we were doing, concentrated his fire on the little body of boys—for we were not much more than boys—who had so daringly cut a way through his ranks.

We fought hand to hand, defending ourselves with the bayonets and in turn forcing the enemy to do likewise.

The bullets fell around us like rain, but not another guardsman was hit, and we managed to pick up our wounded comrade and carry him back to the stockade, being driven back through want of ammunition.

Our success inspired Capt. Wilson, and he asked permission to make a sortie at another point, and, as it seemed desirable to strike the enemy at every available place, it was granted, and the captain, with his South Carolinians, started out at the north gate of the stockade.

Wilson either got frightened or lost his head, for as soon as his fire was returned he fell to the rear and left his brave company to dash ahead without him.
They fought bravely.
Man after man fell, and ten were counted on the ground in a short time.
The order to retreat was given.
Back they came, leaving their dead behind them.
"See," cried Lieut. Vernon, "one of those men is only wounded."
He did not wait for orders, but dashed out of the fort.
The bullets fell around him like rain, but he never stopped.
From all sides the fire was hot and heavy.
Would he ever return?
The question was on every lip, but none gave it words. I wished that he had not been so daring, yet all admired his magnificent courage.
He picked up the wounded Carolinian and started back, carrying the man just as a woman carries a child.
The firing at him seemed like murder, but not a shot hit him.
Cheer followed cheer as he neared the fort, and some
wanted to go out and help him, but the orders were against it.

When he was within sixty yards of the fort the firing suddenly ceased, and from the ranks of the enemy there rose a cheer as loud and hearty as those we had given.

It was a strange sight.

Enemies united in cheering a most daring act, and I am sure that if Vernon had been taken prisoner he would have been the lion of the French soldiers.

He staggered inside the fort and fell with his burden, utterly exhausted.

Washington picked him up and, in a voice broken with emotion, said:

"Braver act I never saw, boy. Your country will be proud of you."

For fully five minutes after he entered the fort only one shot was fired by the enemy, and that was from a tree top, and we knew it came from an Indian.

The battle recommenced and the rain fell heavier than ever; the fire had lasted seven hours, without much intermission, and neither side seemed to have gained an advantage.
We could see that many of the French were killed, and more than one Indian had fallen from his tree branch, but we had lost fifteen men; but that appeared to be the total result of the battle.

Again my guardsmen volunteered to dislodge some of the enemy on the eminence to our right—men who were doing more damage than was pleasant.

We crossed the open space, amid a torrent of bullets, and began the ascent.

"Don't fire, boys," I cried; "use your bayonets."

Up the hill we went, keeping as much as possible behind the trees, but realizing that few of us would return alive.

My foot slipped and I fell.

At that moment I presented a target for the enemy, and bullet after bullet struck the ground all around me.

I could not rise, for I had hurt my foot, but I remember calling out:

"Don't trouble about me; keep on."

Vernon saw my peril and again he distinguished himself.
He crossed to where I was lying and braved the shots which fell thick and fast.

I felt his strong young arms around me, and before I could say a word he had carried me to the shelter of a big rock, which effectually shielded me.

Lieut. Mason developed military strategy of a high order, for he led his men by a devious path round the side of the hill until they were at the rear of the enemy, and then like a whirlwind the young guardsmen dashed down the hill, driving the astonished Frenchmen before them like sheep.

As the enemy reached the plain our men began a fierce fire upon them, and at least a score were put out of fighting condition.

We reached the fort, I being almost carried by my faithful friend, Nimble Ned, who had performed prodigies of valor.

For some unexplained reason the firing ceased, and in a few moments we saw the white flag hoisted above the French position.

Then we caught sight of three men coming towards the fort, bearing a flag of truce.
Heroism.

Washington had just told us that our ammunition was nearly gone and that our surrender was only delayed a few minutes.

We had lost too many men, and the French outnumbered us two to one.

The message from De Villiers was asking a truce until morning, so that the dead might be buried and the tired soldiers refreshed.

It was no use concealing our position, and Washington sent word back offering to surrender if honorable terms could be arranged.

A meeting between the two commanding officers was agreed upon, and I was ordered to act as Washington's aide.

De Villiers was most courteous and gentlemanly, and our colonel proved that a colonial could be the equal of the French veteran in the art of politeness.

We were to be allowed to leave with our arms and all accoutrements, and to be permitted to carry our flag, as though we were the victors.

"I could not have held out any longer," Washington admitted.
“My ammunition was exhausted, or nearly so,” replied De Villiers; “so it was only a question of numbers, and there I had the advantage.”

The battle had lasted over nine hours, and our loss was twenty killed and five wounded. The French loss was more than three times as heavy.

As we marched away from Fort Necessity we knew that the French were masters of the Ohio valley, and our hearts were heavy.

With aching hearts we marched back to our homes, and I verily believe there was not one of our number who looked forward to his homecoming with pleasure.

Col. Washington was sad, but he was also philosophic, and reasoned that surrender with honor was far better than a defeat costing the lives of so many, with nothing but capture and deportation at the end.
CHAPTER XIII.

SHADOWS.

We reached Williamsburg in due time, and were far better received than I expected. It was only natural that there should be some bitter feelings arising out of disappointment, but all knew that Washington had done everything possible, and that if he had failed no one else could have succeeded.

I called the young guardsmen together to disband them, and the gathering was a sorrowful one.

Sergt. Willis stepped to the front and, saluting, addressed me somewhat in this strain:

"Capt. Lee, I very much doubt whether you have the power to disband the guardsmen, for they voluntarily enlisted, not for a limited time, but until the country had no further need of their services.

"That time has not arrived, and I propose that our organization be continued, and that we should hold ourselves ready to take up arms at the call of the captain."
I had wished for such a thing, but had not hinted it to anyone, so was highly pleased when the proposition came from one of the officers.

"I thank you for the suggestion," I said, "but to maintain a military organization is costly; we must keep in practice with our guns, and there are many expenses which must be met."

"We have thought of all that," answered Lieut. Mason, "and we have already obtained guarantees for more than half the likely expenses for a year."

"Is that possible?"

"It is, and you need ask nothing about it. The money will be subject to your call."

"What say you, guardsmen?" I asked.

With one loud voice adhesion was given to the proposition, and a vote was taken that the Young Guardsmen should, at least, remain organized for one year from that date.

When I told Washington he demurred, because he was a stickler for what he termed the proprieties, and he thought the governor might be displeased at having a military organization exist in the capital the expenses
of which were to be paid by voluntary subscriptions. I overcame his scruples, and he volunteered to lay the matter before the governor and obtain his consent.

The story of our battle at Fort Necessity and the heroism displayed by some of my guardsmen spread like wildfire through the capital, and it was a wonder that we were not all spoiled by the attentions we received.

Parties were given in our honor, festivities and ova­tions were the order of the day, much to the disgust of Col. Washington, who did not like any flummery of that kind.

“If I can be relieved from active duty,” he said to me, “I shall go to my brother’s house at Mount Vernon and hide from public view.”

“I would like activity, rather than this kind of life,” I replied.

“What will your guardsmen be worth, after all this dissipation and flattery?”

“I think their hearts are right and all will be well in the end.”

“Let us hope so.”

We had been back nearly a month, and were still
nominally under arms, for the governor, after hearing the request made by the guardsmen, said he thought he would not disband the regiment for some weeks, at least, and that the guardsmen were a part of that regiment.

There was one thing which both pleased and grieved me. Nimble Ned had disappeared.

The boy had tamed down considerably, and had been accepted as an equal by the company; in fact, many had begun to like him as well as I did, for I knew him to be good-hearted and faithful.

One morning when the roll was called he was missing.

That night, again, he did not answer to his name.

Three days passed, and then I was compelled to report him as a deserter. The consequences would not be serious, for we were not at war just then, and the boy was looked upon as a freelance by many of us and had never been bound down by military rules.

Still I was grieved, and we all missed him.

It was in the middle of September, as nearly as I now remember, that Arnold Peyton gave a large party in our honor. He made it a point of honor for every
guardsman to attend, and, to humor him, the roll was called in his great hall as we marched in. Everyone responded except Nimble Ned, and we purposely omitted his name from the roll, so that we should not have to excuse his absence.

In those days, which seem so far away even as I write, though but a few years have passed, we commenced our evening festivities at sunset; alas! even now we think nothing of assembling as late as eight of the clock, a dissipation much to be deplored.

On the hearth in the great parlors blazed some logs, sending out most delicious heat and casting shadows on the floor. It had been a fancy of our host to have some games by the light of the fire, and we had been practicing which could produce the strangest shadow, when a scream startled us all, and when it was followed by another from pretty Mary Peyton we forgot all our shadow-making to find out what it meant.

Mary Peyton was shivering with fear, and her sister clung to her for protection.

“What was it?”

“What affrighted you?”
“Mary, what is the matter?” asked her father, when our questions were not answered.

“I saw a shadow,” she commenced, “and it was not a human—no, I am not jesting. Oh, it was horrible!”

“Where did you see it?” I asked.

“Up there,” pointing to a panel in the ceiling which was of lighter wood than the rest.

“A shadow on the ceiling? Impossible! It was your imagination.”

“No, no, father; I saw it, and Elizabeth saw it. Did you not?”

“Yes, indeed, I did, and it was a great, big, roaring tiger or lion.”

We laughed at the girls, but our laughter died away almost before matured, for Thomas Randolph, good, sober citizen as he was, startled us by declaring that while we had been talking to the girls in the corner the shadow had really appeared again on the ceiling.

He had seen it not a moment ago, and agreed that it was like a big lion.

We huddled close together and watched the panel in the ceiling for many minutes, but no shadow appeared,
and we all came to the conclusion that it was some omen, which only a wise soothsayer could explain.

Arnold Peyton reminded us that the English were said by the French to fight under the banner of a leopard, and it might be that it was a leopard's shadow which had been seen, and, if so, did it not signify that soon the English would be triumphant and the French defeated?

The idea was so pleasing that we readily accepted it, and again indulged in our amusements by firelight.

Mistress Custis volunteered to play on the spinnet while we danced the minuet, and, in her pretty way, said that the shadows the dancers would make would dispel those which had been seen on the ceiling.

The older folks did not dance, but left the floor to the guardsmen and the young ladies, and, though I was one of the dancers, I am ready to say that we did full justice to the stately minuet and really performed some most fascinating figures.

In one of the most graceful figures Mistress Custis, who had turned her head to watch us, allowing her fingers to lead themselves, cried out:
“Look! There it is!”

We all looked at the ceiling, and, sure enough, a shadow of some animal appeared, but a scream from one of the ladies caused us to look down, instead of up, and such a sight I never saw.

The ladies were trying to get on the tables at the side of the room, and were clinging to and hugging each other, for scampering about among them was a most ferocious-looking black cat, held by a string, but by whom none could tell, for the string ended at the fire.

“Shoot it!”

“Catch it!”

“Who will dare to touch it?” I asked, but none responded, for we were all superstitious.

The cat could not reach any of us, for the string held it so that it could not get as far as the walls, against which we were standing.

Thomas Randolph watched his opportunity and caught hold of the cord, which was a wire one, such as Master Franklin had been using to draw the lightning from the clouds to the earth.

Randolph pulled, and as he tugged, so his daughter
tugged at my arm to suggest that she looked to me for protection.

There was a noise in the chimney, and Master Randolph pulled strongly on the cord, when suddenly one of the blazing logs rolled off the andirons and on the hearth; but, what was stranger still, from the hearth there rose a human being, all covered with soot and looking like a demon of darkness.

He stood up, and all over his face there spread a grin, which made him look more uncanny than ever, for his red lips and white teeth showed up all the plainer on account of his sooty face.

"Did I scare you?" he asked, and then, without waiting for an answer, added: "It's me—it's Nimble Ned. Don't be scared."

The mystery was explained.

Ned had returned at the time of the party, and, as he was not invited, he thought to have some fun.

On his jaunts he had found a phenomenally large black cat, which evidently took a fancy to him, for it followed him everywhere. With this cat, he climbed up to the roof of the house, and, having found a coil of
Master Franklin's wire, he saw an opportunity of playing a joke on his comrades.

He secured the wire cord round the cat and then lowered it down the chimney, his object being, as he said, to frighten us and make us cry out. He hoped we should think it a witch-cat and be so much more alarmed. Then, when he had succeeded in scaring us, he intended leaving the roof and presenting himself and the cat at the door and so explain the mystery.

When the wire was all played out and the cat was able to run about the floor he tried to draw it back. He had fastened the wire round his wrist, and when he felt Master Randolph pulling on it he could not unloose it. He leaned over the chimney to get a better purchase on the wire and so drag his cat back up the chimney, but he overbalanced himself and fell headlong into the parlor.

Fortunately, the chimney was a very large one, and he had plenty of room.

"I heard the guardsmen were here, so I came," he said, and I really think he would have tried to take part in the festivities, all sooty as he was, if the host had not
suggested that a little soap and water would improve his appearance.

I was not so much annoyed as I ought to have been. Perhaps it was because Amy Randolph had, in her fright, clung so closely to me that the pleasure offset the annoyance, and when I asked Lieut. Morris what punishment Ned deserved, he looked at Mary Peyton, who had her hand resting on his arm, and asked her to be the awardee of the penalty.

"I think he ought to be thanked," she said, "for he has provided us with some original amusement," and she looked into the face of my first lieutenant with such eyes that no one could resist.

So Nimble Ned escaped any punishment and was allowed to stay the remainder of the evening.

Where he had been or why he had deserted we never knew, for he would not open his mouth when questioned about it.
CHAPTER XIV.

THE ARRIVAL OF GEN. BRADDOCK.

I must not weary the reader by a narrative of the next few months, which were spent in camp, for we had been allowed to remain as part of Washington's command, and had been sent with him to Will's Creek, where a fort had been erected and given the name of Fort Cumberland.

Early in the new year we received glorious news from England. True, our petitions were treated with disdain, and we were told that we were colonies, and not nations, and that what our Congress had done was only a childish piece of impertinence; but what pleased us was that England had ordered two regiments of regulars to come out and, with the assistance of such forces as the colonies could put into the field, protect the frontier against the aggressions of France.

It sounded very peaceful, but we well knew that it meant war, and that was just what we were aching for.
"Capt. Lee, the colonel orders you to report to him without delay."

A soldier should be always ready, so I put on my hat and went across the fort to the room occupied by Washington.

"George, I hear that the British general, Edward Braddock, has arrived in the Chesapeake with two regiments of regulars."

"Arrived?"

"Yes; that is, the vessels have been sighted, so he must have landed ere this."

"That is good news, colonel."

"I hope so. What I sent to you for is this: It is necessary that some one from the army should be there to meet him, and I have thought of you."

"You honor me."

"Not more than you deserve," he was pleased to say.

"What am I to do?"

"Go at the head of your guardsmen——"

"Are they to accompany me?"

"Certainly. You go as a military force to welcome

the Briton, and to offer, in my name, your services as military escort to any place he desires to go."

"I hope he is not another Capt. Wilson," I said, in a low voice.

"No, no; he is an English soldier and a gentleman."

"I hope so. When am I to start?"

"When can you?"

"In an hour."

"So soon?"

"I am ready now, but my men may not be quite as ready."

"You will take three days' rations with you. Let each man carry them in his knapsack. You will not need many rounds of ammunition, but take some; only do not quarrel with Indians or white men if you can avoid it."

"Your orders shall be obeyed."

"One thing more: If Ned goes with you, curb him."

"I do not see how I can leave him behind."

"He would only desert if you tried, so make the best of it. He is honest enough and means well."
"Of that I am quite sure, and if ever we go into battle he will give a good account of himself."

With banners flying the Young Guardsmen left Fort Cumberland in two hours after I had been summoned to meet the colonel.

We reached our destination a little before the transports had arrived, and Gen. Braddock and his staff had refused to land until the troops reached port.

Lying in the peaceful waters of Hampton Roads was the famous man-of-war, the Centurion, in which Lord George Anson had made his famous voyage round the world a few years before. The Centurion had on board Admiral Keppel and Gen. Braddock and his staff.

I was armed with the commission intrusted to me by Col. Washington, and, in addition, I had a warrant from Gov. Dinwiddie ordering all loyal subjects to render me whatever assistance I might need; so I thought I had a right to seek an interview with the British general.

Accompanied by Lieut. Vernon, I rowed out to the Centurion and climbed on the deck of the war ship. It
was the very first war vessel I had ever seen, and I was full of curiosity about it.

I announced that I was an envoy to Gen. Braddock, and asked an audience.

To my surprise, I was told that his excellency, Gen. Braddock, commander-in-chief of the British forces, could not see anyone until the next day; so I had to leave without accomplishing anything.

Early the next day I was rowed out again to the Centurion, and this time I was allowed to see the great general, who was a prime favorite of the Duke of Cumberland.

I saluted him and awaited his command.

"Well?"

That was all he said, and I did not know what to say. "I am commissioned by Col. Washington——"

"Wait a bit; you are too fast, young man. Who did you say sent you?"

"Col. Washington."

"Who the deuce is he? I never heard of him."

"Not heard of the great colonel?" I asked, in surprise.
"When did he come out? Keppel, did you ever hear of a colonel by the name of Washington?"

"No, general, I never did."

Then, damme! there is no such man."

I was very indignant, and did not hesitate to tell his excellency that if he asked Gen. De Villiers or Gen. St. Pierre they would tell him that Col. Washington was a good fighter and was respected by even his enemies.

"This fellow is a colonial, then?"

"Yes, your excellency."

"A native?"

"Yes."

"Red man or white?"

"Your excellency is inclined to joke," I said, but he stopped me, before I could say another word, by jerking out:

"Who are you?"

"Capt. George Lee, of the Young Guardsmen."

"Ha, ha, ha! ho, ho, ho! he, he, ha! Come here, Keppel; come here, Capt. Birkham. Here is a real, live colonial captain. Isn't it a good joke?"
Admiral Keppel did not join in the laugh, but the others roared in their mirth.

"I have the honor, your excellency, of offering my services to you, in the name of Gov. Dinwiddie, whose commission I have——"

"I see it all now; I did not understand before. Admiral Keppel, we have come only just in time. These colonials are giving themselves airs; they actually dare to commission men as officers of his most gracious majesty's army. I suppose this Washerman, or Washingtub, or whatever his name is, received his title from this same governor?"

I did not speak, and, standing at ease, I waited for him to finish.

Outwardly I was calm, and never before had I regretted that I was a soldier; for had I not been one and compelled by my oath to obey my superiors, I should have knocked Gen. Braddock down, even though he was the personal friend of the royal Duke of Cumberland.

"Tell Mister"—and he drawled out the word—"Wash—Wash——"

"Thank you, Keppel, but these Indian names are hard to remember." Turning to me, he continued. "Tell Mr. Washington that when I need his advice I will send for it, and as for you, well, I suppose you know the country round about?"

"Yes."

"You may be useful as a guide. What did you say your name was?"

"Capt. George Lee."

"Are you a native, too?"

"I am."

"Then why haven't you an Indian name like your Mister Washington?"

I knew that the speech was only to anger me, but my heart was in my mouth, and I retorted bitterly and angrily:

"Col. Washington, Gen. Braddock, is of English descent, and is of as noble a family as yourself. Nay, ask Admiral Vernon, of your country, whether there is a better family on the face of the earth than that of Washington?"
“You are insulting.”

“Not so much as you have been, and let me tell you, Gen. Braddock, that if you had said what you have before I was in possession of my commission as an officer I should have knocked you down, and I regret that I cannot do it now.”

With that I went to the taffrail and hailed my boat. Before I left the Centurion I thanked Admiral Keppel for his courtesy.

I fully expected that before many hours had passed I should be ordered to be court-martialed, but early the next morning I was sought out and ordered to report at once to Gen. Braddock.

On my way to the man-of-war the soldier, a private—the general would not show me sufficient courtesy to send an officer—said, in the most approved London dialect:

“'Is hexellency was bloomin' tight yesterday.”

“What?”

“As full has a lord, so 'e was.”

The soldier did not think there was anything to be ashamed of in that, for in those days—and, alas! the
custom is not much better—to drink two or three bottles of strong wine at dinner was the correct thing.

"Are you his orderly?"

"Yes, Hi ham."

I found Gen. Braddock in a very different mood, and he was almost courteous; but it was plainly seen that he looked upon the colonials as but very little better than savages.

One thing was evident: he would not recognize any right to military rank among us; so in speaking, he referred to Mr. Washington, but of Capt. Wilson, of whom he had heard.

"What message did Mr. Washington send me?" he asked.

I told him, and added that my company was at his order, and he would find that, though they were only colonials, they were all gentlemen.

"I want to know all about your country, and, as you say you were at Fort Necessity, you might tell me about the skirmish there. What do you drink?"

"I do not require anything, your excellency."

"As you like, at all times when in my service, young
man," he said, with an evident intention of being friendly.

I told him of the fight which lasted nine hours, and how we had at last to surrender, though with all the honors of war.

"I told you so, Keppel. It requires his majesty's regulars to stand against the soldiers of France. These colonials would naturally run away from trained soldiers."

Insults every few minutes I had to listen to, but I had made up my mind that Col. Washington should have no occasion to regret sending me as his messenger.

"One of your people went last year to Gen. St. Pierre as a messenger from the governor, is not that so?"

"It was Col. Washington, and I had the honor of being his aide."

There was a burst of laughter from the lips of the distinguished English soldier—laughter which lasted two or three minutes.

Turning to one of his staff, he said:
"Is it not ridiculous the way these fellows talk? Here they are playing at diplomacy, and what do you think? That man, Washington, really went as an ambassador and had an aide. I really shall die laughing."

While he was sneering at us a boat drew alongside, and, to my great pleasure and surprise, Col. William Markham came on deck.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Braddock. "As I live, it is my old friend, Markham. How goes it with you in this outlandish country?"

Markham shook the general's hand heartily, and for a few minutes I was unnoticed.

"How do you manage to live among savages?" Braddock asked, and Markham replied that he thought the Americans the nicest lot of savages that lived in any part of the world.

He caught sight of me and put out his hand, which I took as readily as he offered it.

"Capt. Lee, I am rejoiced to see you here. I thought you were at Fort Cumberland with the colonel."

"I reached here yesterday on a mission to his excellency."
"Braddock, you have made the acquaintance of as true a hero as you ever met."

I shook my head at the compliment, though secretly I was pleased to find an English colonel praising an American captain.

"I suppose we must give Mr. Lee some credit," the general said, condescendingly.

"With the exception of Col. Washington——"

"Stop right there, Markham. I cannot allow any mere colonial to be called colonel or captain."

"Sorry for you, Braddock, but before you have known Washington a week you will be ready to give him any title you can think of; he is a king among men."

I saw that I was not wanted, and so I asked permission to retire, a request granted at once.

I afterwards learned that Markham told the English general of the way the Young Guardsmen were recruited, and what most impressed the Englishman was the fact that we were all well connected and many of my little company far wealthier than Braddock himself.

Braddock agreed to accept the services of the colo-
nials, but he told Markham that he should appoint officers himself, and that the so-called officers could serve in the ranks if they liked fighting. Col. Markham, loyal to the country of his adoption, tried to reason the English general out of this position, but only partially succeeded.

"I tell you, Markham," he said, "if these colonials are with us they will be in front, and if they do not run away they will be killed first, and so save some of the king's good soldiers."

All this was told to me long afterwards; in fact, Braddock had breathed his last breath and had been buried on the battlefield before I knew of his worst insults. I suppose I ought to forgive him and admit, with Gen. Washington, that Braddock was a good soldier, but badly educated in politeness.
CHAPTER XV.

NED'S PRANKS AGAIN.

In a few days a fleet of transports arrived, bringing stores and men, ammunition and plenty of money.

I had been asked the best place for the army to land, and, wonderful to relate, my advice was accepted.

The Young Guardsmen were graciously allowed to proceed up the bay on one of the transports, while I was given the distinguished honor of being on the Centurion as an official aide to the great man.

I knew that it was only because it was necessary to have some one who knew the country, for, strange to say, the captain of the Centurion had no chart of Chesapeake Bay; but, as for being an aide, I was treated more like a lackey, and often I found my position hard to bear.

I found a friend in Admiral Keppel, a man I learned to love.

The admiral was the second son of the Earl of Albermarle, and had accompanied Lord Anson in his cele-
brated voyage round the world. Whenever I could get an hour away I spent it with him, listening to his tales of that famous voyage and of the naval battles in which the stanch *Centurion* had been engaged.

We reached Alexandria on the second of April, 1755, and at once commenced to disembark.

My guardsmen were assigned to duty as porters, for that was really the case; but not one murmured, but went to work with energy and zeal.

One of the English captains, a man whose name I have quite forgotten, was watching the unloading of some of the stores by my men, when he used some very insulting remarks about Lieut. Vernon.

Nimble Ned reported it to me, but I told him to take no notice, and I thought I had impressed my orders fully on his mind. I saw Vernon carrying a barrel of powder on his shoulder, and his face was the color of carmine, so deeply did he feel the insult. I spoke a few words to him pleasantly and helped him pile up the barrels, to show that, whatever he had to do, I would still acknowledge his equality with the best.

The English captain was standing near the water's
edge, shouting out some orders in a tone which almost any man would resent, when Nimble Ned rolled a barrel down the bank.

The boy made no attempt to stop it, and in a moment it had caught the captain full on the back of his legs, knocking him over and giving him his first bath in American waters.

Ned was in the water immediately to rescue the officer, but I am afraid he lost his head, for, instead of catching the Englishman by the collar, he seized his foot and dragged him head downwards through the water, keeping him in that position until he was nearly drowned.

When both were pulled on shore the officer cursed awfully, and Ned made believe he was really sorry.

"You stuck up your foot, an’ how was I to know that you didn’t do it for me to catch hold of?" he asked, simply.

"I’ll have you whipped, you scoundrel," said the Englishman.

"Is that so?" asked Ned.
"It is, and your back will have more stripes upon it than you can see stars on a dark night."

"Then you'll have to save yourself next time," answered Ned, and, stooping down, he seized the officer round the legs and threw him again into the water.

I ordered Ned under arrest, and the boy grinned as he was led away.

"I ain't sorry; he asked for it and he's got it. He'll learn sense some day," Ned called back as he was being led to the rear.

The only regret that I heard Ned utter was that a barrel of good powder had been wasted.

Unloading took far longer than I anticipated, and we worked very hard, at that.

Ned got me into trouble a few days later by another of his silly pranks.

He had been detailed, not by my orders, but over my head, to be general servant to the very captain who had been twice thrown into the water by him.

The captain prided himself on some riding boots which had to be kept soft by constant rubbing with
mutton tallow. This work Ned had to do, and twice daily the officer's boots were greased by him.

One morning the captain was pulling on his boot, when he gave a jump in the air and shrieked as though all the evil gnomes were after him.

A dozen officers ran to the spot and saw a black-snake crawling out of the boot.

"A rattler," Ned cried, and appeared to be very frightened.

"Keep way back, or it'll bite you, an', safe as houses, you'll die," he continued, as he saw some of the officers strike at the little harmless snake with their swords.

I hurried to the spot and saw what mischief had been done. I ordered Ned to pick up the snake, which was only half awake, and either kill it or take it and throw it in the water.

It appeared that Ned, hearing that the captain was mortally afraid of snakes, had found a nest of the sleeping reptiles and had taken one of them and deftly put it in the boot. He placed the boot near the camp fire and the heat revived the snake. It was just begin-
ning to crawl out when the captain tried to put on the boot.

With strange inconsistency, Ned was not even censured, but I was ordered to be court-martialed for inciting him to perform the silly prank.

I was tried at drum head that same day, but acquitted, for even Gen. Braddock would not allow a hated provincial to be treated unjustly; but the annoyance and disgrace hurt me terribly, and I felt anything but pleased with Nimble Ned.

When the transports had been unloaded the officers selected a site for the camp, and I then saw what military life was like. I could not help admiring the order and precision with which two thousand trained veterans transformed the site into a veritable white city, arranging the tents in streets and placing the officers' quarters in such position that they were well protected.

Messengers had been sent out to the governors of the provinces ordering them to meet Gen. Braddock at Alexandria to arrange the plan of campaign.

On the fourteenth of April the governors assembled in convention and discussed the condition of affairs.
Lawrence had been ordered to complete the conquest of Nova Scotia according to the English idea of boundaries. Sir William Johnson, of New York, was to enroll a force of volunteers and Mohawks in British pay and to capture the French post at Crown Point. Gov. Shirley was to equip a regiment in Massachusetts and drive the enemy from their position at Niagara, while the commander-in-chief, Gen. Braddock, was to lead the main body of regulars at once against Fort Du Quesne and drive the French from the Ohio valley.

Such was the plan agreed upon at the convention.

Camp life was a complete change to all of us colonials. While we had been together in camp there was but little difference, save in discomfort, to the lives we led at home, but with the English army everything was different.

The officers dined together daily, and, as money was plentiful, they partook of the best; and I am sorry to say that many of them had to be carried from the table to their tents after dining, "not wisely, but too well," as Master Franklin said.
It was one day at officers' mess that Benjamin Franklin, who had visited Gen. Braddock, made the remark. One of the officers saw the philosophic postmaster look at him, and asked:

"Do you think I am drunk?"

Franklin seemed to know that a truthful answer would be provocative of a quarrel, and so he evaded a direct reply by saying:

"I think, sir, you have dined not wisely, but too well."

The officer was pleased, and remarked that the crabs had not agreed with him.

The day after the convention broke up two companies of volunteers joined us. They were led by Col. Horatio Gates, of New York.

Their approach was made known by the singing of a special song which had been dedicated to Gen. Braddock. The first verse, as I remember, was like this:

To arms, to arms, my jolly grenadiers!
Hark, how the drums do roll it along!
To horse, to horse, with valiant good cheer;
We'll meet our proud foe, before it is long.
Let not your courage fail you:
Be valiant and bold;
And it will soon avail you,
My loyal hearts of gold.

Huzzah, my valiant countrymen! Again I say huzzah!
'Tis nobly done—the day's our own—huzzah, huzzah!

The New Yorkers shouted out these lines with forty-
horse lung power, and Braddock was pleased enough to
remark that if they could only fight as well as they
could shout the victory would not be long delayed.

The arrival of the English army caused a great ex-
citement throughout the province, and the officers were
made much of, but it is with very great regret that I
have to say that they abused the hospitality very often,
and as for the private soldiers, they made themselves
so obnoxious to the colonials that Gen. Braddock was
often appealed to against his men. The soldiers ap-
peared to think they were in a conquered country, and
they scorned the colonials and insulted the Indian allies,
so much so that when the Indians were most needed
the insults were remembered and the aid refused.

Braddock took quite a fancy to Franklin, and asked
him much about the country. Franklin had been twice
to Europe, and the English general counted that as very much in his favor.

"Who is this Mr. Washington I hear so much about?" he asked Franklin one day.

"One of the finest men in all Virginia," was the answer.

"I suppose I shall have to enlist his services?"

"You would do well to give him a position of prominence."

"By George! I have it. I can please the fellow's vanity and make use of him as well. Send for him, Mr. Franklin."

"Nay, your excellency; I have no power to send for him, seeing that he is commander of our army at Fort Cumberland."

"The fellow likes fighting."

"No, he does not like it, but he can fight better than any man I know."

"Then, by George! he shall have it, and you shall convey the honor to him. I will make him corporal of my grenadiers. By George! but I hope my confidence will not be misplaced."
Franklin did not reply. The blood surged to his face, and I, who heard the insult, well understood that, man of peace though he was, if he had replied it would be in warlike words. When the great man was able to control himself he said that it would be well to make his offer through Gov. Dinwiddie, who thought a great deal of Col. Washington.

I noticed that Franklin made a special emphasis of the title "colonel," and Braddock bit his lip, for he knew what the answer meant.

Gen. Braddock was to meet the great Virginian much earlier than he at that time anticipated, for a dinner was to be given to the English officers by one of the magnates of Alexandria, and the governor and staff were to be present. Gov. Dinwiddie sent for Washington to meet him at Alexandria and take his place as chief of the staff.
CHAPTER XVI.

CORPORAL OF GRENADEERS.

"By George! who is that man?" Braddock asked, as he saw a horseman riding towards the house where Gov. Dinwiddie was being entertained.

"That is Col. Washington," was the answer of one of my guardsmen.

"He looks like a centaur. I never saw a man sit a horse better. He looks fine, by George! he does."

An hour later Gov. Dinwiddie, with his staff, approached the camp, and Gen. Braddock prepared to welcome him with such cordiality as was necessary.

By the governor's side rode Washington, looking a king among men.

The general welcomed the governor, the exchange of courtesies took place and the visit was over.

It was merely a formality, and one that neither party enjoyed.

That day, at four of the clock, the two met at dinner,
and, to the Englishman's great annoyance, Washington was given a place of honor.

The dinner was a sumptuous one and much to the taste of the general, who very soon forgot that there were ladies present, and rolled off his big oaths with astonishing frequency.

I am sure my readers will not care to know much about what the parson did or said, or how Squire Tallman tried his best to prevent the young ladies of the house hearing the general's oaths, or why Col. Danvers was so interested in an account given by a young sport of a cock fight; so I will omit details, though they would make a very pretty tale of what society was like in that year.

Gen. Braddock did not decline any of the dishes, but I noticed that he was still more eager to keep his glass filled with sangaree, and when he had drunk much of that he changed off to strong Bordeaux wine, and alternated with cider and brandy.

In these excesses Washington took no part. In fact, he would often dine without touching wine or ale or
Corporal of Grenadiers.

spirit, and I have known him go weeks at a time without touching either.

"Wash, my boy," exclaimed Braddock, looking at Washington, "I like you. I have heard of your fight at Fort What-do-you-call-it, and I think you did well for a novice."

"I thank your excellency for that good word."

"That isn't all. I've a great honor to bestow on you. I'm going to make you corporal of my crack regiment, by George! I will."

"Colonel, you mean, your excellency," Dinwiddie added.

"Colonel be hanged! No colonist can have military rank. I'll appoint the officers to the volunteers myself, and I'll make you, what do you call yourself—Washington, ay, that's the name—corporal."

"I decline the honor."

"Decline? Hang it, man, you can't! Am I not sent here by the king, God bless him! and what I say is law. So report in the morning for duty as corporal of grenadiers."
"Take no notice; he's drunk," exclaimed Lieut. Morris, of the guardsmen.

"Hush! You will only provoke more insults," I whispered.

Braddock looked at me, and in a maudlin voice said:

"I rather like you, George Lee, and you shall be a corporal, too. Hang me if I'm not too generous."

"Far too generous, your excellency."

The insults were hurled at us by the English officers so rapidly that I have often wondered since why we did not draw our swords after the ladies left and challenge the insulters to meet us.

At eight of the clock the party broke up and the officers and guests for the most part left. Gen. Braddock refused to allow his staff to wait for him, as he desired some more of the famous sangaree, and his officers had left nearly an hour before the negro servants of the house carried the great British general to his carriage.

His staff had become accustomed to such conduct and knew that it would be all right; so they told us we need not worry, for both our host and Gov. Dinwiddie
hesitated about allowing him to stay after the others for the purpose of drinking more.

A few stayed behind, among them being Gov. Dinwiddie, Col. Washington and myself.

“What are we going to do, George?” the governor asked.

“I shall hand in my resignation at once, sir.”

“So shall I,” I added, quickly.

“I happen to know that in Braddock’s commission it is prescribed that the provincial captains and colonels shall hold no rank when serving with the British army.”

“Is that the order of the king?”

“It is,” Dinwiddie replied.

“Then Heaven help the British army, for no colonials will volunteer.”

“There is another thing to which I must ask your attention, colonel. The day the general landed the country was declared under military law, so those who have volunteered must stay in the ranks or be treated as deserters. Of course, this does not apply to the officers; they can resign.”

“We are caught in a trap.”
I must make a digression at this point to tell of a trap into which the general fell on his way to the camp.

Like master, like man, is an old saying, and in this case it was true, for while the general snored inside the carriage the coachman fell from the box, and was so full of cider and ale and other liquid refreshments that he could not get up. In fact, he did not attempt to do so, but rolled over to have a good sleep.

Nimble Ned saw the accident and ran forward to render any assistance he could, but when he saw the state of affairs he got up on the box and, turning the horses round, lashed them into a gallop.

Down the road they went for a mile or so, and then Ned turned them into a cart track through the wood. On the other side of the wood was a piece of marshy ground, by the side of which the road ran, without any protection from the marsh.

Not far from a farmhouse Ned stopped the horses and got down from the box.

Cautiously he opened the door of the carriage and saw the general was still sleeping.
He dragged the great man from the coach and laid him by the side of the road.

Leaving the door of the carriage open, he gave the horses a cut with the whip and sent them down the road at a furious pace.

Then Ned took a short cut to the camp.

It was several hours before any news came of the general, and then a farmer reported that he had seen the horses running away and that the carriage door was open. He stopped the horses and recognized the harness as that of Gen. Braddock.

Search was made, and later the friend of the great Duke of Cumberland was found by the side of the marsh and carried on a litter to the camp.

It was generally believed that it was all an accident, and general rejoicing was ordered to celebrate the miraculous escape of the English commander-in-chief of his majesty’s forces in the colonies of North America.

It was more than a month after before I heard of the part Ned had played in the affair.

The next day every officer of the colonial volunteers handed in his resignation and left the camp.
I felt sorry to leave the guardsmen, but honor compelled me to do so.

For two weeks we remained at home, and then, at the urgent wish of Virginia, expressed through its General Assembly, we agreed to go back and take our old places, but without rank; in other words, we were private soldiers, though allowed to assume command.

As a means of pleasing the colony, Washington was asked to become an aide-de-camp of Gen. Braddock, but still without rank, though the general more than once said that Mr. Washington knew quite a deal about military affairs.

It was particularly galling to have to reprimand the guardsmen for calling me captain, though I had assumed my position, being, as the general said, "permitted to command the Young Guardsmen, without rank."
CHAPTER XVII.

WARNED.

On the last day of May, 1755, we commenced our march from Fort Cumberland.

Straight-Tongue and Surefoot had returned the day before from a scouting expedition in the direction of Fort Du Quesne. Surefoot had actually got into the fort, and was able to give us some information of importance.

The French had realized that the fort was worth keeping, and for three months reinforcements had been received, but even then the garrison was by no means able to cope with the superior force commanded by Braddock.

Surefoot was able to overhear a conversation between the commandant of the fort and Red Wolf, the Indian chief, and to know that neither Indians nor French had any hope of being able to withstand the onslaught of Braddock.

Red Wolf had urged, and he was supported by the
chiefs of six tribes of Indians, the advisability of giving the Indians full permission to fight as they pleased and to take all the scalps they could. The French hesitated, for they were not accustomed to savage warfare, and the general objected to the mutilation of the enemy.

Straight-Tongue reported that the Indians would do most of the fighting, and that it would be well to send out scouting parties to prevent the troops being ambuscaded.

Gen. Braddock listened to the two scouts and, without a word of thanks, dismissed them.

He sent for Franklin.

"I am warned that my troops may be ambuscaded," he said. "Do you not think the warning is very absurd?"

"Your excellency, I think the warning is good. I would bid you act with very great caution."

"Sir!"

"I repeat, the savages you will have to meet are skilled in all the arts of treachery; they will avail themselves of every trick——"
"Enough. I sent for you because you have been in England and know what British soldiers are like."

"It is for that reason I warn you."

"Master Franklin, I would have you know that if all the savages in this God-forsaken country were united against us they could make no impression on my troops."

"I hope not."

"How dare you, sir, speak in that fashion? Why don't you say you are sure they could not."

"Because, your excellency, I know something more of the Indian character than you do."

"Good-day, Master Franklin. I expected to meet a man of sense, but find only a braggart."

Turning to Col. Dunbar, the general said:

"Did you ever hear such impudence? A colonial postmaster daring to advise me, one of his majesty's generals, and commander-in-chief of the armies in North America!"

"I do not think that the postmaster meant to be impertinent."

"By George! no. If he did I would have him
whipped by the drummer boy of your regiment, Dunbar, and I never knew a boy who could whip as well as he can."

"I wish we had less whippings."

"By George, Dunbar, you are getting chicken-hearted; I tell you it is the only way to maintain discipline. There was that fellow, Nimble Ned, they call him, didn't he deserve all he got?"

"I felt sorry for him, fifty lashes were almost more than he could stand, and even now I am told he is delirious—"

"Delirious is he, then give him twenty more to act as a tonic; I'll teach young vermin of these colonies to respect an English soldier."

"The boy, Ned, was only high-spirited. Jackson, a private in the forty-fourth, ordered him to grease his boots, and the boy said he did not belong to that regiment. Jackson kicked him, and Ned knocked him down. I should have done the same in his case."

"There is a difference, Dunbar; we are English, these fellows are only colonists, not far removed from savages. I tell you that those fifty lashes the boy re-
ceived will do more to make these fellows respect us than anything else."

"I differ. I think that they may hate us, and we want love."

"The Duke of Cumberland said to me the day before I left, 'Braddock, make them fear you. Strike terror into them, and then use them'; those were his words."

"Your excellency, Mr. Washington craves an interview."

"Bid him enter, orderly."

Col. Washington entered the tent, and saluted the two officers.

"I will leave you," said Dunbar.

"Stay where you are, Dunbar; Mr. Washington can have nothing private to discuss."

"Your excellency, I have come to suggest that scouts should be sent out in advance of the army to see that there is no chance of ambush."

Braddock looked at the Virginian, and then let loose such a volley of oaths that even Col. Dunbar, who was accustomed to hear the general swear, was staggered.
Braddock walked up and down his tent swearing like a trooper, though I never met a trooper who could equal him, and then, when a little calmer, exclaimed:

"So, Col. Buckskin, you think you can teach a British general how to fight. Let me tell you, sir, that I will not listen to a lot of crazy busybodies, who think they know something. Go back to your men, and tell them that I am commander, and shall do as I please."

Washington listened to the tirade, knowing well that the general did not mean half what he said. When Braddock had resumed his insular calm, the Virginian said:

"I am not disputing your right to do as you please; but a boy, who says I saved his life some months ago, has reached camp, and he tells me that the Indians, led by Red Wolf, were seen leaving Fort Du Quesne in large numbers."

"Very likely, they are retreating, for the savages could not stand against his majesty's troops."

"They were coming this way."

"Absurd. I suppose you want me to believe all a boy tells you?"
"This boy is a remarkable youth. If you heard the story of his life, and listened to his account of the murder of his grandparents by this very Indian, Red Wolf, you would believe him."

"What is his name? Where does he come from?"

"Harry Leonard, and he lived a little north of the first French settlement in the Ohio valley."

"You mean well, Washington, but you are only an amateur in fighting. I thank you for your warning, but shall take no heed of it."

Orders were given that very day to break camp.

Sir Peter Halket, with five hundred picked men, was sent forward to open up the roads in the direction of Fort Du Quesne, while Braddock was to follow with the main body.

The young guardsmen were detailed to bring up the rear, and often since I have been heartily glad of it, for we were able to do some good work there.

I had three men unable to march, but the orders were to take them along. Nimble Ned was still delirious from the whipping he had received, and two others were down with fever.
We improvised litters, and carried our comrades with us.

We marched in a slender column, and our line extended for four miles.

Straight-Tongue reported on the fourth of June that hostile Indians were near.

Braddock laughed at the story, and calling Col. Thomas Gage to him bade him investigate, and should the report prove false he ordered the trial of the scout at drum head, a proceeding of daily occurrence.

Straight-Tongue took the colonel to a small house not half a mile from our outposts, and there showed him the dead bodies of a man and woman, their scalps being taken, and a little boy who had been scalped, but was still alive.

Gage had never seen such a sight before, and he sickened and almost fainted.

When he returned and reported to the general a proclamation was issued offering a reward of five English pounds for every Indian's scalp brought in.

Washington remonstrated, telling the general that if it was savage to scalp a white man, it was also savage to
treat a red man the same way, but the only answer the Virginian got was a volley of oaths.

Our march was orderly, and every night we bestowed the greatest care on our camp. Our baggage and Gen. Braddock's tents and guards, were placed in the center of the camp. We had outlying sentries by two and threes, by tens and whole companies. At the least surprise they were to run in on the main body and rally round the tents and baggage, which were so arranged as to be a strong fortification.

On the nineteenth of June, Braddock put himself at the head of twelve hundred chosen troops, and began to press forward more rapidly.

Col. Dunbar was left behind with the remainder of the army, and was ordered to intrench himself in a strong position, as it was unlikely that his services would be needed at the front.

The American militia, as our volunteer force was now called, was ordered to accompany Gen. Braddock, and I noticed that the English general was beginning to show more respect to our colonel, for several times
he forgot his own order and addressed Washington as colonel.

On the eighth of July, the van reached the junction of the Youghiogheny and the Monongahela.

We had only twelve miles more to cover before Fort Du Quesne was reached.
CHAPTER XVIII.

A STRUGGLE IN THE DARK.

We had camped for the night.

The men on the advanced pickets were constantly under arms, with fixed bayonets, and relieved every two hours. The half that were relieved lied down by their arms, but were not suffered to leave their pickets.

I was sleeping, sleeping as soundly as I ever did in my life.

I was dreaming of Williamsburg, and especially of that dear girl who was all the world to me.

When I left her we had selected a star which we would gaze at each night, and let its rays and brightness be a witness to our devotion to each other.

I was dreaming of this star, and in my dream it seemed to suddenly grow dim and then fade away entirely from sight.

The dream troubled me, and I woke up, but then fell asleep again for I knew it was only a dream.

In the few moments of my wakefulness I could hear
the tramp of the sentries, and the challenge given when some one moved near the line.

I mention this to prove that I had been really awake.

Again I dreamed, and in my dream I thought Amy Randolph was calling me; the dream was so real that I suddenly jumped up, and as I did so I caught hold of something which was not in my dream.

It was a man's hand, and in that hand was a murderous knife.

My first impression was to call out, but that would have raised an alarm, and for some reason I did not want that.

It was dark, so dark that I could not see who the intruder was.

I felt the knife, and that was sufficient proof that I had an enemy to deal with.

I tried to wrench it from its owner's hand, but he was strong and powerful.

I wrestled with him, and we fell and got up only to fall again all in the dark.

I wished that I had possessed a knife, for I would have stabbed my assailant without one qualm or ques-
tion, but I was unarmed, my pistol being by the side of my blanket on the ground instead of being at my belt.

Not a word was spoken by either of us.

I do not know how it came about that no one heard our scuffling, but we were not disturbed.

Occasionally a horse whinnied and its driver would speak to it, but that was nearly the only sign of life we heard in the camp.

There was something awful in that struggle in the dark.

Never before had I felt the darkness so oppressive. To be fighting for life with an unseen enemy in a small tent across which you could not see was something not expected even in war.

I do not know how long we struggled, but I know the perspiration poured from every pore of my body, and my breath was beginning to fail me.

In a few moments I must succumb.

Hope had left me, and I saw in my mind the end of all things.

The picture of a bright and happy future was
dimmed, and death in an inglorious fashion was to be my fate.

I decided to give an alarm.

I tried to call out, but the words would not form in my mouth.

My throat was dry and parched, my head was bursting, I knew what death meant, for I was facing its dread presence.

I tried to press my hand to my forehead, and as I did so I felt something wet on my cheek.

Instinctively I knew it was blood; I was wounded, but, strange to relate, I had never felt its infliction.

I could no longer stand. I fell forward, and struck my head against my gun.

The gun fell over, and made a noise, which attracted the attention of a sentry.

I heard him pass, I felt him pause by my tent, but did not know anything more until the morning, when I found myself lying wrapped in my blanket with a bandage round my head.

Gradually I recalled my dream, and then the midnight struggle.
Was it all a dream?

That was what they wanted me to believe.

It was impossible for anyone to have got within the lines, and no one within the camp would want to do me an injury.

How had I received the wound on my cheek?

That was explained by the fact that I had fallen over, most likely trying to walk in my sleep, and had struck myself on the barrel of my gun or on my short sword.

Such was the way it was all explained, but when I could rise and prepare for the continuance of the march, I found a piece of cloth torn from a man's coat, unlike anything that I possessed, and on the ground I saw a knife.

I picked it up.

On its blade there was a blood stain.

I looked carefully at it, and on the haft I saw some letters scratched.

For some time I puzzled over them for they looked like "G. L.," my own initials, and I know I had never owned a knife like it.
My brain was in a whirl, I felt dizzy and queer, but like an inspiration it was flashed across my mind that the initials were "C. L.", and the only one who had such a name was my mortal enemy, Charles Leroy.

But how could he have passed the sentries, even if he had eluded the vigilance of the pickets?

That was a mystery which may never be solved.

For an hour I was of the opinion that my midnight assailant had been my enemy, Leroy, and I felt that if I ever met him I should not hesitate to take his life.

But the hour passed, and a revulsion of feeling set in. Leroy was a spy, he hated me, he had several times tried to take my life, but it was in a more open manner, and I came to the conclusion that he was innocent of this most diabolical attempt at murder.

It was absolutely useless to try and find my assailant, for my brother officers maintained that I was the victim of nightmare, and that only an imaginary attack had taken place.

We continued our march, and for two hours never rested. When we did, Capt. Malcolm came to me, and talked over the affair of the night before.
"I am glad I did not occupy that tent last night," he said, with far more seriousness than I had seen him display usually.

"You occupy it?"

"Yes, did you not know?"

"What?"

"Why, Col. Farquhar, of the forty-fourth, wanted you to exchange places with me; it appears he wanted to talk with you about the country we are traversing, and I know nothing about it."

"But how would you have occupied my tent?"

"I should have taken the command of the Young Guardsmen, and you were to have my company."

"But your men are regulars."

"That did not matter; Gen. Braddock had bluffe a lot, but in his heart he knows that you volunteers are good men and have a big advantage over us."

"It was perhaps lucky for you that I was in my own tent."

"Yes, especially as I have a package of most important papers I have to convey North to Gen. Johnson."
"How is it that you are with us, then?"

"For company. In three days at most we shall have beaten the French, and got possession of Fort Du Quesne, and then I could have gone North rapidly."

"Did anyone know you had the papers?"

"With the exception of my colonel, I don't think anyone knew, unless that fellow, White Heart, I think he was present, but he does not understand English."

White Heart was an Indian whom I did not trust, and I was pretty sure he understood English all right, though he always insisted that he did not.

Was it not possible that he had been the marauder, and that his object was to obtain the package of papers? That put a different construction on the affair, and yet, there was the knife with the initials, how could that be accounted for?

I soon found out that White Heart had gone ahead that afternoon with Sir Peter Halket, and only returned an hour before Malcolm told me of the papers, so I felt that another clew was to be given up.

By noon we crossed the Monongahela to the northern
bank, just beyond the confluence of Turtle Creek, and expected to find the enemy.

In this we were disappointed.

Sir Peter Halket reported that the enemy was nowhere in sight, and he gave it as his opinion that we should have to attack the fort, for the French white coats were evidently shielding themselves behind the earthworks.

Col. Thomas Gage was sent forward with a detachment of three hundred and fifty men.

The road was about twelve feet wide; the country uneven and woody. There was a dense undergrowth on either hand, rocks and ravines, a hill on the right and a deep, dry hollow on the left.

Braddock had sent a few guides in advance and some feeble flanking parties, but it was evident that he did not expect an attack.

Washington rode back to the general, and bade him strengthen the flanking parties.

“What danger is there?”

“We may fall into an ambush.”

“Stuff and nonsense. Just mind your own business,”
Washington. I am many years older than you as a fighter, and I hold his majesty's commission."

"I am afraid of the result."

"If you are afraid, why in thunder do you not retreat, and take your beggarly colonials with you?"

Washington closed his mouth tightly, he had learned the soldierly prudence of keeping silent when occasion demanded it.

All at once a quick and heavy firing was heard in the front.

Braddock turned pale.

He had not expected an attack, but his confidence in his men was so great that after a moment's silence he gave his orders with calmness.

"Stay by me, colonel; I shall need you."

At a point about seven miles from the fort a force of two hundred and thirty French and six hundred and thirty-seven Indians, under command of Cols. Beaujeu and Dumas, lay in wait for the approaching English.

As soon as the flanking parties were seen the French
fired, and the Indians yelled and slunk into hiding places.

The flanking parties fought; but from behind every tree there came a musket ball, and terrified and panic stricken the English fell back, leaving their six pounders in the hands of the enemy.

Col. Gage acted with indecision. Had he thrown his men forward the day might have ended differently, but when he gave the order to advance his men wavered, and got lost in the thick underbrush, and in trying to extricate themselves mixed with a regiment which Braddock had pushed forward to the rescue.

The confusion increased, and there was every symptom of a panic.

Amid all the confusion the enemy was pouring a deadly fire into the ranks of the English, and piles of dead blocked the road.

Braddock rode among his men, urging them to make a stand, alternately cheering and cursing them.

Waving his sword above his head, he cried out:

"Follow me! Never let it be said that Englishmen were cowards."
A bullet struck his horse, and he fell heavily to the ground, he picked himself up, and jumped into the saddle of a horse whose rider had just been slain.

"Come on, men; make a charge for victory!"

He rode among the men, and when he saw one standing shivering with fear, he seized the musket from the man’s hand and fired at the invisible foe, for during all this time the enemy had been hiding behind the trees, and the English could not dislodge them.

Again Braddock had his horse killed under him, but Washington leaped from his own horse and gave it to the general.

Our noble Virginian was soon in possession of another horse, and his tall and manly form was seen in the thickest of the fray.

He had begged to be allowed to bring up his regiment of volunteers, but the proud Englishman would not hear of it, he wanted all the glory for himself.

Braddock’s secretary rode up for orders.

"Take this to Col. Gage. Tell him he must save the day."
A Struggle in the Dark.

The secretary took the document, and turned his horse, but at that moment an arrow pierced his heart, and he fell to the ground dead.

In an instant a boy had jumped forward and seized the document, and vaulting into the saddle mounted the secretary’s horse, and rode away, shouting:

“Col. Gage shall have it, general.”

“Who is that boy?” Braddock asked his aides.

“Harry Leonard, the boy who gave me warning,” answered Washington.

“A brave boy; I’ll thank him when he returns.”

“Merwin, find Gates, and bid him bring his volunteers to the front—— Great Heaven!”

The ejaculation was caused by seeing Capt. Merwin fall dead from his horse. He was the second of the general’s aides who had been killed in that short space of time.

“Shall I take the order?” Washington asked.

“No, stay by me. Send that young guardsman.”

The colonel rode over to where my guardsmen were stationed, and gave me the message.
"To reach Gates I shall have to fight my way through the enemy."

"Can you do it?"

"My men can."

"Take them, and Heaven preserve you all."

"Boys," I shouted, "I want you to cover yourself with glory; it is not for your king, but your country. Will you follow me?"

"To the death, captain!"

"Come, on, then; we have got to cut a way through the enemy."

We dashed forward, little expecting that any would reach Gates alive.

The bullets fell like hailstones around us, the air was thick with the arrows fired by the Indians.

A big, half-naked savage seized my horse's bridle, and in a moment I should have been killed, for I was taken unawares, but a boy sprang to the front, and with a terrific blow felled the redskin, spattering his brains all over the horse's neck.

"You're all right, cap'n. Go in an' win."
Again Nimble Ned had saved my life.

The fight was terrible. White coats and redskins mingled to prevent us cutting a way through.

My eyes were blinded with blood, I felt that I should faint, but making an effort, I shouted:

"Boys, charge for old Virginia!"

The Indians yelled, the white coats cheered for King Louis, but we could shout as well as they and we did; but we did more, for we fought as well as shouted.

I have seen many a battle since then, but never have I seen more determined fighting.

I was proud of my boys.

"Look, Gates is to our rear," shouted Lieut. Vernon.

I saw that we had fought for nothing, and had to retrace our steps through the bloody chasm.

We overtook Gates, and I gave him the order.

"Too late, captain," he said; "see, the army is in a panic, and nothing will save them."

I felt angry with Gates, but knew that he was right. He might do more good in saving the army in its retreat, but the order was to go to the front.
Gates reflected, and resolved to obey the order.

He gave the command, and his little force of volunteers endeavored to reach the front.

I was thanked by Braddock, and ordered to take up a position on the left of the road and await further commands.

Once more the English general was horseless, and a cry went up that he was killed.

A panic set in.

The English soldiers stood huddled together like sheep, or fled in terror to the rear.

"Cowards," shouted Braddock, rising to his feet, and mounting a horse which had been brought to him. "Cowards, is this the way you fight. Follow me, and I'll show you how to fight for King George and old England."

In vain he tried to rouse his men; they answered not to his call, and the enemy slaughtered them as they stood.

Becoming emboldened, the Indians left their cover on the left, almost in the rear of my guardsmen.
For the first time the Indians showed themselves in the open, and yelled like demons.

It was contrary to my orders, but I acted on the impulse of the moment. I called out to my young guardsmen:

"At 'em, boys, and show how you can fight."

Like a lot of hounds released from the leash they rushed forward, firing as they did so. I was at their head, and did not realize the danger.

We saw that every bullet had its billet, and the Indians fell thick and fast.

We charged them at bayonet's point, and drove them back to cover.

If only the English had come to our aid we could have turned the fortunes of the day, but we were alone, a little body of twenty boys.

I gave the order to retreat.

I hated to do it, but to go forward meant the death of every guardsman, and a death to our hopes as well, for we could not gain a victory by dying then.

We fell back, and as we passed Braddock, he shouted:
"Well done, boys; I wish my men could fight as well."

The praise from such a source was pleasant, and we felt that we could fight ever so much better. All the insults were atoned for, and we forgave the general all the wrongs he had heaped upon us.
CHAPTER XIX.

THE DEATH OF BRADDOCK.

Gen. Braddock saw that the day was lost. He was humiliated, but never was he greater. It was in that hour that he showed himself as the true man he really was.

Calling Washington to his side, he asked his forgiveness for any insults offered, then in a tone of command, he asked:

"Can we not rally them?"
"I'll try, if you give the order."
"No, I will do it, follow me."

Once more the general was riding among his panic-stricken troops, and cheering them as though they were victorious.

"Rally for our flag," he shouted, and seizing the flag of England from a standard bearer, he rode forward into the midst of his advance ranks, and again shouted:

"Men, look upon your flag. Forward, Englishmen never retreat."
Washington was seen to reel in the saddle and almost fall.

Instantly young Harry Leonard was by his side.

"Are you wounded?" he asked.

"No, it was only a spent ball, but it nearly dismounted me."

A Shawnee savage took deliberate aim at Washington, whose figure was conspicuous, he pulled the trigger, but at the same time Nimble Ned had fired also; the two smokes seemed to mingle, and the bullets must have crossed, for the Indian fell dead, while the other bullet passed through the coat worn by Washington.

The fighting continued, but it was more like a massacre than a battle.

At last the general received a ball in his right side, and sank fainting to the ground.

Washington was by his side in an instant.

"What shall we do now, colonel?" asked the wounded man.

"Retreat, sir—retreat, by all means."

"Give the order, you are in command now."
The colonel gave the order to retreat, and the soldiers welcomed it as never soldiers did before.

"Lee, I give Gen. Braddock into your care; guard him as you would your own life."

The guardsmen he had despised became his bodyguard, and the retreat began at once.

We carried Gen. Braddock as carefully as it was possible over the rough road, and not a groan or sign of pain escaped him, though we knew he was suffering tortures.

Once he roused himself, and, calling to me, whispered:

"Who would have thought it?"

I saw the death glance in his eyes, and I could not speak.

Again he murmured:

"You colonials knew best. I shall know better how to deal with them the next time."

"Yes, general," I said. I did not know what words to frame to express what I thought.

"If I had only listened," he whispered.

I tried to speak, but my tongue seemed too large for
my mouth, and words would not come to my lips. I looked at the general and saw that he had fallen asleep.

I was glad.

I offered up a silent prayer that he might live, for I had learned to respect him and had caught a glimpse of the true greatness of the man whose greatest fault was his stubborn pride.

It was evening of the fourth day after the fight that he roused himself, and asked where we were.

"Within a mile or so of Fort Necessity."

"So near and yet—so far."

"We shall soon be there, general."

"Can you not camp here for the night?"

"If you wish it."

"Call Hanson."

Dr. Hanson was by his side in a minute.

"Hanson, I should like to camp just here, it is so peaceful. May I?"

"Yes, general, if you wish it, but the fort is within half an hour."
“Not the fort, I want peace; see, the sun is going down. Was anything more lovely?”

“It is indeed beautiful.”

“Lee, your country is worth loving, your people are brave; pray Heaven that they may learn peace rather than war. Hanson, stoop down, my heart seems to be stopping.”

The army doctor listened to the beating of the general’s heart, and gave a sigh.

It was done unconsciously, but the soldier heard it.

“How long have I to live?” he asked.

“You may live for years——”

“No, no, the truth, Hanson; see, the sun is fast sinking, shall I not go with it?”

“Soon after.”

“I knew it. Leave me, Hanson, a minute. Lee.”

“Yes, general.”

“Stoop low, I have only five minutes to live. Tell Col. Washington I admire him. Tell him that I leave my reputation in his hands; he will do justice. I have fought hard, but now there is peace—peace—peace.”

The last word was long drawn out, and with it his
The Death of Braddock.

spirit left his body, and the great English general was dead.

We buried him there by the roadside, for we knew he would prefer it as his resting place, and with sorrowful hearts we left him there in one of the loveliest places on earth.

We camped by his grave until the sun had well risen the next day, and then resumed our march to Dunbar's camp.
CHAPTER XX.

DUNBAR'S WEAKNESS.

No attempt had been made to call the roll, for we had retreated in disorder, only the Young Guardsmen keeping an even appearance of order, and even among us, small as our company had been, I knew that some had gone with the main army instead of keeping with us.

We marched sorrowfully to Dunbar's camp, and hoped that the defeat would only be the incentive to a general rising of the colonists to avenge their dead.

Everything depended on Dunbar, who was now the commander in place of Braddock.

As I look back and see with clearer vision I cannot understand the confidence the general displayed. He left most of his artillery, all the stores and by far the greatest amount of ammunition with Dunbar, and instead of dividing his army and approaching Fort Du Quesne by two different routes, he took his men along the rough and narrow road where every chance of an ambushade was offered.
When we reached Dunbar's camp we found everything in confusion.

Washington had told me his opinion of Dunbar, and he was right. He had said as soon as he had seen him that he was a man of weak capacity, and possessed of absolutely no courage.

It was my duty to report to him the death of the general.

I found him marching up and down his tent, rubbing his hands together, and asking me, and everyone, even his orderly, what he should do.

I told him of Braddock's death; he listened as one stunned and unable to think what should be done.

"What shall I do, Lee?" he asked.

I replied that I was only a colonial captain, having no recognized rank in the army of England, while he was an English colonel. He acted like one dazed, and sent for Washington.

"Col. Washington, what am I to do?"


"What would you do in my place?"

"I should gather together the remnant of the army,
recruit as many colonials as possible, and make a quick
march to Fort Du Quesne, getting there before the
enemy could know our movements, and strike a swift
blow for our cause."

"Would you, really?"

"It is the only thing."

"But Gen. Braddock said that if he was defeated I
ought to destroy all the stores, and get far away from
the scene of the conflict as soon as it was possible."

"If you have your orders why ask me for advice?"

"I thought he—the general—might have sent some
word by you. I don’t know what to do."

"You are the ranking officer of the army, sir."

"The French and their savage allies will sweep down
upon us, and we shall all be killed."

"We can at least die fighting."

"To fight, sir, when we can save ourselves by a
masterly retreat, is madness."

"I have the honor of wishing you good-day," said
Washington, saluting and withdrawing.

"Do you think he will destroy the stores?" I asked.

"I am afraid he will, he is an arrant coward."
“Not so bad as that, surely.”

“I hope not. Lee, have you called the roll?”

“No, colonel.”

“I am nearly heartbroken, out of my men only fifteen are alive, or, at least, with me.”

“Only fifteen?”

“That is all, how many have you?”

“I do not know.”

When the roll of the Young Guardsmen was called only twelve answered to their names.

Frank Vernon, my second lieutenant, was missing, and seven privates.

I could not understand about Vernon, for I was sure I had seen him when we commenced the retreat.

I spoke to Washington as to the advisability of sending a search party back to the scene of the battle to gather up the wounded.

“No, George,” he answered, “it is not advisable. You know I would do much to save one of our brave colonials, but I am sure that not one wounded man exists on the battlefield. If any were not dead when we retreated, the Indians would soon scalp them.”
The same afternoon Dunbar gave orders to destroy all the artillery, heavy baggage and stores, to the value of one hundred thousand pounds. It was useless to protest, he pleaded that the general had wished him to do so and that was sufficient.

When the work of destruction was finished we retreated to Fort Cumberland, but only to stay there a few days, so frightened was the English colonel that the French would overtake him.

The order was given to march to Philadelphia, and to make all further movements from that safe point.

"What are you going to do?" asked Washington.

"Whatever you do," I answered.

"George, I am free. The promise I gave Gov. Dinwiddie was to aid Braddock all I could in his march against the enemy; the army is now ordered into winter quarters—"

"What? Winter quarters when the sun is so hot that it is unbearable at noon time."

"I know that it is only the beginning of August, but Col. Dunbar told me not an hour ago that we must
march to Philadelphia, because that was the best place for winter quarters."

"I understand."

"As I was saying, my duty is done; I shall go back home with the remnant of my band."

"I would like to go with you, but I have a duty to perform."

"And that?"

"Is to find some tidings of Vernon. I promised his mother I would look after him; he is only sixteen, you know, and I feel sure he is alive."

"Do not endanger others in searching for him."

"I will use all caution."

Straight-Tongue was stricken down with fever, and so I had to dispense with him, but in his place Harry Leonard volunteered to accompany me, and as he knew the country I was very glad to have him, for he was a boy like ourselves, and full of youthful energy.

I had taken quite a liking to Harry, or, as Washington had called him, "Fighting Hal." He was brave, did not know what fear meant, and yet was as kind and gentle as any girl.
Washington obtained permission for the colonials, or rather the Virginians, to retire, but had he not obtained it, we should have retired just the same, as our commission gave us the right to do if the army went into quarters.

Col. Gage warmly thanked Washington, and told him that it was his few courageous Virginians that had saved the English army from complete annihilation.

"What were the losses?" asked Washington.

"Out of eighty-two officers we lost in killed and wounded sixty-three," he said, "and of the privates seven hundred and fourteen were killed or rendered absolutely unfit for any further fighting."

"It was a terrible carnage."

"You are right, Washington; but it would have been worse if it had not been for you. I wish you would accept a commission in the English army. You would rise to high rank very quickly."

"I have no ambition in that direction."

"I hope we shall meet again."

I have often recalled that wish, for since that time I have witnessed the meeting again of Washington and
Gage, but Washington was then commander-in-chief of the American army and was besieging Boston, where Gage was governor.

Washington and his little band returned to Virginia, and I and my guardsmen went to Fort Necessity.

When we reached there we prepared to make ourselves comfortable, my plan being to send out scouting parties in all directions for the missing men of my command.

Harry Leonard was of the greatest use to us, for he proved how well he knew the country.

He was indefatigable, nothing seemed to tire him, and after a long march, instead of begging for a day’s rest, he would come to me for orders for the following day, saying that at sunrise he wished to be off.

A week passed before we obtained any news, and then our eyes were gladdened by seeing a party of seven returning, whereas only three had started out in the morning.

They were too far off for recognition, but we knew from the signals that they all belonged to us.
When they got nearer, we could hear them singing:

“Let not your courage fail you;
Be valiant, stout and bold;
And it will soon avail you,
My loyal hearts of gold.
Huzzah, my valiant countrymen! Again I say huzzah!”

We marched out to meet the heroes, and I am afraid that we did not act as soldiers in the way we conducted ourselves, for we forgot all discipline, and hugged each other like brothers who had been absent from each other for a long time.

Vernon was there, and so was Tom Early and Harry Jackson, and a right royal welcome they got from their comrades.

When the exuberance of our welcome had quieted down a little, one of the young soldiers pulled my coat sleeve, and said:

“You never said you were glad to see me!”

“I don’t know you. To what company do you belong?”

“Capt. Lee, I am ashamed of you, not to know Joanna.”

“Joanna! Can it be possible?”
"It is possible, for here I am."

"Where have you been? How did you come here?"

"They thought I was dead, and I managed to save my scalp."

"Where? When?"

I was so thoroughly astonished that I could not speak coherently.

"Why, on the battlefield, of course."

"How came you there?"

"I was there as long as you; I managed to escape detection, and I fought as well as some; at least, I did not run away."

"But you have an English uniform on."

"Yes, I am ashamed of it, but I had to wear something, and my own clothes were so full of holes that they were not decent, so I took these off a poor young boy who will never want them again; soon after I saw one of your guardsmen lying dead. Poor boy, I could not help dropping a tear on his upturned face, and I—I—kissed him, just for his mother, you know. I wanted to take his uniform because it was American,
but I couldn't strip one of our own people, so here I am."

"And she saved my life," spoke up Lieut. Vernon.

"She is always saving some one's life," I said.

"I did not know that he was a girl—what are you laughing at? I see, I said he when I should have said she, but when I first saw him or her I thought he or she was a man; I am getting confused, but you know what I mean."

"When you have rested you must tell me all about it," I said; "but the first thing now is to get something to eat, and then we can talk."
CHAPTER XXI.

HOW VERNON WAS SAVED.

"My story, why, there is not much to tell," said Vernon, after we had all eaten together.

"Little or much we want to hear it."

"You see, it was a misfortune of mine that caused the necessity of telling this story.

"When we commenced the retreat we were told that there were five thousand Frenchmen and as many savages pursuing us, and you know how the English run.

"I got separated from you, and knocked down and trampled on by some of our own men, I mean English, of course, for the Americans did not run panic stricken.

"When I rose up I could not see you, and the place was deserted, but I was soon aware that some one was round about, for I got a bullet in my leg, and straightway fell to the ground.

"I was not much hurt, as it happened, but I thought I was killed, though I was pretty wide awake. I saw the white coats and the savage redskins rush over the
field, and I don’t think there were a hundred all told, white and red combined, and yet they had routed a big English Army.

"I lay as still as I could, and I saw the savages reveling in the spoils of the battlefield.

"The Indians stripped the officers of their coats and boots, their cockades and fine hats, they even took off the entire uniforms, and in the fantastic dress made up of plundered clothes—privates and officers’ bodies contributing—the savages strutted about as proud as peacocks.

"The French had made the savages pledge themselves that they would not take any scalps, and so we were saved for a time.

"I lay there alternately fainting and awaking both from the heat and exhaustion until night.

"I thought it would be safe to try and crawl away when darkness came, and for that I had waited.

"To my horror, night had hardly set in when I heard some savage yells, and saw a score of Indians, maddened by firewater, come upon the scene, and begin
plundering the bodies and taking the scalps of the slain.

"I will give them credit for one thing, they took the scalps of the French as well as our people. I saw one great, big savage approach me. He stopped to look at a French officer who was lying not twenty yards away. He rifled his pockets, and appropriated everything he possessed, and then placing his scalping knife in his mouth he looked round and caught sight of me.

"I was suddenly struck powerless. I wanted to cry out, but could not make a sound; I tried to reach my gun, but could not move hand or foot. I do not know what caused this paralysis, but the fact confronted me.

"The Indian placed his foot on my chest, and looked at me very intently. I really believe if I had been dead he would have left me alone, but he saw I was alive, and he gave a big gasp, and muttered: 'Good, chief have good white scalp; me mighty pleased.' He might be pleased, but I was not. He knelt down on me, and with one hand seized my hair, pulling it until I felt that not one hair would be left on my head, then he bent
down and his knife was within an inch of my scalp, when his hand was seized from behind, and so vigorously twisted that he dropped the knife, and turned on his interrupter.

"I was able to look up, and I saw a young man, dressed very strangely, but he was strong, and knew just what to do.

"He grappled with the Indian until they both rolled to the ground and I was able to get hold of my gun. I put a bullet in that savage with greater pleasure than I had ever done anything before.

"My preserver's clothes were all in ribbons, and he, or I should say she, though, honor bright, I did not know that he was a she until some days later, left me very hurriedly. When next I saw my life-saver, he, or she, was dressed in an English officer's clothes, just as you see Joanna now.

"I tried to walk, but my leg pained me, and she dressed it as well as any army doctor could do; in fact, better, for she found some plant which she applied to the wound and took out the fever almost at once.
"She—I will call her she in future as you will understand it better—she searched the bodies of the dead soldiers and found a flask of rum. It refreshed me, and I wanted more, but Joanna got a gourd of water, and put into it some bark which made the water very bitter, and made me drink it; she said it would prevent fever.

"When I was a little recovered we thought it better to get away from that scene of death, and we crawled along on our hands and knees, afraid that we might be recognized by some prowler and killed.

"We had not gone far before we stumbled over the body of Tom Early, who had been trampled on by so many that he had fainted, and was only just recovering.

"That is my story; it is not much, but it would have been less had it not been for Joanna. I do not know what her other name is, but if I live to reach home she can have mine if she will accept it—"

"Oh, oh, oh!"

"You may exclaim 'Oh,' but I mean it, for I never
How Vernon Was Saved.

saw anyone I admired more, though I thought I had found a brother instead of—"

"A wild, half-savage girl, who has become ashamed of her conduct," added Joanna, bursting into tears.

It was the first time I had seen her so affected, and I tried to comfort her; she leaned against me, and whispered, her voice husky and full of tears:

"Do you think Mistress Randolph would teach me how to wear petti-petti-coats?" and then she burst into a torrent of weeping.

From Early we heard how Jackson was found, and he was able to give proof that the others were killed.

The Young Guardsmen had lost five from its ranks, and yet we were proud to think that we had lost so few, for we had been often in the thickest of the battle, and had many times cut our way through the enemy.

We stayed at Fort Necessity for some days, resting and getting ready for our march home.

Fighting Hal proved himself a good comrade, and sadly wanted to become one of our number, but I fully intended disbanding the company, and withdrawing
How Vernon Was Saved.

from military life when I had reported to Gov. Dinwiddie.

Whether I carried out my intention or not has nothing to do with this story, so I will not anticipate, for all I promised to do was to tell of the campaign with Braddock, and that I have done.

I may have had to talk too much about myself, but it has not been intentional, for I hardly see how I could make a personal narrative without introducing the egotistic "I" very often.

We reached Williamsburg safely, and though five homes mourned, even in their grief they had the knowledge that their loved ones had given their lives for the sacred cause of their country.

We were given quite an ovation, far more than I, at least, deserved, but the governor thought differently, and so did the good citizens, for they loaded us down with good things, and the general council was pleased to bestow on me a medal which was struck to commemorate the glorious manner in which the Virginians had covered the retreat of the English army.
At the College of William and Mary, the Young Guardsmen were given a reception, and I shall never forget the words of George Washington, who paid us such a noble tribute.

"Virginia has reason to be proud of her boys," he said, "and of these brave Young Guardsmen in particular. I know whereof I speak. They performed miracles of courage, they fought when others grew weary; they marched when others fainted from exhaustion, and though often days without food they never complained. In the future when the colonies are knit together in the ties of nationhood, their king will be pleased to remember that the deepest debt of gratitude is owing to Capt. Lee and the gallant Young Guardsmen of Virginia."

I was too confused to reply, but I did manage to stammer out:

"We tried to do our duty, and we are ready to give our lives for the liberty of the American provinces."

My story is finished. If it has been as interesting to the reader as to the writer, I am well satisfied. I
have only one word more to say, and that is, I have lived long enough to know that a country can never lose its liberty when its boys are ready to give their lives for freedom and fatherland.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Captain Carey</td>
<td>Tom Truxton’s School Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kit Carey’s Protege</td>
<td>Tom Truxton’s Ocean Trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieut. Carey’s Luck</td>
<td>Treasure of the Golden Crater</td>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young Showman’s Rivals, The</td>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last Chance Mine</td>
<td>Tom Havens with the White Squadron</td>
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(viii)