

V. MIRACLE MEN

Whenever the sense of his own incapacity showed the need of some great artificer, some supernatural miracle-worker, man created gods in his own image.—MARIAN ROALFE COX

1. COMIC DEMIGODS

WHEN the heroes of history go, the demigods arrive. As the ring-tailed roarer is a comic version of the frontiersman who wrestles single-handed with the wilderness, so our tinkering demigods are the comic culture heroes of an industrial civilization who account for its wonders. Their miracles are also the pranks of trickster heroes, whose huge laughs provide much the same sort of comic relief as our comic strips. "All mythical heroes have been exaggerations," says Max Eastman, "but they have been serious ones. America came too late for that. . . . That is the natively American thing—not that her primitive humor is exaggarative, but that her primitive exaggerations were humorous."¹

A typical American demigod is Pecos Bill, the culture hero of the cowboy, who is said to have "invented most of the things connected with the cow business." At the same time his affinity with the wild men of the West is attested by his title of the "king killer of the bad men." His toughness is of the kind that was the boast of the pseudo bad men: "He cut his teeth on a bowie knife, and his earliest playfellows were the bears and catamounts of East Texas." In the Davy Crockett tradition are his fights with two grizzly bears, which he hugged to death; with a rattlesnake, which he used as a lariat to spin at Gila monsters; and with a mountain lion, which soon hollered for mercy and let Bill ride him "a hundred feet at a jump . . . quirtin' him down the flank with the rattlesnake." He is the boasting cowboy par excellence; and his cyclone variant of the theme of the horse that couldn't be ridden and the cowboy that couldn't be thrown is only a little less poetic than Badger Clark's High-Chin Bob version. In the latter's poem of "The Glory Trail" (also recorded from tradition by John A. Lomax) Bob ropes a mountain lion; and since neither would or could let go, they continue together through eternity—a ghost rider on a ghost horse leading a ghost lion in a noose. Pecos Bill's death is a caricature of the death of a hero, caused, according to one version, by putting "fish-hooks and barbed wire in his toddy."

In a slightly different key is the "saga of inadvertence" of Bowleg Bill, whose fool stunts and outlandish exploits are more the result of happy accidents—"uncommon happen-quences"—than of design. His reckless playfulness links him with Pecos Bill, but this "gawdamnedest intelligent fool" outdoes the other in the "larger lunacy" of his antics. As a sea-going cowboy and an "inland furriner" he combines the freakishness of a hybrid with the innocence of the greenhorn, though in this case a greenhorn who teaches the old hands some new tricks. Of the breed of pet

¹ *Enjoyment of Laughter* (1936), p. 168.

trout and rattlesnakes is Piccolo the whistling whale; and the bronco that could not be broken turns up again in Slickbritches the Hoss-Mackerel.

The American genius for invention has produced its hero in Paul Bunyan. Although he handles nature like a toy and accounts for the bigness of certain American geographical features, such as Puget Sound, he is primarily a work giant whose job is to invent logging. By reason of his having to start from scratch, there is something primordial about him; but unlike most Titans, he combines brain with brawn, and employs both for the good of mankind. He has gone a long way from the giant of nursery tales whose chief purpose was to scare little children and be slain by the hero.

Just as the "mightiest of loggers" appears in other settings and guises as Tony Beaver, Kemp Morgan, Finn MacCool, and Febold Feboldson, so his exploits are essentially prodigious lies of the Munchausen variety, which are much older than the heroes themselves. The "key stories" in the Bunyan cycle may be matched by hundreds of Old World parallels in Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*.

Tales of the Paul Bunyan type originated as separate anecdotes or "gags" exchanged in competitive bragging or lying contests and involving "sells" and the pranking of greenhorns. "The best authorities," writes W. B. Laughead (and in this the experts all agree), "never recounted Paul Bunyan's exploits in narrative form. They made their statements more impressive by dropping them casually, in an offhand way, as if in reference to actual events of common knowledge." Such remarks often began with a phrase of reminiscence or reminder: "Time I was with Paul up in the Big Onion country —"; "That happened the year I went up for Paul Bunyan"; "Did you ever hear of the — that Paul Bunyan —?"

James Stevens traces the mythical Paul Bunyan to a French-Canadian logger named Paul Bunyon, who won a reputation as a prodigious fighter in the Papineau Rebellion against the Queen in 1837, and later became famous as the boss of a logging camp—"he fight like hell, he work like hell, and he pack like hell."¹ But whatever his historical origins, if any, Paul Bunyan—the superman in a world of super-gadgets—has become an American symbol of bigness and a proverbial character on which to tack an extravagant anecdote. Although the tradition has spread to many other occupations—the oil fields, the wheat fields, and construction jobs, Paul Bunyan tales are told popularly, outside of the industry more than within it, and depend for their effect upon pure exaggeration rather than upon occupational coloring.

The first appearance of Paul Bunyan in print seems to have been an advertising man's idea. In 1914 the Red River Lumber Company issued a booklet of tales which has since gone through twelve editions, gradually incorporating more and more advertising matter along with the original stories. To-day Paul Bunyan is the company's trademark and "stands for the quality and service you have the right to expect from Paul Bunyan." The author and illustrator of these booklets, W. B. Laughead, who claims to have invented many of the names of characters and who is given credit for initiating the preservation of the Paul Bunyan stories, has never made

¹ *Paul Bunyan*, by James Stevens (1925), p. 1.

clear whether Paul Bunyan dreamed up the lumber business or *vice versa*.¹ In 1914 also appeared Douglas Malloch's poem "The Round River Drive," published in *The American Lumberman*, to be followed in 1916 by the first scholarly investigation of the legends by K. Bernice Stewart and Homer A. Watt, in 1919 by the "first continuous narrative" of Ida Virginia Turney, and in 1924 by Esther Shephard's volume. In the same year James Stevens began to publish his dressed-up versions for readers who do not like their folklore raw. How much of Paul Bunyan is folklore and how much of it is literature is still an open question. But in the absence of authentic oral versions, scholars give credence to the view that he is, if not actually a hoax, at least the product of downward transmission.²

Paul Bunyan has been the inspiration of other demigods who are probable inventions, such as Tony Beaver, the West Virginia lumberjack hero of *Up Eel River* (1928), by Margaret Prescott Montague, and Febold Feboldson, the plains hero. On the origins of the latter Paul R. Beath writes: ³

I first became aware of Febold Feboldson when stories of him were appearing regularly in the Gothenburg, Nebraska, *Times*. As I recall this was in 1927 or 1928 while I was undergraduate at the University of Illinois. About this time I read James Stevens' *Paul Bunyan* and immediately spotted the similarity. It was during this period that I started contributing an occasional story to the *Times* during my summer vacations which I spent in Nebraska. The stories were mostly adaptations of those I had heard around town with elaborations and embellishments to fit what I conceived to be Febold's character, i. e., an indomitable Swedish pioneer who could surmount any difficulty.

I must add here that as a boy and young man I worked as night clerk in a hotel in Gothenburg where I heard literally thousands of stories told by travelling salesmen and other garrulous wayfarers. I suppose I received clues to many of the stories I used from this ever flowing stream. At one time, after

¹ See his letter to Louise Pound in her article on "Nebraska Strong Men," *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, Vol. VII (September, 1943), No. 3, pp. 133-143. For Paul Bunyan bibliography see "Paul Bunyan Twenty-Five Years After," by Gladys J. Haney, *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. LV (July-September, 1942), No. 217, pp. 155-168.

² In a note on "Paul Bunyan—Myth or Hoax?," in *Minnesota History*, Vol. XXII (March, 1940), No. 1, pp. 55-58, Carleton C. Ames places the burden of proof on "those who are presenting Paul Bunyan as a native product of the imagination of the shanty boy, and who are making him, in a sense, the patron saint of the old-time logger." On the basis of the negative evidence that Paul Bunyan was unknown to old-timers in Wisconsin and Minnesota and of certain anachronisms in Esther Shephard's version, he reaches the "tentative conclusion" that "Paul Bunyan as the legendary hero of the shanty boy, as true folklore, is spurious. He may have appeared in the camps of a later day, possibly about the turn of the century, when the true shanty boy had all but vanished. He may exist among the lumberjacks of the Pacific Coast, where logging is a far different operation than the Minnesota and Wisconsin jack ever knew, but he was a stranger to the loggers of the Middle West when logging was at its height."

³ Letter to Louise Pound, July 1, 1943, a copy of which, together with clippings from the Gothenburg, Nebraska *Times*, and other Febold data, is on file at the Archive of American Folk Song, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

I had read the *Canterbury Tales* in college, I contemplated a modern set based on this hotel experience.

. . . Don Holmes of the *Times* told me that the character had been created by Wayne T. Carroll, a local lumber dealer, who wrote a column under the name of Watt Tell in the now defunct *Gothenburg Independent*. This series, to the best of my knowledge, began about 1923. Later Carroll used Febold in advertising he wrote for his lumber company. Lumber magazines were the first to use Paul Bunyan and it seems obvious to me that Febold was patterned after Paul Bunyan. But Febold could never have been a lumber hero, because there are no trees on the Great Plains. So Febold became a hero wrestling with the adversities of the plains—tornadoes, drouths, extreme hot and cold, Indians, politicians, and disease.

Because I have published Febold the widest of any of his first champions—that is, Carroll, Holmes, and myself—I have been accused of creating him. I did not. Febold, a pioneer Swede, and all his nephews were in existence when I came upon the legend. Febold, the fabulous uncle, had already gone to his reward by retiring to California like a good middlewesterner. His exploits seemed always to be recounted by someone who knew him in the old days, usually his nephews, Bergstrom Stromberg, Herebold Farvardson, Hjalmar Hjalmarson, and Eldad Johnson. For some reason there was always a contemporary of Febold called Eldad Johnson's grandfather. The only historical basis for any of these characters is that Olof Bergstrom is Bergstrom Stromberg, . . . the immigration from Gothenburg, Sweden, to Nebraska of a band of Swedes [having been] led by Olof Bergstrom who founded both Stromberg (the reverse of his true name) and Gothenburg in the state of Nebraska. It is my opinion that Carroll had this man in mind, because tales of him were current when I was a boy. He had a most hectic career. He married a Swedish singer on one of his periodic returns to the old country; she later committed suicide. He worked for the Union Pacific selling railroad land to the incoming immigrants. He killed a man and was acquitted. He was said to have disappeared.

In 1928 these stories "caught on." Not only did Don write them, but contributions began coming in from the *Times* readers. From 1928 to 1933 at least one Febold story appeared in the *Times* without a break from week to week, a total of 260 stories.

Mr. Beath's account throws light on the making of legendary heroes. The early stages of the process are clearly reflected in the Febold stories, where the central conception of a heroic character has not yet attained full growth and tends to fall apart into the *dissecta membra* of tall stories.

2. STRONG MEN AND STAR PERFORMERS

Although American legendary heroes like Paul Bunyan and the other work giants are occupational heroes, they are industrial pioneers rather than industrialists. Thus Paul Bunyan represents the days before the timber beast became a timber mechanic and Old Stormalong, the days of wooden ships and iron men. Under the influence of the machine the hero undergoes a change. The work boss is supplanted by the ordinary worker, who distinguishes himself not so much for innovations as for doing a good job of whatever he is doing. He is a strong man or a star performer with

tragic and social rather than comic significance. The tragedy usually results from his being overcome by a superior force—the machine. Thus John Henry dies in a contest with a steam drill and Casey Jones in a train wreck with one hand on the whistle cord and the other on the airbrake lever; while Joe Magarac offers himself up as a sacrifice to make better steel.

Originally a flesh-and-blood hero of the rock-tunnel gangs, the great steel-driver who died with his hammer in his hand while competing with a steam-drill at Big Bend Tunnel on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad in West Virginia in 1870, John Henry has become a legendary and mythical figure with various symbolic significances. In folk song tradition the “tiny epic of man’s last stand against the machine” has produced a work song (the hammer song), a ballad, and a social song or blues, in which the central theme of the drilling contest has attracted to itself double meaning stanzas and conventional ballad lines and motifs. The few John Henry tales that have been recovered are of the Paul Bunyan type, elaborating the hero’s size, strength, skill, and prowess with food, women, etc. As the tradition moved west, other kinds of labor were substituted for tunnel construction, until in Roark Bradford’s version John Henry becomes the champion cotton picker, roustabout, and railroad man with more than a touch of the bad man and boaster or “big mouth.”

“I’m f’m de Black River country,” said John Henry, “and I kin roust what I kin git my hands on. But dat don’t make me no rouster. I’m f’m de Black River country whar de sun don’t never shine. My home ain’t hyar, and I’m fixin’ to git around.”

“. . . ’Scuse me for laughin’, Cap’m,” he said, “but dat tawk do sound funny. Dat winch might work like ten good men, but how about John Henry? I burned out all de men you got, and I kin burn dat steam winch out, too.

“So th’ow down another stage for me, so I kin git some action. I’ll roll more cotton on de *Big Jim White* den you kin wid dat steam winch, ’cause I’m John Henry and I’m six foot tall and my strenk can’t hit de bottom. Maybe de women fool me bad, and maybe, too, de gamblers. Maybe de happy dust cross me up and de preacher put me in de dozens. But rollin’ cotton ain’t nothin’ but work, and can’t nobody fool me. So stand back, you bullies, and gimme some room, and watch me roll dat cotton. I’ll clean dat boat befo’ de sun goes down or my name ain’t John Henry.”

The supreme symbol of industrial strength is Joe Magarac, who comments thus on his name and nature: “Sure! Magarac. Joe. Dat’s me. All I do is eatit and workit same lak jackass donkey.” He symbolizes not only the power of steel but the power of the men behind the steel, the human basis of our basic industry.

There is no glory comparable to poured iron or poured steel. The gushing out of fiery metal from a great wheel-like container seems like the beginning of Creation. This black container of molten iron is twenty feet high. A ladle advances on an overhead railway. It travels to the container of molten iron. It moves forward on its track and then laterally and then down. The black container swings around slowly on its axle as a man presses a lever.

Then follows the sudden magnificence of poured metal. Like giant fireworks, a thousand sparks fly from it, a river of white fire throwing off cascades of stars, a fiery shower on all sides. On a greasy platform above the ladle are the men who operate it. They look down with indifference into its seething deadly brightness.

My guide said: "A man fell into that once, and they buried him and all the tons of metal. Right here they held the burial service."

The story of the man who fell into the vat of molten metal and became part of it obsesses the men's minds. I have heard it told in different ways.

They tell you of a man made into iron rails, of another who went into the structure of great buildings.

This story is as old as time. There was a great bell once which was cast and re-cast and would not ring true until a human being was sacrificed to it.¹

The Saga of Pecos Bill

It is highly probable that Paul Bunyan, whose exploits were told in a recent number of *The Century Magazine*, and Pecos Bill, mythical cow-boy hero of the Southwest, were blood brothers. At all events, they can meet on one common ground: they were both fathered by a liar.

Pecos Bill is not a new-comer in the Southwest. His mighty deeds have been sung for generations by the men of the range. In my boyhood days in west Texas I first heard of Bill, and in later years I have often listened to chapters of his history told around the chuck-wagon by gravely mendacious cow-boys.

The stranger in cattle-land usually hears of Bill if he shows an incautious curiosity about the cow business. Some old-timer is sure to remark mournfully:

"Ranchin' ain't what it was in the days Bill staked out New Mexico."

If the visitor walks into the trap and inquires further about Bill, he is sure to receive an assortment of misinformation that every cow-hand delights in unloading on the unwary.

Although Bill has been quoted in a number of Western stories, the real history of his wondrous deeds has never been printed. I have here collected a few of the tales about him which will doubtless be familiar to cow-men, but deserve to be passed on to a larger audience.

Bill invented most of the things connected with the cow business. He was a mighty man of valor, the king killer of the bad men, and it

¹ *Men and Steel*, by Mary Heaton Vorse (1920), p. 20.

was Bill who taught the broncho how to buck. It is a matter of record that he dug the Rio Grande one dry year when he grew tired of packin' water from the Gulf of Mexico.

According to the most veracious historians, Bill was born about the time Sam Houston discovered Texas. His mother was a sturdy pioneer woman who once killed forty-five Indians with a broom-handle, and weaned him on moonshine liquor when he was three days old. He cut his teeth on a bowie-knife, and his earliest playfellows were the bears and catamounts of east Texas.

When Bill was about a year old, another family moved into the country, and located about fifty miles down the river. His father decided the place was gettin' too crowded, and packed his family in a wagon and headed west.

One day after they crossed the Pecos River, Bill fell out of the wagon. As there were sixteen or seventeen other children in the family, his parents didn't miss him for four or five weeks, and then it was too late to try to find him.

That's how Bill came to grow up with the coyotes along the Pecos. He soon learned the coyote language, and used to hunt with them and sit on the hills and howl at night. Being so young when he got lost, he always thought he was a coyote. That's where he learned to kill deer by runnin' them to death.

One day when he was about ten years old a cow-boy came along just when Bill had matched a fight with two grizzly bears. Bill hugged the bears to death, tore off a hind leg, and was just settin' down to breakfast when this cow-boy loped up and asked him what he meant by runnin' around naked that way among the varmints.

"Why, because I am a varmint," Bill told him. "I'm a coyote."

The cow-boy argued with him that he was a human, but Bill wouldn't believe him.

"Ain't I got fleas?" he insisted. "And don't I howl around all night, like a respectable coyote should do?"

"That don't prove nothin'," the cow-boy answered. "All Texans have fleas, and most of them howl. Did you ever see a coyote that didn't have a tail? Well, you ain't got no tail; so that proves you ain't a varmint."

Bill looked, and, sure enough, he didn't have a tail.

"You sure got me out on a limb," says Bill. "I never noticed that before. It shows what higher education will do for a man. I believe you're right. Lead me to them humans, and I'll throw in with them."

Bill went to town with this cow-hand, and in due time he got to enjoyin' all the pleasant vices of mankind, and decided that he certainly was a human. He got to runnin' with the wild bunch, and sunk lower and lower, until finally he became a cow-boy.

It wasn't long until he was famous as a bad man. He invented the six-shooter and train-robbin' and most of the crimes popular in the old

days of the West. He didn't invent cow-stealin'. That was discovered by King David in the Bible, but Bill improved on it.

There is no way of tellin' just how many men Bill did kill. Deep down he had a tender heart, however, and never killed women or children, or tourists out of season. He never scalped his victims; he was too civilized for that. He used to skin them gently and tan their hides.

It wasn't long before Bill had killed all the bad men in west Texas, massacred all the Indians, and eat all the buffalo. So he decided to migrate to a new country where hard men still thrived and a man could pass the time away.

He saddled up his horse and hit for the West. One day he met an old trapper and told him what he was lookin' for.

"I want the hardest cow outfit in the world," he says. "Not one of these ordinary cow-stealin', Mexican-shootin' bunches of amateurs, but a real hard herd of hand-picked hellions that make murder a fine art and take some proper pride in their slaughter."

"Stranger, you're headed in the right direction," answers the trapper. "Keep right on down this draw for a couple of hundred miles, and you'll find that very outfit. They're so hard they can kick fire out of a flint rock with their bare toes."

Bill single-footed down that draw for about a hundred miles that afternoon; then he met with an accident. His horse stubbed his toe on a mountain and broke his leg, leavin' Bill afoot.

He slung his saddle over his shoulder and set off hikin' down that draw, cussin' and a-swearin'. Profanity was a gift with Bill.

All at once a big ten-foot rattlesnake coiled up in his path, set his tail to singin', and allowed he'd like to match a fight. Bill laid down his saddle, and just to be fair about it, he gave the snake the first three bites. Then he waded into that reptile and everlastingly frailed the pizen out of him.

By and by that old rattler yelled for mercy, and admitted that when it came to fightin', Bill started where he let off. So Bill picked up his saddle and started on, carryin' the snake in his hand and spinnin' it in short loops at the Gila monsters.

About fifty miles further on, a big old mountain-lion jumped off a cliff and lit all spraddled out on Bill's neck. This was no ordinary lion. It weighed more than three steers and a yearlin', and was the very same lion the State of Nuevo León was named after down in old Mexico.

Kind of chucklin' to himself, Bill laid down his saddle and his snake and went into action. In a minute the fur was flyin' down the cañon until it darkened the sun. The way Bill knocked the animosity out of that lion was a shame. In about three minutes that lion hollered:

"I'll give up, Bill. Can't you take a joke?"

Bill let him up, and then he cinched the saddle on him and went down that cañon whoopin' and yellin', ridin' that lion a hundred feet at a jump, and quirtin' him down the flank with the rattlesnake.

It wasn't long before he saw a chuck-wagon with a bunch of cow-boys squattin' around it. He rode up to that wagon, splittin' the air with his war-whoops, with that old lion a-screechin', and that snake singin' his rattles.

When he came to the fire he grabbed the old cougar by the ear, jerked him back on his haunches, stepped off him, hung his snake around his neck, and looked the outfit over. Them cow-boys sat there sayin' less than nothin'.

Bill was hungry, and seein' a boilerful of beans cookin' on the fire, he scooped up a few handfuls and swallowed them, washin' them down with a few gallons of boilin' coffee out of the pot. Wipin' his mouth on a handful of prickly-pear cactus, Bill turned to the cow-boys and asked:

"Who the hell is boss around here?"

A big fellow about eight feet tall, with seven pistols and nine bowie-knives in his belt, rose up and, takin' off his hat, said:

"Stranger, I was; but you be."

Bill had many adventures with this outfit. It was about this time he staked out New Mexico, and used Arizona for a calf-pasture. It was here that he found his noted horse Widow-Maker. He raised him from a colt on nitroglycerin and dynamite, and Bill was the only man that could throw a leg over him.

There wasn't anythin' that Bill couldn't ride, although I have heard of one occasion when he was thrown. He made a bet that he could ride an Oklahoma cyclone slick-heeled, without a saddle.

He met the cyclone, the worst that was ever known, up on the Kansas line. Bill eared that tornado down and climbed on its back. That cyclone did some pitchin' that is unbelievable, if it were not vouched for by many reliable witnesses.

Down across Texas it went sunfishin', back-flippin', side-windin', knockin' down mountains, blowin' the holes out of the ground, and tyin' rivers into knots. The Staked Plains used to be heavily timbered until that big wind swiped the trees off and left it a bare prairie.

Bill just sat up there, thumbin' that cyclone in the withers, floppin' it across the ears with his hat, and rollin' a cigarette with one hand. He rode it through three States, but over in Arizona it got him.

When it saw it couldn't throw him, it rained out from under him. This is proved by the fact that it washed out the Grand Cañon. Bill came down over in California. The spot where he lit is now known as Death Valley, a hole in the ground more than one hundred feet below sea-level, and the print of his hip-pockets can still be seen in the granite.

I have heard this story disputed in some of its details. Some historians claim that Bill wasn't thrown; that he slid down on a streak of lightnin' without knockin' the ashes off his cigarette. It is also claimed that the Grand Cañon was dug by Bill one week when he went prospectin'; but the best authorities insist on the first version. They argue that that streak

of lightnin' story comes from the habit he always had of usin' one to light his cigarette.

Bill was a great roper. In fact, he invented ropin'. Old-timers who admit they knew him say that his rope was as long as the equator, although the more conservative say that it was at least two feet shorter on one end. He used to rope a herd of cattle at one throw.

This skill once saved the life of a friend. The friend had tried to ride Widow-Maker one day, and was thrown so high he came down on top of Pike's Peak. He was in the middle of a bad fix, because he couldn't get down, and seemed doomed to a lingerin' death on high.

Bill came to the rescue, and usin' only a short calf-loop, he roped his friend around the neck and jerked him down to safety in the valley, twenty thousand feet below. This man was always grateful, and became Bill's horse-wrangler at the time he staked out New Mexico.

In his idle moments in New Mexico Bill amused himself puttin' thorns on the trees and horns on the toads. It was on this ranch he dug the Rio Grande and invented the centipede and the tarantula as a joke on his friends.

When the cow business was dull, Pecos Bill occasionally embarked on other ventures; for instance, at one time he took a contract to supply the S. P. Railroad with wood. He hired a few hundred Mexicans to chop and haul the wood to the railroad line. As pay for the job, Bill gave each Mexican one fourth of the wood he hauled.

These Mexicans are funny people. After they received their share of the wood they didn't know what to do with it; so Bill took it off their hands and never charged them a cent.

On another occasion Bill took the job of buildin' the line fence that forms the boundary from El Paso across to the Pacific. He rounded up a herd of prairie-dogs and set them to dig holes, which by nature a prairie-dog likes to do.

Whenever one of them finished a nice hole and settled down to live in it, Bill evicted him and stuck a fence-post in the hole. Everybody admired his foresight except the prairie-dogs, and who cares what a prairie-dog thinks?

Old Bill was always a very truthful man. To prove this, the cow-boys repeat one of his stories, which Bill claimed happened to him. Nobody ever disputed him; that is, no one who is alive now.

He threw in with a bunch of Kiowa Indians one time on a little huntin'-trip. It was about the time the buffalo were getting scarce, and Bill was huntin' with his famous squatter-hound named Norther.

Norther would run down a buffalo and hold him by the ear until Bill came up and skinned him alive. Then he would turn it loose to grow a new hide. The scheme worked all right in the summer, but in the winter most of them caught colds and died.

The stories of Bill's love-affairs are especially numerous. One of them may be told. It is the sad tale of the fate of his bride, a winsome little

maiden called Slue-Foot Sue. She was a famous rider herself, and Bill lost his heart when he saw her riding a catfish down the Rio Grande with only a surcingle. You must remember that the catfish in the Rio Grande are bigger than whales and twice as active.

Sue made a sad mistake, however, when she insisted on ridin' Widow-Maker on her weddin'-day. The old horse threw her so high she had to duck her head to let the moon go by. Unfortunately, she was wearin' her weddin'-gown, and in those days the women wore those big steel-spring bustles.

Well, when Sue lit, she naturally bounced, and every time she came down she bounced again. It was an awful sad sight to see Bill implorin' her to quit her bouncin' and not be so nervous; but Sue kept right on, up and down, weepin', and throwin' kisses to her distracted lover, and carryin' on as a bride naturally would do under those circumstances.

She bounced for three days and four nights, and Bill finally had to shoot her to keep her from starvin' to death. It was mighty tragic. Bill never got over it. Of course he married lots of women after that. In fact, it was one of his weaknesses; but none of them filled the place in his heart once held by Slue-Foot Sue, his bouncin' bride.

There is a great difference of opinion as to the manner of Bill's demise. Many claim that it was his drinkin' habits that killed him. You see, Bill got so that liquor didn't have any kick for him, and he fell into the habit of drinkin' strychnine and other forms of wolf pizen.

Even the wolf bait lost its effect, and he got to puttin' fish-hooks and barbed wire in his toddy. It was the barbed wire that finally killed him. It rusted his interior and gave him indigestion. He wasted away to a mere skeleton, weighin' not more than two tons; then up and died, and went to his infernal reward.

Many of the border bards who knew Pecos Bill at his best have a different account of his death.

They say that he met a man from Boston one day, wearing a mail-order cow-boy outfit, and askin' fool questions about the West; and poor old Bill laid down and laughed himself to death.

Old Stormalong, the Deep-Water Sailorman

"CERTAINLY, I 'member Old Stormalong," said the oldest skipper on Cape Cod. "I was a 'prentice fust on his ship and later on I was Second when he was bosun on the *Courser*, out o' Boston. *That* was a ship, a wooden ship with iron men on her decks, a ship that aint been eekaled by these hoity-toity steamboats. No, sir, an' never will. Donald McKay built that ship just because he found one sailorman who could handle her as

she should be handled. But, you're aimin' to hear about a sailorman an' not about ships.

"Only t'other day a young whippersnapper was a-telling me about Stormie sayin' as how he was fourteen fathoms tall. I've heared other tales about his height. I know! He was jes' four fathoms from the deck to the bridge of his nose.

"He was the first sailorman to have the letters 'A. B.' after his name. Those were jes' his 'nitials, put after his name on the ship's log just the same as always. Alfred Bulltop Stormalong was the name he gave his first skipper. The old man looked him over and says:

"'A. B. S. Able-Bodied Sailor. By your size and strength they should measure the talents of all other seamen.'

"It makes me pretee mad when I see some of the hornswogglers of today with these letters after their names. They are only feeble imitators o' the greatest o' all deep-water sailormen.

"You landsmen know very little about real sailormen, that is, blue-water sailors. This chap Stormalong was not only a sailorman for all waters, he was a whaler too. I mind the time we was anchored in the middle of the North 'Lantic finishin' off a right whale. The lookout sights a school off to the east'ard and Stormie, the bosun, gives the order to h'ist the mudhook. All hands for'ard but not a h'ist. The hook 'ud give a bit and then it 'ud sink right back into the mud. Seemed to be hands clutchin' it and draggin' it out o' our hands. Once we got it clear o' the bottom and almost shipped it when we seed what was wrong. Nothin' short of an octopus was wropped all 'round that mudhook. He was holdin' the anchor with half of his tenacles and with the other half hangin' on to the seaweed on the bottom.

"The mate yelled 'vast heavin'' and went back to tell the skipper. When the old man came for'ard to see for himself he was just in time to see Stormie go overboard with his sheath knife in his teeth. He went below the su'face and there began a terrific struggle. The water was churned and splashed about so that old hooker jes' rolled about like she was beam to the wind. All of us was sure our bosun had been tore 'part by the octopus. The struggle went on for about a quarter of an hour when Stormie's head came to the su'face. Some one called out to throw him a line but before one could be brought he had grabbed the anchor chain and came hand over hand to the deck. The strugglin' in the water kept on for a while but moved away from the ship.

"'All right,' yelled Stormie, 'all hands lean on it and bring it home.'

"After the anchor was shipped I asked him what he had done to the octopus.

"'Jes' tied his arms in knots. Double Carrick bends. It'll take him a month o' Sundays to untie them.'

"There was one peculiar thing about Stormalong that was due to his size. He was as loyal to his ship as any sailorman until he saw a bigger one. Then he'd get peevisish an' sullen until he had signed aboard the

bigger ship. His biggest complaint was that ships weren't built big enough for a full sized man.

"Well, the ship we were on at that time was *Lady of the Sea*, finest and fastest of the tea packets. Even that didn't satisfy him. He wanted a bigger ship or he'd go farmin'. Once he said to us as we sat 'round the forebitt:

"'When this hooker gets to port I'm goin' to put an oar over my shoulder and I'm goin' to start walkin' 'way from salt water. I'm goin' to keep right on walkin' until some hairlegger says to me, "What's that funny stick you have on your shoulder, matey?" an' right there I'm goin' to settle down and dig potatoes.'

"'Yes,' said the Third-in-Command, skeptically, 'what potatoes are you goin' to dig?'

"'Regular and proper spuds, fresh ones, not like the dead potatoes you get on this hooker,' said the Sailor Who Was Tired of the Sea.

"'Got to plant them first,' said the Third. 'Then you got to hoe them, pick the bugs off'n them, spray them, hoe them some more. You got to irrigate them, too. Best irrigater for potatoes is the sweat off'n your brow. Just dig so hard and fast that the sweat rolls down along your nose and drops on the plant. Much harder'n holystoning the deck which, by the way, you'll begin on jus' as soon as you turn to in the mornin'.'

"'Nothin' can be as hard as holystoning a deck,' observed Stormie.

"'Compared with sailoring,' I cuts in, 'farmin' comes under the headin' of hard labor. The best part o' farmin', I'll admit, is that all the hard work comes in fine weather while with sailerin' it's jes' t'other way 'bout.'

"For the rest of that trip Stormalong was moody and preoccupied. He had been on the ship for over a year, a very long time for him, without seeing a bigger ship. When the ship hit Boston Stormie signed off. He came on deck with his duffel bag over his shoulder.

"'Where you goin'?' I asks him.

"'Farmin',' says he.

"Then he heaves the bag over the rail and follows it to the wharf. The crew of the *Lady of the Sea* just stood along the rail and gaped.

"Several years later when we were again lined against the wharf at Boston a big, tall man was seen coming down the wharf.

"'Stormie, or I'm a fool,' says I to myself.

"The big man came over the side and sure enough it was Alfred Bulltop Stormalong. There was a change immediately apparent. He was taller than ever but the flesh hung in dewlaps all over him and his eyes showed the marks of great suffering. Too, he looked hungrily at the sea. He breathed deep breaths of the salt air and in a few minutes seemed to regain some of his old spirit.

"'Stormie, where 'a' you been?' I asks him.

“‘Farmin’,’ says he.

“‘How’d you like it?’ I goes on.

“‘Terrible,’ says he. ‘Nothin’ but green grass an’ trees an’ hills an’ hot work. Nary a breeze or the smell o’ the sea. Never a storm to make a man pull out all the best that’s in him. Nothin’ but zephyrs an’ a hot sun an’ pushin’ on a plow. All my muscles were made for pullin’ an’ on a farm there’s nothin’ to do but push. Sailorin’s the best job after all.’

“He signed on for his old job of boatswain and after taking on water we got under way. We cruised about the Caribbean Sea taking on and discharging shipments for over six months. Then we made for Boston Harbor.

“Stormie was a loyal sailor until he saw a bigger ship and the *Lady of the Sea* was the biggest ship sailing the Atlantic. At least we thought she was but just before we got to Barnegat we came across what first appeared to be a mirage. She was just the biggest ship ever built and I heard the skipper say to the mate that she was Donald McKay’s dream come to life. Her lines were perfect, her cloth pure white and hung on silver masts. She rolled lazily on a sea that made us bump about like a cork. I saw Stormie at the rail gazing in goggle-eyed admiration.

“‘Must take a million ordinary sailors to man her,’ he gasped. ‘Yes, sir! One million at the least. Well, I guess I’ll be leavin’ this packet.’

“The next mornin’ we were without a bosun. The best explanation we could give was that during the night he had gone over the side and swum to the big ship. For a second time Stormalong had gone out of my life.

“After the *Lady of the Sea* discharged her cargo in Boston we got word that they were signing on a crew for a new ship, the *Courser*. I applied for a place as second mate and was signed on. We were told to report to a ship at the end of the wharf that was acting as a tender for the *Courser* which was too big to enter Boston Harbor.

“The next morning we boarded the tender and were taken out to the *Courser*. She was none other than the big ship we had seen from the *Lady of the Sea*, the ship that Stormie had gone over the side for. She looked like a ship that might have been built for a race of men of Stormalong’s stature. The first thing that caught my eye as my feet hit the deck was a stableful of horses.

“‘Horse boat, huh!’ I said.

“‘Horse boat nothin’,’ said the man in charge of the tender. ‘Those horses are for the men on watch.’

“Believe it or not. That ship was so big that all officers and men on watch were mounted on horses. Manalive, her rigging was so immense that no living man could take her in at a single glance. Her masts penetrated the clouds and the top sections were on hinges so they could be bent over to let the sun and moon pass. Her sails were so big that the builders had to take all the able-bodied sailmakers out in the Sahara Desert to find room to sew them. Young men who were sent aloft usually came

down as gray-beards. The skipper had to order all hands aloft six days before a storm. Every yard and every block and tackle had bunkhouses and cooks' galleys built into them to accommodate the men who worked aloft. She carried over six hundred men and some of the sailormen never saw all their shipmates. Once the Old Man, who gave his orders through a megaphone, ordered all hands forward. It took the after crew a week to get there and then over thirty were killed in the crush. Some of the men got lost because they had not taken the precaution to bring their compasses with them.

"The *Courser* was so big that she had to keep to the oceans, there was no harbor big enough for her to turn about in. Her wheel was so big it took thirty-two men working in unison to turn her and early in the cruise it was found that Stormalong was the only man aboard who could make her answer the wheel promptly. When we had to take on or discharge a cargo a whole fleet of ordinary ships used to come out and we would transship our load.

"But she was a great ship. There never was a storm great enough to cause her any real discomfort.

"There was one that caused us a bit of worry. One of those September gales that chivvy us in the North Atlantic. She was so big that the Skipper just let her ride out any storm, knowing that no matter how big a blow it was the *Courser* could weather it. Well, this was some storm, and we bobbed about like a regular sized vessel all over that ocean. Worst of it was that the clouds and fog made it so dark we couldn't make where we were at. This went on for over a fortnight when we awoke to see the sun bright and shining. The bosun put his mouth to his megaphone and shouted:

Rise and shine
For the Black Ball Line

and all hands turned to. There was Stormalong at the wheel holding her true to what he thought was her course. After the Captain and all the mates had 'taken the sun' and figured it out on paper they told us we were somewhere in the North Sea and headed south. That meant trouble. The *Courser* could never get through the English Channel and it meant that we'd pile up against the cliffs of Dover or on the French coast. You see, the North Sea wasn't big enough for us to turn around in. The skipper and the mates had a consultation and decided as they could not turn around to take a chance of easing through the Channel. The officers rode across the poop of that ship on their horses, yelling orders and squinting their eyes along the ship's sides. Stormie was at the wheel and the only man who could see everything at once. Just as they got to the point between Calais and the cliffs of Dover all sails were reefed and the skipper was ready to order the men to take to the boats. He looked back at Stormie and saw that the man at the wheel was calm and steady.

"'Will she make it?' yelled the skipper through his megaphone.

"'I think so!' answered the man at the wheel. 'May scrape a bit o' paint off'n our sides but she'll go through.'

"Then, squinting first along the port side an' then the starboard, he called to the man on the poop deck:

"'Better send all hands over and soap the sides, put an extry heavy coat on the starboard.'

"The skipper got the whole crew plastering the sides with the best soap he had and the big ship eased through just as sweet as honey. But it's all due to the scap that we did get through. It was such a tight fit that the cliffs at Dover scraped every bit of soap off the starboard side. Ever since then the cliffs at that point have been pure white. That was from the *Courser's* soap and the action of the waves. Sometime when you are in the channel take a look at the waves. They are still a bit foamy from the soap.

"When the Old Man saw we had gotten through he called all hands forward to splice the main brace, which meant in nautical terms, to come and have a drink of grog.

"The *Courser* kept right on going but after a few hours we got into shallow water and we had to jettison all of our ballast. We threw so much overboard that you can still see the piles of dirt. The English call them the Channel Islands.

"In all the time I knew her the *Courser* had but one other storm that troubled her. Strange to relate but it was another September gale, one of those lads that generally does so much damage around Florida. The *Courser* was down among the Caribees and the storm whipped her about pretty badly. The Skipper wasn't as much afraid of losing his ship as he was of hitting one of the islands and knocking it and the inhabitants into kingdom come. The ship just missed Haiti and headed west by south like a broncho with the bit in his teeth. Right down the Gulf she went until she came to Darien and without asking anybody's permission went right through the Isthmus. The *Courser* found herself out in the Pacific Ocean. The only eye-witnesses of the destruction outside the crew were a couple of army officers who had been sent down by the United States to make surveys for a canal. And right in front of their eyes a ship comes along and digs it for them. Naturally they took all the credit but the truth of it is Old Stormalong and the *Courser* dug that ditch."

The Oldest Skipper on Cape Cod paused in his narrative to yawn and give his cronies a chance.

"All I ever knowed about him," said another, "was that he took his whale soup in a Cape Cod dory, that his fav'rite meat was shark. He liked ostrich eggs for breakfast and then he would lie back on the deck and pick his teeth with an eighteen foot oar."

"Skippers came and skippers went," said the Oldest Skipper on Cape Cod, "but Stormie stuck to the *Courser* to the end. He died while we were discharging a cargo from the middle of the Gulf of Mexico."

"I heard how he was buried," said the Sailor Who Had Swallowed the Anchor. "They took him ashore and buried him right near the water so he could always have the salt spray over him."

Then he burst into song:

Stormie's gone, that good old man,

And all the rest joined in the chorus line:

To my way hay, storm along, John.
Stormie's gone, that good old man,
To my aye, aye, aye, Mister Stormalong!

They dug his grave with a silver spade,
To my way hay, storm along, John!
His shroud of finest silk was made,
To my aye, aye, aye, Mister Stormalong!

They lowered him with a silver chain,
To my way hay, storm along, John!
Their eyes all dim with more than rain,
To my aye, aye, aye, Mister Stormalong!

An able sailor, bold and true,
To my way hay, storm along, John!
A good old bosun to his crew,
To my aye, aye, aye, Mister Stormalong!

He's moored at last, and furled his sail,
To my way hay, storm along, John!
No danger now from wreck or gale,
To my aye, aye, aye, Mister Stormalong!

I wish I was old Stormie's son,
To my way hay, storm along, John!
I'd build me a ship of a thousand ton,
To my aye, aye, aye, Mister Stormalong!

I'd sail this wide world 'round and 'round,
To my way hay, storm along, John!
With plenty of money I would be found,
To my aye, aye, aye, Mister Stormalong!

I'd fill her with New England rum,
To my way hay, storm along, John!
All my shellbacks they would have some,
To my aye, aye, aye, Mister Stormalong!

Old Stormie's dead and gone to rest,
To my way hay, storm along, John!
Of all the sailors he was the best,
To my aye, aye, aye, Mister Stormalong!

The song ended and the old shellbacks looked wistfully across the harbor. Beyond the harbor entrance a steamship was making her smoky way to Minot's Light. The Sailor Who Had Swallowed the Anchor spat into the water and said:

"When I went to sea they had iron men and wooden ships; now they got iron ships and wooden men. I'd ruther be found dead than to be found on one o' them steamboats."

Bowleg Bill

I. THE CRIMPING OF BOWLEG BILL

SOME say 'Frisco, some say Provincetown. Nobody seems to know where Bowleg Bill first went down to the sea. But east or west, it was a long trail, for it began in Laramie County, Wyoming.

They called him "the sea-going cowboy," and though his adventures were keeping the Liars' Bench warm in every port from Cape Cod on "down to the east'ard," Bowleg never forgot his home acres. Through it all—whaling, fishing, the foreign trade—he remained at heart a ranch-hand; he longed again to feel out his saddle.

Once, when he came to Provincetown as third mate of the whaleship *Lily Queen*—"riding herd," as he called it, on a passel of fo'mast hands—three towns on Lower Cape Cod could hear him bellowing his favorite ditty across the waters of the bay, and there were echoes even on the far shore, in the very respectable towns of Brewster and Dennis. Unfortunately, my publishers tell me the words of this song do not lend themselves well to print. There were forty-eight stanzas, and from the lot I have picked one which I am allowed to include here if I change the last line. And I am including it because it shows how Bowleg Bill really felt about the sea, though he was at the height of his career. It goes:

Oh, give me a bucket o' bull blood,
Give me the prai-rie grass!
You kin take yore oceans
And seafaring notions
And la, tra-la, tra-la.

Because he felt this way, Bowleg was never, technically, an able seaman. Those who spread his fame and were so generous with their own embroidery would readily admit that he "didn't know a thwart from a thunder-mug."

No, and he never bothered to learn. Throughout his career, he did

From *Bowleg Bill, The Sea-Going Cowboy*, or *Ship Ahoy & Let 'Er Buck!* by Jeremiah Digges, pp. 11-18, 21-28, 37-46. Copyright, 1938, by Josef Berger. New York: The Viking Press.

things in his own way, and ashore or afloat, it was the way of the ranch-hand, the mustanger, the bronc-peeler, from another world. On the Liars' Bench, he was always "the big furriner," and his "born-to trade" was touched on gingerly by the wharf-yarners, who described it as "launching crank horses on their maiden voyage across the flats of Wyoming," or, in other versions, "going harbor-pilot to them big schools of western cattle—them hermaphrodite-rig bulls that are growed for their meat."

But with such a background for their hero, the spell-weavers of dory and wharf-spile could cast off in waters worthy of their skill. They could sail close to the wind. They could soar above all demand for oath and affidavit and grandly omit the long assurances that everything was gospel-truth. If, in the pages that follow, heaven or any of its inhabitants is called upon as witness, it will be merely a matter of form; it is the language of the Liars' Bench; it is a concession of the proud and the lofty.

All that they have asked of Bowleg Bill—in Gloucester, in Boston, in Provincetown—was that he be true to himself. And the Liars' Bench has kept him so. A gawd-damned lubber he was when he went down to the sea. A gawd-damned lubber he remained through the height of his fame. And precisely because of this, the wonders he worked were the more engaging to those who heard them, the more gleefully seized on by those who would pass them along.

Wharf-yarns and spondrift? Yes, else why should Bowleg Bill be picked as the man to perform the prodigious—Bowleg, who, to quote the Bench itself, "could not have told you the difference between a taffr'l and the skipper's left tit," Bowleg, who, by his own admission, could never learn to "sashay around on them poles and wires," Bowleg, who was ever unpleasantly surprised because he couldn't remember to spit to the looward? Why pick the supreme lubber to work wonders at sea?

Well, he who knows the New England fisherman of today will understand, and so would he who knew the New England whaleman of yesterday. Give them Paul Bunyan, if you will, on the Liars' Bench of any waterfront, but do not try to impress the boys with what a mighty man Paul was. Do not go into the dull statistics of felling a spruce six feet through in ten strokes of the ax—by virtue of great strength and great skill. No, if you would win these fellows over to Paul, let him fell his tree in one stroke—and with his eyes closed too—by virtue of a rotten spot in the trunk. Better still, let him lean on his ax while a bolt of lightning comes down at the proper moment and does the business for him.

It's not that they are lazy. God knows, the fisherman's work is as hard as any on earth, and a shade more hazardous. But through the ages, the man with the hook, the trawl, or the harpoon has insisted on "working shares," instead of for a fixed wage; and the hero who clicks with him must be endowed with something above strength, something beyond skill.

Thus, the entire story of Bowleg Bill becomes a saga of inadvertence. His career at sea began by accident, the mistake of a "crimp" operating

in a waterfront "pulparee," or dive frequented by drifters from the deep water and by floaters from inland. The whaleships of that day had difficulty finding men who were willing to undergo the hardships of a voyage lasting from three to five years, and crimps were paid to bring hands aboard. The crimp would accost his prey in the pulparee, buy him a few drinks, and then slip him a dose of knockout drops. When the victim came to, he was lying on the deck of some outbound blubber-boiler, with a bucko mate standing over him, belaying pin in hand.

The Liars' Bench has never bothered, so far as I have been able to discover, with the question of Bowleg's presence in a pulparee. It was a long way from Wyoming, no matter which coast, and Bowleg had wandered in, for no matter which of the two major attractions a pulparee offered.

There he fell in with a crimp, who was naturally impressed with his height—eight foot four inches without them long-heeled boots!—drugged, and hoisted aboard the whaleship *Sawdust Sal*. The mate of the *Sawdust Sal* looked him over with great curiosity, paused to stare at his legs and marvel, at the way he "paid off on opposite tacks from the waist down," felt of the angora chaps he was wearing, and in bafflement finally remarked: "I've seen many a tough hide in my day, but I'll be damned if ever I seen a man that chafes so severe he needs rope-yarns on his drawers!" He kicked Bowleg's inert form over, slipped the gun out of "that inside-out leather pocket stuck on his belt," and left him there on the deck.

When Bowleg came to, it was morning and the *Sawdust Sal* was well out to sea on a cruise of three years or longer. He sat up and blinked. He looked out to starboard and saw deep water. He looked out to larboard and saw more deep water. He rose to his full height, saw deep water all around him, and exclaimed:

"Durned if I hain't flooded the range in my sleep!"

When the mate saw Bowleg on his feet, he came after him with a marline-spike. But Bowleg nodded and said sleepily:

"Mornin'. You hain't seen nawthing of a chestnut gelding tethered somewheres hereabouts, have you, stranger?"

"Git aloft there, ye swill-sotted son of a sarpint," the officer answered, "and take in the skys'l afore I start a little gelding of my own aboard this ship!"

That answer didn't mean a great deal to Bowleg, but the tone of it told him this was no exchange of good old Western pleasantries.

"Fly yore own balloons," he said. "I hain't got time for play, and my hoss never did like the wet too well."

The mate brought up his marline-spike, and Bowleg reached for his gun—which wasn't there. So he took hold of the spike and twisted it out of the fellow's hand.

"When a man asks after his own hoss," Bowleg lectured, "he's asking a civil question. Don't you know this thing is dangerous, with a sharp point to it?" and he tossed the marline-spike overboard.

The mate swung at Bowleg with his fist, and several other ship's officers ran to join in the fight. All accounts agree that it was a grand mêlée, there on the deck of the *Sawdust Sal*, with Bowleg's long arms bowling men down as quickly as they got to their feet, and with a lecture throughout from the giant bronco-buster, who kept asking them, didn't they know it wasn't civil to come at a man with "them tent-pegs and things" when he was merely asking after his boss?

Finally Captain Slateface appeared on deck, with a pistol in his hand. Slateface, according to the Liars' Bench, was one of the most terrible, the bloodthirstiest bully captains ever to go a-whaling.

"You the foreman here?" Bowleg asked.

Slateface ignored him, and turned to the mate.

"Clap this mutinous son of a bitch in the run!"

But nobody stepped forward to carry out the order, and when the skipper looked back at Bowleg, he found a long six-shooter pointing his way. For the mate who had taken the gun from Bowleg's belt had never thought to look in his "long-heeled shoes." And with this gun, so the Liars' Bench avers, "you could have shot a fourteen-foot blue shark from dead astern and blowed his brains out!"

"Better put that little parlor-piece away, boss," Bowleg told the skipper. "Why, you might put somebody's eye out with that!" And when the Captain wavered, and could not make up his mind whether to give up or let fly, Bowleg warned the other men:

"All right, boys. If this place has a bar or something to give cover, better lay low behind it!"

Then—bang! The six-shooter roared out once, and when the smoke cleared, there stood the skipper "with his mustache clipped off clean at the second coil—port side." And—bang!—the six-shooter roared out twice, and when the smoke cleared, there stood the skipper, "with his mustache clipped off clean at the second coil—starboard side."

Well, the upshot of it was that Bowleg, after neatly bringing the skipper out of his whiskers and scaring him out of his wits, disarmed him and forced the crew to "hop up there and wheel this thing around for home—pronto!" And while the skipper sat by the after-hatch and growled through his short hairs about "mutiny" and "fur-legged lunatics," the whaleship *Sawdust Sal* was worked back into port.

And on these details of Bowleg Bill's first adventure at sea, the Liars' Bench is generally agreed. Several seaports have been named, several names have been given to the big cowpuncher. But these things do not matter, nor does it matter whether the stories of Bowleg Bill that follow were told on the Liars' Bench, of other men, in other ages. There was a way that all such stories had of popping up again and again in unexpected places, and in unexpected dress. There was a general overlapping, and I myself have heard parts of all these stories in still other stories; and the germ of no single one among them is new. The wharf-yarners do not invent. The truths they speak are the eternal verities; the words, spoondrift. . . .

II. SLICKBRITCHES THE HOSS-MACKEREL

The boys of the trap fleet are setting on the wharf as usual between trips, betting on the gulls as to which will be the next to decorate the spiles, when Bowleg Bill the sea-going cowboy shows up.

We have been hearing yarns for years of this wild Wyoming bronco-buster, and the uncommon happen-quences which are told of him since he took to seafaring, and now all of a sudden on our own waterfront here he is personal. But for all his rare seamanship, not even Bowleg Bill himself—personal as a spinster's dream—is going to take up much slack among the boys that goes out for swordfish or hoss-mackerel.

"Hoss-mackerel" is the name we give in Cape Cod waters to what off-Cape furriners calls "tuna." For a few days each summer they strike here and git caught in the weirs and float-traps which we set in the harbor for smaller fish. This summer the run of hoss-mackerel is heavy in the traps, and while the boys are talking of the elegant stocks it is rolling up for them, Bowleg Bill paces for'ard and aft on that wharf like a tomcat on one side of the fence which figures he is missing something on tother.

Finally the talk is more than he can put up with, and he walks over to Yank Daggett, who skippers the *Tossup*, and who is high-line fisherman of the harbor fleet.

"This here hoss-mackerel," Bowleg inquires, "he's a sassy varmint, is he, stranger?"

Yank nods. "The strike is running uncommon heavy this season, with a long streak of hell in each of 'em."

"Mmm. Real cornfed he-man's work, is it, ridin' herd on 'em?"

"Well, you got to know how to gaff 'em in. Hoss-mackereling is no business for a green hand."

Bowleg Bill paces the wharf a couple more times, and comes back.

"What do you reckon the critters will weigh on the hoof?"

"Up to rising a thousand pounds. Most of 'em come a hundred to eight-nine hundred."

"Now, hain't that a shame!" says Bowleg. "Not enough to kick dust in yore eye! I was figgering I might admire to rope in a few, but where I come from, we don't bother with a rope on nawthing under a couple ton—that is, if it's extry good, smoke-snortin' bull with half a ton of devilment throwed in."

Yank bends a long grin between his ears.

"You jest throw back the small fry, eh?"

"Wa-al, them little fellers we pick up barehanded by the belly-slack, and toss 'em into the pens."

Yank nods. "Makes it handy, don't it? But with us, we got to watch out for the tail. A hoss-mackerel's tail ain't no slack hawser abaft,

ending in a bunch of loose rope-yarns. When you git hoss-mackerel, you want to make sartin-sure you don't git slapped over the gunnels with his tail."

"Huh!" says Bowleg. "I have yet to meet up with the critter—two-legged or four, stranger—which I couldn't take keer of in that section. Where's yore foreman? I see I'll have to show you fellers how to haze yore herd, the way it's done back in old Wyoming!"

"I'm skipper here," Yank says, "but we ain't taking on no greenies while the run of hoss-mackerel keeps up."

"Mister," says Bowleg, "if you are a betting man, I'll jest hit the trail with you to them corral-things out yonder. And if I don't cut me out one of yore full-growed hoss-mackerel and bring him in bare-handed, without using none of them long-handled prod-sticks, I'll pay you twenty silver dollars and marry yore meanest of kin!"

Well, Yank figures this big cowboy has missed stays in the August heat, but he has heard so many yarns about him that finally he takes the bet. The boys at the wharf hurry upstreet to spread the news, and before dark the whole town is talking of the off-Cape lunatic who is going after hoss-mackerel barehanded. Big odds is offered against Bowleg, but these people knows fish, and there is no takers amongst 'em.

Next morning the whole harbor is cluttered up with dories, pungoes, and anything down to harness-casks, which the citizens can climb aboard to watch the *Tossup* draw the traps. As a fishing port, the town has took Bowleg's bet to heart as an insult, and he gets hootcalls aplenty on the way out. Even poor old Cap'n Dyer, who's been shorebound twenty years with the backsliding vertigo, is out there in one of the boats.

"Better go back inland, young feller!" he hollers. "Ye don't know what's waiting fer ye in that net!"

"Don't you fret over me, grandpaw!" Bowleg calls back. "That's a mighty shaky caboose yo're driving there. You get for cover pronto if I start a stampede!"

At the first trap, there is thrashing and white water, a commotion like a hurricane stoppered up under them net-buoys, and in the middle of it, the biggest hoss-mackerel Yank Daggett has ever seen. And the minute Yank does see him, he forgets all about Bowleg Bill, he forgets everything but that great blue-silver body and six foot of slapping, thrashing tail. And he stands ready with his gaff while the boys haul on the net.

Bowleg gets the measure of this big feller, and he climbs over, alongside Yank.

"That one over yonder!" he says. "Will he weigh up to our bet?"

"Will he weigh up to it! He's two thousand pounds if he's a Scotch ounce, you lubber!"

"All right, boys," Bowleg sings out, "give me a clear field!" And he pushes Yank and a couple of others aside and yells to the hoss-mackerel. "Come along, leetle dogie!"

"Hey, git aft, you blasted pig-farmer!" Yank hollers. "That fish is big money, and I ain't leaving it to no gawd-damned greeny to lose him!"

"Now, jest keep yore britches dry, boss," says Bowleg, "and lift that daggone spear out o' my road. I've picked my animal and I'm a-going after him for all creation and a barbwire fence! *Hy-up!* Come along, leetle dogie, come along!"

He reaches out, he gets hold of the fish in the small, and he heaves—though how in etarnity he figures to swing aboard two thousand pounds of game fish that way, only an inland furriner might know! The tail slips clear of his hands, and the hoss-mackerel slips clear of the backbone of the net.

"Look out!" Yank hollers. "He's clear! He's clear and away!"

"Oh, no, he hain't," Bowleg answers. Over the side he goes, boots and all, and before the fish has got under way, there is this shatterwitted cowpuncher, setting astride, whipping astern with his hat, and hollering like the yoho-bird of every dead sailor come home from hell!

"*Whoop-ee-ee! Hy-ee-ee—up!* Show some buck, now, you white-livered snubbin'-beetle, before I sell you off to a livery stable. Come on here, Slickbritches, *hy-up!*" And away goes that silver divil, and up he jumps, breaching clean out of the water like a porpoise. But when he comes down again, there is Bowleg Bill, still astraddle, still fanning his tail with the wide out-rigger hat.

Yank gives a groan. "There goes the biggest catch—and the gawd-damnedest fool—that was ever set loose in these waters!"

But somebody aboard one of the craft hard by sets up a cheer: "Ride him, cowboy!" And other folks takes it up, till all over the harbor there is a wide sing-out of cheers for Bowleg Bill and the hoss-mackerel which he has named Slickbritches.

But the worst yells is from Bowleg himself, who is whooping like a wild Injun with the galloping chin-cough.

"*Yip, yip, yip-ee-ee!* Come on, you two-dollar fly-roost, hain't you going to throw no sand in their eyes?"

I don't know where he larned it, but somehow that cowboy has took a grip on the foretops'l fin, and no matter how bad Slickbritches broaches to, he can't shake him loose. They go scudding a wide circle of the harbor, with the big hoss-mackerel getting madder every minute. He dives to starboard, he lashes to larboard, he all but pitchpoles head-over. But somehow—and may the divil spit me over hell's hottest hearth if I can explain it!—Bowleg hangs on, with his knees bearing in close amidships, riding easy as grandmar in the Sunday-parlor rocker. Then Slickbritches makes one last big leap, like the flurry of an ironed whale—up in the air and clean over the bow of the *Tossup!*

"Buck away, you overgrowsed sardine!" yells Bowleg. "I'll peel you if it takes to Kansas City!"

But after that last jump, it is plain that Slickbritches is losing wind.

He stops pitching, and jogs along easy among the harbor craft. And Bowleg, setting there and showing out of water from the knees up, starts stroking the fish abaft the gills, and talking to him, and—so help me Gawd!—little by little larning him to answer the helm! He hauls taut on that fin, and Slickbritches takes one tack; and he hauls again, and Slickbritches takes another tack; and when he has rode all the crank notions out of him, Bowleg veers about and heads in for the beach.

They make inshore till the hoss-mackerel is chafing his chin on the tideflats. Then—just when the whole town is fixing to send up a cheer for the landing of the biggest fish in history—this big beef-farmer gives a performance which none of us human folks will ever understand, and which I respectfully leave to some gawd-damned inlander to explain.

Instead of beaching that fish, he all of a sudden warps him around and jumps off!

Slickbritches heads for the open water, and Bowleg speeds him on his course, splashing after him and flogging him over the tail.

A crowd is gathered on the beach, and they are mad as a school of bees in a tar-barrel; for any man which lets a big fish get away has got some explaining to do before the law-abiding citizens of this town. When Bowleg wades out of the water, they all want to know why he done it, and is he gone clean whacky, and hadn't they better get him arrested and locked up as a dangerous character.

But Bowleg Bill just shakes his head at the crowd, and there is a sad, long-frayed look in his eyes, and he knuckles a tear off his cheek, and he says:

“That pore old windbroke waterbug! I tell you, folks, there ain't nawthing that'll break a cowhand's heart so quick as to find a critter—two-legged or four—with the rough all rode off at first mount!”

III. THE SKIPPER'S BULL BAZZOON ¹

The skipper is in his cabin, blowing brisk ditties on the bull bazzoon.
OOMPA-DIDDLE-DIDDLE.

¹ . . . the story that Cap'n Sam told bore some resemblance to an old Cape Cod legend, or rather a whole group of legends, concerned with a “whistling whale,” a musical giant whose talents were employed in various ways for the weal or woe of humankind.

According to one local version, a great whale was harpooned, the iron going in thwartships through his spouthole. That is a very effective but very dangerous place to harpoon a whale, I am told. At any rate, the whale got away. And ever after that, his breathing and spouting caused a great whistling sound which could be heard for miles.

Some say he learned to control it, and give the boys a tune; others, that he charmed other whales and treacherously turned decoy. And according to still another school, he had a pet hate on the chief of the Provincetown Volunteer Fire Department, who, in his younger days, had planted that very iron in his snoot. And so, he used to come into the harbor in the dead of night and reproduce the sound of the fire whistle so ably that the entire force would turn out three and four times a night.—J. D., pp. 153-154.

Me and Bowleg Bill is setting on the deck, the same as we have sot these hunderd and eighty long days at sea, with nary a heave of the long dart, nary a thimble of ile in the casks. Aye, we sets and we stews and we rots and we stinks, and Sparm Whale pokes his head out of the green water and gives us twenty barr'ls of the Injy Ocean in our faces with his compliments. And our skipper goes on a-blowing brisk ditties on the bull bazzoon.

"May the divil beach you on the hottest flats in hell!" I says to the whale.

"Shoo, you ornery gruller-hoss," Bowleg Bill says to the whale.

But he knows better, that whale. Him and all the whales in the Injy Ocean knows that Cap'n Epepharus Atkins of the *Duty Bound* has went clean whacky with a bull bazzoon, ever since he has picked it up in a New Bedford hand-me-along emporium. Aye, they knows the bazzoon is a bugle of Beelzebub, which will drive a man whacky blowing this everlasting oompa-diddle. And this particular bazzoon which our skipper has picked up is two yards long and big around as the spankerboom of the whaleship *Duty Bound*. And all the whales in the water knows that Epepharus Atkins will not show willing to lower so long as he can practice brisk ditties on that bazzoon.

OOMPA-DIDDLE-DIDDLE.

Like the groans and gripes of a bung-stoppered walrus, so help me! And this sparm whale is breaching under our lee quarter, till the lookout is nigh to gitting slapped out of the crow's nest.

"Thar she blows!" he hollers. "Blo-o-ow! Thar she blows and belches, thar she breaches and biles! My Gawd, thar she bilges the bottoms of my boots!"

OOMPA-DIDDLE-DIDDLE.

So long as he hears it, this whale knows he can blow like all the typhoons in the China Sea, for the skipper will never show willing to lower. And he twists his flukes up for'ard to the end of his nose, and he winks us an eye, and he gives to the whole of us a ancient and honorable invitation.

"Bowleg," I says, "I am discouraged. We ain't never going to git home again."

"Reckon not?" says Bowleg.

"Bowleg," I explains, "if the skipper don't show willing to lower, we don't git no whale. And if we don't git no whale, we don't try no blubber. And if we don't try no blubber, we don't bile no ile. And if we don't bile no ile, we don't stow no casks. And if we don't stow no casks—why, we jest cruise on and on! Bowleg"—and I breaks down under the whole of it—"we will jest cruise on and on till we have exhausted the whole gawd-damned Injy Ocean!"

"Don't say!" says Bowleg. "Wa-al, durned if it don't look like a case for the possy!"

"And there is a girl back on Cape Cod, Bowleg, which I wish to see

again," I goes on with a snag in my gullet. "We used to go out in the spring and pick mayflowers, her and me together," I goes on, with tears in my eyes. "Bowleg, I wish to go back to Cape Cod and pick mayflowers!"

Bowleg Bill lays a flipper on my shoulder, and I am crying like a baby, and the skipper is still in his cabin, blowing brisk ditties on the bull bazzoon. And Bowleg keeps saying it is a case for the possy—whatever the hell that is—and this gawd-damned whale keeps blowing barr'ls of the Injy Ocean in our faces, and I breaks down under the whole of it. And I turns to Bowleg.

"Bowleg Bill, you are a pore crimped sailor. By trade you are a cow-hand, and your home acres is the cow country. But, Bowleg, you won't never navigate no cows again, you won't never climb aboard no horse, you will not see them long flats of Wyoming again to the end of your days!"

"*What?*" he bellers. "You aiming to say, pardner, *I can't ride the range no more?*"

"Never no more, Bowleg—till we have exhausticated the whole of the Injy Ocean."

He jumps to his feet. He walks to the rail. He looks this here sparm whale in the eye, and he says:

"You jest keep yore shirt on, stranger. I'm a-going downstairs for a leetle talk with the driver of this roundup wagon. But I'll take keer of you when I git back." And he crowds his eight-foot frame down through the coamings of the after-hatch.

OOMPA-DIDDLE-DIDDLE.

It goes on for a few more toots, and then I hears it taper off to one last belch. And then there is voices, coming from below in the skipper's cabin:

"So Seaman Salthorse is discouraged, is he?"

"Plumb discouraged, sir."

"Well, you jest tell Seaman Salthorse any time he gits so discouraged he would like to jump overboard, I have no anchors lodged whar they would hold him back. Now, git for'ard, ye long-eared lubber, and next time you break into my bazzooning I'll have you flogged a dozen lashes for every note I miss!"

OOMPA-DID—

"Jest a minute, boss. I hear this outfit's been hired to ride out yonder and stick a passel o' them floatin' pigs. And while I hain't never hankered for pig-stickin' work, here is one hombre that is about ready for the feel of his saddle. Now, I'll jest trouble you, boss, to hand me over that double-jointed flute."

Then I hears a ruckus breaking out, and the skipper hollers for the mate. And then more ruckus, and shouting and batterfanging about down below, but in a couple of minutes the noise abates, and up comes Bowleg Bill, with his big forty-five in one hand and—may Gawd sink my soul for a derelict!—the skipper's bazzoon in tother!

"Bowleg," I says, "where is the skipper?"

"He'll keep. Got him and that foreman of his hog-tied down there in the chuck-box."

"My Gawd, Bowleg, you have committed mutiny!"

"Hain't done no such of a thing," says he, setting down the bazzoon to roll a cigarette. "Yore boss has still got everything he was born with, pardner."

"Bowleg," I says, "I ain't no sea lawyer, but I knows a mutiny from a maypole dance. Now we can't never go back to the States!"

"Wa-al, now, out where I come from, Salthorse, when the feller that's driving the wagon falls asleep, a smart nag don't stop dead at the cross-roads." And he goes to the rail and looks out to sea. "Now, where is that daggone water-beetle?"

The sparm whale is standing by, and when Bowleg raises him again, he waves his hat and lets out a yell.

"*Hy-up!* Come on, you son of a squirt-gun, and let me tame you down with a good old tune from the country of the sage and the hardpan!" And with that, he starts a-blowing on the skipper's bull bazzoon. And if there is one thing worse in this miserable world than Cap'n Atkins's brisk ditties, it is the music which Bowleg Bill is making now.

OOMPA-DIDDLE-DIDDLE.

Like the mating season of a school of overdue sea elephants, and I am not the man to talk small of nature's wonders! But this sparm whale rises to Bowleg's music first off. In fact, he is clean spell-moored to it! He veers and he rolls, he scuds and he spins, he ups and he downs like a three-legged tailor with two left legs, and he launches into a hell-roaring hornpipe to the thunderbeats which Bowleg Bill sends rolling over the Injy Ocean.

OOMPA-DIDDLE-DIDDLE.

Closer and closer to the vessel comes the spell-betaken critter, and louder and louder Bowleg blows on the skipper's bull bazzoon. His face is gitting red, his eyes is nigh popped, I am afeard he is going to start a plank any time now, or pass his insides through that black foghorn of hell. But he jest keeps on a-blowing, and when the whale is come within a looward spit, this whacky cowboy climbs up on the bulwark and holds the bazzoon aloft.

"In the name of the Bar One Flying Bee, of old Wyoming," he hollers, "I christen you Piccolo Ike!" And with the heft of a spile-driver, he jams the bazzoon down into the spouthole of the whale. Then he takes the long steering oar out of the waist boat and brings it down—one, two, three—on that bazzoon, driving it in like a calker's stick, where all the ripping and snorting of hell's own hurricanes will never jar it clear.

Then—hey-diddle-diddle, away goes Piccolo Ike, a-trumpeting for Judgment Day! Every time he blows, he has got to blow through that bazzoon, and now it is gitting blowed like it was never blowed before. That whale is out of sight long before he is out of earshot, and while the *Duty Bound*

is jogging along with a smart sou'wester at her heels, we can hear him running due no'theast, and far across the water—

OOMPA-DIDDLE-DIDDLE.

"Wa-al," says Bowleg Bill, "now that we got a bellwether turned out with the herd, reckon 'twon't do no harm to let the boss up out of the dugout." And he goes below and sets loose the skipper and the mate.

Cap'n Atkins is wild. When Bowleg tells him he can't give him back his bull bazzoon, he is wilder still. But this ain't nothing but sweet birdsong alongside of what he is next morning. We are idling over a flat sea, and he is pacing the quarterdeck, and growling to himself. And all of a sudden he hears, rolling over that blue water—

OOMPA-DIDDLE-DIDDLE.

Aye, then the skipper digs in and claws at his hair, and nigh jumps out of his boots. And the lookout calls down:

"Thar she—thar she whistles!"

"Where away?" the Cap'n bellers.

"Two points off the starboard bow. Sparm whale! Sparm whale with a steam calliope!"

All hands comes on deck, and there is Piccolo Ike, heading straight for the vessel, and a-blowing on the skipper's bull bazzoon, with all the whales in the Injy Ocean coming in his wake! They are follering him, and may the divil keel-haul me on hell's own bottom if it ain't because of the brisk ditties he is blowing on the skipper's bull bazzoon!

"Thar she whistles and toots!" the lookout yells. "Thar she warbles, thar she chirps! Thar—Gawd damn ye down below—thar she yodels lullabies!"

"Lower away!" the skipper orders. "Lower all boats! Lively there, ye blasted school o' mud turkles, lower and see that the whole of ye makes fast to the critter which is playing on my bazzoon!"

And so the whaleship *Duty Bound*—a hunderd and eighty-one long days at sea—lowers for whale at last! And when the boats come back, they has each of them killed three-four sparm whales, rolling fin out, and waiting to be cut in.

Cap'n Atkins is standing at the rail, and as the boats come back, one by one he asks them, where is the whale which has made off with his bazzoon. But we shakes our heads, every man amongst us, and the boatsteerers they look shy, and the mates they look ashamed. And from over the horizon, far out in the Injy Ocean, it comes again—

OOMPA-DIDDLE-DIDDLE.

Cap'n Atkins roars and rants, he stomps and he heaves at his hair. But there is whales to cut in, there is blubber to bile, and ile to stow in the hold of the *Duty Bound*. And all hands is at work, with every man a two-fathom grin spread under his jib.

Next day we picks up the whistling of Piccolo Ike again. And again Cap'n Atkins goes into a galloping frenzy, and orders all boats to lower. And whales is killed, and ile is biled, but no man amongst us has salvaged

the bull bazzoon. And time and again, as the weeks go by we picks up Piccolo Ike by the brisk ditties which he is blowing, and the boatsteerers they look shy and the mates they look ashamed, and Cap'n Atkins roars and rants and bites out pieces of the cap rail. But we lowers, we makes fast, we gits whale. We cuts in, we biles blubber, we stows down. And all hands works with a two-fathom grin spread under their jibs. So I turns to Bowleg Bill, and I says:

"Bowleg, I am thinking of the girl back on Cape Cod, and I am thinking of the mayflowers which I will go a-picking. One things leads to another in this world, which is no place for a man to be discouraged."

And Bowleg Bill turns to me and says:

"Salthorse, it's a daggone elegant world! Reckon I'll be riding the range again in my time, and when I do, it'll be on some ornery gruller-hoss with jest enough daylight under him to clear the sagebrush!"

On this we shakes hands, and we looks out over that gawd-damned Injy Ocean, and I starts me a chantey!

For it's Old Man Sparm
With a iron in his back—

And Bowleg jines me in:

Oh, it's Old Sulphurbottom
With a iron in his middle—

And from far astern, we hears across that blue water—

OOMPA-DIDDLE-DIDDLE.

Paul Bunyan

I. WHO MADE PAUL BUNYAN?

WHO made Paul Bunyan, who gave him birth as a myth, who joked him into life as the Master Lumberjack, who fashioned him forth as an apparition easing the hours of men amid axes and trees, saws and lumber? The people, the bookless people, they made Paul and had him alive long before he got into the books for those who read. He grew up in shanties, around the hot stoves of winter, among socks and mittens drying, in the smell of tobacco smoke and the roar of laughter mocking the outside weather. And some of Paul came overseas in wooden bunks below decks in sailing vessels. And some of Paul is old as the hills, young as the alphabet.

The Pacific Ocean froze over in the winter of the Blue Snow and Paul Bunyan had long teams of oxen hauling regular white snow over from China. This

From *The People, Yes*, by Carl Sandburg, pp. 97-99. Copyright, 1936, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc. New York.

was the winter Paul gave a party to the Seven Axmen. Paul fixed a granite floor sunk two hundred feet deep for them to dance on. Still, it tipped and tilted as the dance went on. And because the Seven Axmen refused to take off their hob-nailed boots, the sparks from the nails of their dancing feet lit up the place so that Paul didn't light the kerosene lamps. No women being on the Big Onion river at that time the Seven Axmen had to dance with each other, the one left over in each set taking Paul as a partner. The commotion of the dancing that night brought on an earthquake and the Big Onion river moved over three counties to the east.

One year when it rained from St. Patrick's Day till the Fourth of July, Paul Bunyan got disgusted because his celebration of the Fourth was spoiled. He dived into Lake Superior and swam to where a solid pillar of water was coming down. He dived under this pillar, swam up into it and climbed with powerful swimming strokes, was gone about an hour, came splashing down, and as the rain stopped, he explained, "I turned the dam thing off." This is told in the Big North Woods and on the Great Lakes, with many particulars.

Two mosquitoes lighted on one of Paul Bunyan's oxen, killed it, ate it, cleaned the bones, and sat on a grub shanty picking their teeth as Paul came along. Paul sent to Australia for two special bumble bees to kill these mosquitoes. But the bees and the mosquitoes intermarried; their children had stingers on both ends. And things kept getting worse till Paul brought a big boat-load of sorghum up from Louisiana and while all the bee-mosquitoes were eating at the sweet sorghum he floated them down to the Gulf of Mexico. They got so fat that it was easy to drown them all between New Orleans and Galveston.

Paul logged on the Little Gimlet in Oregon one winter. The cook stove at that camp covered an acre of ground. They fastened the side of a hog on each snowshoe and four men used to skate on the griddle while the cook flipped the pancakes. The eating table was three miles long; elevators carried the cakes to the ends of the table where boys on bicycles rode back and forth on a path down the center of the table dropping the cakes where called for.

Benny, the Little Blue Ox of Paul Bunyan, grew two feet every time Paul looked at him, when a youngster. The barn was gone one morning and they found it on Benny's back; he grew out of it in a night. One night he kept pawing and bellowing for more pancakes, till there were two hundred men at the cook shanty stove trying to keep him fed. About breakfast time Benny broke loose, tore down the cook shanty, ate all the pancakes piled up for the loggers' breakfast. And after that Benny made his mistake; he ate the red hot stove; and that finished him. This is only one of the hot stove stories told in the North Woods.

II. THE ROUND RIVER DRIVE

'Twas '64 or '65
 We drove the great Round River Drive;
 'Twas '65 or '64—
 Yes, it was durin' of the war,
 Or it was after or before.
 Those were the days in Michigan,
 The good old days, when any man
 Could cut and skid and log and haul,
 And there was pine enough for all.
 Then all the logger had to do
 Was find some timber that was new
 Beside a stream—he knew it ran
 To Huron or to Michigan,
 That at the mouth a mill there was
 To take the timber for the saws.
 (In those old days the pioneer
 He need not read his title clear
 To mansions there or timber here.)
 Paul Bunyan, (you have heard of Paul?
 He was the king pin of 'em all,
 The greatest logger in the land;
 He had a punch in either hand
 And licked more men and drove more miles
 And got more drunk in more new styles
 Than any other peavey prince
 Before, or then, or ever since.)
 Paul Bunyan bossed that famous crew:
 A bunch of shoutin' bruisers, too—
 Black Dan MacDonald, Tom McCann,
 Dutch Jake, Red Murphy, Dirty Dan,
 And other Dans from black to red,
 With Curley Charlie, yellow-head,
 And Patsy Ward, from off the Clam—
 The kind of gang to break a jam,
 To clean a bar or rattle rum,
 Or give a twenty to a bum.

Paul Bunyan and his fightin' crew,
 In '64 or '5 or '2,
 They started out to find the pines
 Without much thought of section lines.
 So west by north they made their way
 One hundred miles until one day
 They found good timber, level land,
 And roarin' water close at hand.

They built a bunk and cook-house there;
 They didn't know exactly where
 It was and, more, they didn't care.
 Before the Spring, I give my word,
 Some mighty funny things occurred.

Now, near the camp there was a spring
 That used to steam like everything.
 One day a chap that brought supplies
 Had on a load of mammoth size,
 A load of peas. Just on the road
 Beside the spring he ditched his load
 And all those peas, the bloomin' mess,
 Fell in the spring—a ton I guess.
 He come to camp expectin' he
 Would get from Bunyan the G. B.
 But Joe the Cook, a French Canuck,
 Said, "Paul, I teenk it is ze luck—
 Them spring is hot; so, Paul, pardon,
 And we will have ze grand bouillon!"

To prove the teamster not at fault,
 He took some pepper, pork and salt,
 A right proportion each of these,
 And threw them in among the peas—
 And got enough, and good soup, too,
 To last the whole of winter through.
 The rest of us were kind of glad
 He spilt the peas, when soup we had—
 Except the flunkeys; they were mad
 Because each day they had to tramp
 Three miles and tote the soup to camp.

Joe had a stove, some furnace, too,
 The size for such a hungry crew.
 Say what you will, it is the meat,
 The pie and sinkers, choppers eat
 That git results. It is the beans
 And spuds that are the best machines
 For fallin' norway, skiddin' pine,
 And keepin' hemlock drives in line.
 This stove of Joe's it was a rig
 For cookin' grub that was so big
 It took a solid cord of wood
 To git a fire to goin' good.
 The flunkeys cleaned three forties bare
 Each week to keep a fire in there.
 That stove's dimensions south to north,
 From east to westward, and so forth,
 I don't remember just exact,
 And do not like to state a fact

Unless I know that fact is true,
 For I would hate deceivin' you.
 But I remember once that Joe
 Put in a mammoth batch of dough;
 And then he thought (at least he tried)
 To take it out the other side.
 But when he went to walk around
 The stove (it was so far) he found
 That long before the bend he turned
 The bread not only baked but burned.

We had two coons for flunkeys, Sam
 And Tom. Joe used to strap a ham
 Upon each foot of each of them
 When we had pancakes each A. M.
 They'd skate around the stove lids for
 An hour or so, or maybe more,
 And grease 'em for him. But one day
 Old Pink-Eye Martin (anyway
 He couldn't see so very good),
 Old Pink-Eye he misunderstood
 Which was the bakin'-powder can
 And in the dough eight fingers ran
 Of powder, blastin'-powder black—
 Those niggers never did come back.
 They touched a cake, a flash, and poof!
 Went Sam and Tommie through the roof.
 We hunted for a month or so
 But never found 'em—that, you know,
 It was the year of the black snow.

We put one hundred million feet
 On skids that winter. Hard to beat,
 You say it was? It was some crew.
 We took it off one forty, too.
 A hundred million feet we skid—
 That forty was a pyramid;
 It runs up skyward to a peak—
 To see the top would take a week.
 The top of it, it seems to me,
 Was far as twenty men could see.
 But down below the stuff we slides,
 For there was trees on all four sides.

And, by the way, a funny thing
 Occurred along in early Spring.
 One day we seen some deer tracks there,
 As big as any of a bear.
 Old Forty Jones (He's straw-boss on
 The side where those there deer had gone)

He doesn't say a thing but he
 Thinks out a scheme, and him and me
 We set a key-log in a pile,
 And watched that night for quite a while.
 And when the deer come down to drink
 We tripped the key-log in a wink.
 We killed two hundred in the herd—
 For Forty's scheme was sure a bird.
 Enough of venison we got
 To last all Winter, with one shot.

Paul Bunyan had the biggest steer
 That ever was, in camp that year.
 Nine horses he'd out-pull and skid—
 He weighed five thousand pounds, he did.
 The barn boss (handy man besides)
 Made him a harness from the hides
 Of all the deer (it took 'em all)
 And Pink-Eye Martin used to haul
 His stove wood in. Remember yet
 How buckskin stretches when it's wet?
 One day when he was haulin' wood,
 (A dead log that was dry and good)
 One cloudy day, it started in
 To rainin' like the very sin.
 Well, Pink-Eye pounded on the ox
 And beat it over roads and rocks
 To camp. He landed there all right
 And turned around—no log in sight!
 But down the road, around the bend,
 Those tugs were stretchin' without end.
 Well, Pink-Eye he goes in to eat.
 The sun comes out with lots of heat.
 It dries the buckskin that was damp
 And hauls the log right into camp!

That was a pretty lucky crew
 And yet we had some hard luck, too.
 You've heard of Phalen, double-jawed?
 He had two sets of teeth that sawed
 Through almost anything. One night
 He sure did use his molars right.
 While walkin' in his sleep he hit
 The filer's rack and, after it,
 Then with the stone-trough he collides—
 Which makes him sore, and mad besides.
 Before he wakes, so mad he is,
 He works those double teeth of his,
 And long before he gits his wits
 He chews that grindstone into bits.

But still we didn't miss it so;
For to the top we used to go
And from the forty's highest crown
We'd start the stones a-rollin' down.
We'd lay an ax on every one
And follow it upon the run;
And, when we reached the lowest ledge,
Each ax it had a razor edge.

So passed the Winter day by day,
Not always work not always play.
We fought a little, worked a lot,
And played whatever chance we got.

Jim Liverpool, for instance, bet
Across the river he could get
By jumpin', and he won it, too.
He got the laugh on half the crew:
For twice in air he stops and humps
And makes the river in three jumps.

We didn't have no booze around
For every fellow that we found
And sent to town for apple jack
Would drink it all up comin' back.

One day the bull-cook parin' spuds
He hears a sizzlin' in the suds
And finds the peelin's, strange to say,
Are all fermentin' where they lay.
Now Sour-face Murphy in the door
Was standin'. And the face he wore
Convinced the first assistant cook
That Murphy soured 'em with his look.
And when he had the parin's drained
A quart of Irish booze remained.
The bull-cook tells the tale to Paul
And Paul takes Murphy off the haul
And gives him, very willingly,
A job as camp distillery.

At last, a hundred million in,
'Twas time for drivin' to begin.
We broke our rollways in a rush
And started through the rain and slush
To drive the hundred million down
Until we reached some sawmill town.
We didn't know the river's name,
Nor where to someone's mill it came,
But figured that, without a doubt,
To some good town 'twould fetch us out

If we observed the usual plan
And drove the way the current ran.

Well, after we had driven for
At least two weeks, and maybe more,
We come upon a pyramid
That looked just like *our* forty did.

Some two weeks more and then we passed
A camp that looked just like the last.
Two weeks again *another*, too,
That looked like *our* camp, come in view.

Then Bunyan called us all ashore
And held a council-like of war.
He said, with all this lumbering,
Our logs would never fetch a thing.
The next day after, Silver Jim
He has the wits scared out of him;
For while he's breakin' of a jam
He comes upon remains of Sam,
The coon who made the great ascent
And through the cook-house ceilin' went
When Pink-Eye grabbed the fatal tin
And put the blastin' powder in.

And then we realized at last
That every camp that we had passed
Was *ours*. Yes, it was then we found
The river we was on was round.
And, though we'd driven many a mile,
We drove a circle all the while!
And that's the truth, as I'm alive,
About the great Round River Drive.

What's that? Did ever anyone
Come on that camp of '61,
Or '63, or '65,
The year we drove Round River Drive?
Yes, Harry Gustin, Pete and me
Tee Hanson and some two or three
Of good and truthful lumber men
Came on that famous camp again.
In west of Graylin' 50 miles,
Where all the face of Nature smiles,
We found the place in '84—
But it had changed some since the war.
The fire had run some Summer through
And spoiled the logs and timber, too.
The sun had dried the river clean
But still its bed was plainly seen.

And so we knew it was the place
 For of the past we found a trace—
 A peavey loggers know so well,
 A peavey with a circle L,
 Which, as you know, was Bunyan's mark.
 The hour was late, 'twas gittin' dark;
 We had to move. But there's no doubt
 It was the camp I've told about.
 We eastward went, a corner found,
 And took another look around.
 Round River so we learned that day,
 On Section 37 lay.¹

III. THE WHISTLING RIVER

It seems that some years before the winter of the Blue Snow (which every old logger remembers because of a heavy fall of bright blue snow which melted to ink, giving folks the idea of writing stories like these, so they tell) Ol' Paul was logging on what was then known as the Whistling River. It got its name from the fact that every morning, right on the dot, at nineteen minutes after five, and every night at ten minutes past six, it r'ared up to a height of two hundred and seventy-three feet and let loose a whistle that could be heard for a distance of six hundred and three miles in any direction.

Of course, if one man listening by himself can hear that far, it seems reasonable to suppose that two men listening together can hear it just twice as far. They tell me that even as far away as Alaska, most every camp had from two to four whistle-listeners (as many as were needed to hear the whistle without straining), who got two bits a listen and did nothing but listen for the right time, especially quitting time.

However, it seems that the river was famous for more than its whistling, for it was known as the orneriest river that ever ran between two banks. It seemed to take a fiendish delight in tying whole rafts of good saw logs into more plain and fancy knots than forty-three old sailors even knew the names of. It was an old "side winder" for fair. Even so, it is unlikely that Ol' Paul would ever have bothered with it, if it had left his beard alone.

It happened this way. It seems that Ol' Paul is sitting on a low hill one afternoon, combing his great curly beard with a pine tree, while he plans his winter operations. All of a sudden like, and without a word of warning, the river h'ists itself up on its hind legs and squirts about four thousand five hundred and nineteen gallons of river water straight in the center of Ol' Paul's whiskers.

¹ A township consists of thirty-six sections. Cf. the "nineteenth hole" of a golf course.

Naturally Paul's considerably startled, but says nothing, figuring that if he pays it no mind, it'll go 'way and leave him be. But no sooner does he get settled back with his thinking and combing again, than the durn river squirts some more! This time, along with the water, it throws in for good measure a batch of mud turtles, thirteen large carp, a couple of drowned muskrat, and half a raft of last year's saw logs. By this time Ol' Paul is pretty mad, and he jumps up and lets loose a yell that causes a landslide out near Pike's Peak, and startles a barber in Missouri so he cuts half the hair off the minister's toupee, causing somewhat of a stir thereabouts. Paul stomps around waving his arms for a spell, and allows:

"By the Gee-Jumpin' John Henry and the Great Horn Spoon, I'll tame that river or bust a gallus tryin'."

He goes over to another hill and sits down to think out a way to tame a river, forgetting his winter operations entirely. He sits there for three days and forty-seven hours without moving, thinking at top speed all the while, and finally comes to the conclusion that the best thing to do is to take out the kinks. But he knows that taking the kinks out of a river as tricky as this one is apt to be quite a chore, so he keeps on sitting there while he figures out ways and means. Of course, he could dig a new channel and run the river through that, but that was never Paul's way. He liked to figure out new ways of doing things, even if they were harder.

Meanwhile he's gotten a mite hungry, so he hollers down to camp for Sourdough Sam to bring him up a little popcorn, of which he is very fond. So Sam hitches up a four-horse team while his helpers are popping the corn, and soon arrives at Paul's feet with a wagon load.

Paul eats popcorn and thinks. The faster he thinks the faster he eats, and the faster he eats the faster he thinks, until finally his hands are moving so fast that nothing shows but a blur, and they make a wind that is uprooting trees all around him. His chewing sounds like a couple hundred coffee grinders all going at once. In practically no time at all the ground for three miles and a quarter in every direction is covered to a depth of eighteen inches with popcorn scraps, and several thousand small birds and animals, seeing the ground all white and the air filled with what looks like snowflakes, conclude that a blizzard is upon them and immediately freeze to death, furnishing the men with pot pies for some days.

But to get back to Ol' Paul's problem. Just before the popcorn is all gone, he decides that the only practical solution is to hitch Babe, the Mighty Blue Ox, to the river and let him yank it straight.

Babe was so strong that he could pull mighty near anything that could be hitched to. His exact size, as I said before, is not known, for although it is said that he stood ninety-three hands high, it's not known whether that meant ordinary logger's hands, or hands the size of Paul's, which, of course, would be something else again.

However, they tell of an eagle that had been in the habit of roosting

on the tip of Babe's right horn, suddenly deciding to fly to the other. Columbus Day, it was, when he started. He flew steadily, so they say, night and day, fair weather and foul, until his wing feathers were worn down to pinfeathers and a new set grew to replace them. In all, he seems to have worn out seventeen sets of feathers on the trip, and from reaching up to brush the sweat out of his eyes so much, had worn all the feathers off the top of his head, becoming completely bald, as are all of his descendants to this day. Finally the courageous bird won through, reaching the brass ball on the tip of the left horn on the seventeenth of March. He waved a wing weakly at the cheering lumberjacks and 'lowed as how he'd of made it sooner but for the head winds.

But the problem is how to hitch Babe to the river, as it's a well-known fact that an ordinary log chain and skid hook will not hold water. So after a light lunch of three sides of barbecued beef, half a wagon load of potatoes, carrots and a few other odds and ends, Ol' Paul goes down to the blacksmith shop and gets Ole, the Big Swede, to help him look through the big instruction book that came with the woods and tells how to do most everything under the sun. But though Paul reads the book through from front to back twice while Ole reads it from back to front, and they both read it once from bottom to top, they find nary a word about how to hook onto a river. However, they do find an old almanac stuck between the pages and get so busy reading up on the weather for the coming year, and a lot of fancy ailments of one kind and another that it's supper time before they know it, and the problem's still unsolved. So Paul decides that the only practical thing to do is to invent a rigging of some kind himself.

At any rate he has to do something, as every time he hears the river whistle, it makes him so mad he's fit to be tied, which interferes with his work more than something. No one can do their best under such conditions.

Being as how this was sort of a special problem, he thought it out in a special way. Paul was like that. As he always thought best when he walked, he had the men survey a circle about thirty miles in diameter to walk around. This was so that if he was quite a while thinking it out he wouldn't be finding himself way down in Australia when he'd finished.

When everything is ready, he sets his old fur cap tight on his head, clasps his hands behind him, and starts walking and thinking. He thinks and walks. The faster he walks the faster he thinks. He makes a complete circle every half hour. By morning he's worn a path that is knee-deep even on him, and he has to call the men to herd the stock away and keep them from falling in and getting crippled. Three days later he thinks it out, but he's worn himself down so deep that it takes a day and a half to get a ladder built that will reach down that far. When he does get out, he doesn't even wait for breakfast, but whistles for Babe and tears right out across the hills to the north.

The men have no idea what he intends to do, but they know from

experience that it'll be good, so they cheer till their throats are so sore they have to stay around the mess hall drinking Paul's private barrel of cough syrup till supper time. And after that they go to bed and sleep very soundly.

Paul and the Ox travel plenty fast, covering twenty-four townships at a stride, and the wind from their passing raises a dust that doesn't even begin to settle for some months. There are those who claim that the present dust storms are nothing more or less than that same dust just beginning to get back to earth—but that's a matter of opinion. About noon, as they near the North Pole, they begin to see blizzard tracks, and in a short time are in the very heart of their summer feeding grounds. Taking a sack from his shoulder, Paul digs out materials for a box trap, which he sets near a well-traveled blizzard trail, and baits with fresh icicles from the top of the North Pole. Then he goes away to eat his lunch, but not until he's carefully brushed out his tracks—a trick he later taught the Indians.

After lunch he amuses himself for a while by throwing huge chunks of ice into the water for Babe to retrieve, but he soon has to whistle the great beast out, as every time he jumps into the water he causes such a splash that a tidal wave threatens Galveston, Texas, which at that time was inhabited by nobody in particular. Some of the ice he threw in is still floating around the ocean, causing plenty of excitement for the iceberg patrol.

About two o'clock he goes back to his blizzard trap and discovers that he has caught seven half-grown blizzards and one grizzled old nor'wester, which is raising considerable fuss and bids fair to trample the young ones before he can get them out. But he finally manages to get a pair of half-grown ones in his sack and turns the others loose.

About midnight he gets back to camp, and hollers at Ole, the Big Swede:

"Build me the biggest log chain that's ever been built, while I stake out these daddblasted blizzards! We're goin' to warp it to 'er proper, come mornin'."

Then he goes down to the foot of the river and pickets one of the blizzards to a tree on the bank, then crosses and ties the other directly opposite. Right away the river begins to freeze. In ten minutes the slush ice reaches nearly from bank to bank, and the blizzards are not yet really warmed to their work, either. Paul watches for a few minutes, and then goes back to camp to warm up, feeling mighty well satisfied with the way things are working out.

In the morning the river has a tough time r'aring up for what it maybe knows to be its last whistle, for its foot is frozen solid for more than seventeen miles. The blizzards have really done the business.

By the time breakfast is over, the great chain's ready and Babe all harnessed. Paul quick-like wraps one end of the chain seventy-two times around the foot of the river, and hitches Babe to the other. Warning the

men to stand clear, he shouts at the Ox to pull. But though the great beast strains till his tongue hangs out, pulling the chain out into a solid bar some seven and a half miles long, and sinks knee-deep in the solid rock, the river stubbornly refuses to budge, hanging onto its kinks like a snake in a gopher hole. Seeing this, Ol' Paul grabs the chain and, letting loose a holler that blows the tarpaper off the shacks in the Nebraska sandhills, he and the Ox together give a mighty yank that jerks the river loose from end to end, and start hauling it out across the prairie so fast that it smokes.

After a time Paul comes back and sights along the river, which now is as straight as a gun barrel. But he doesn't have long to admire his work, for he soon finds he has another problem on his hands. You see, it's this way. A straight river is naturally much shorter than a crooked one, and now all the miles and miles of extra river that used to be in the kinks are running wild out on the prairie. This galls the farmers in those parts more than a little. So it looks like Paul had better figure something out, and mighty soon at that, for already he can see clouds of dust the prairie folks are raising as they come at top speed to claim damages.

After three minutes of extra deep thought he sends a crew to camp to bring his big cross-cut saw and a lot of baling wire. He saws the river into nine-mile lengths and the men roll it up like linoleum and tie it with the wire. Some say he used these later when he logged off the desert, rolling out as many lengths as he needed to float his logs. But that's another story.

But his troubles with the Whistling River were not all over. It seems that being straightened sort of took the gimp out of the river, and from that day on it refused to whistle even a bird call. And as Paul had gotten into the habit of depending on the whistle to wake up the men in the morning, things were a mite upset.

First he hired an official getter-upper who rode through the camp on a horse, and peat a triangle. But the camp was so big that it took three hours and seventy-odd minutes to make the trip. Naturally some of the men were called too early and some too late. It's hard to say what might have happened if Squeaky Swanson hadn't showed up about that time. His speaking voice was a thin squeak, but when he hollered he could be heard clear out to Kansas on a still day. So every morning he stood outside the cookshack and hollered the blankets off every bunk in camp. Naturally the men didn't stay in bed long after the blankets were off them, what with the cold wind and all, so Squeaky was a great success and for years did nothing but holler in the mornings.

IV. THE BEDCATS

Ol' Paul had quite a time with the Bedcats one winter, when he was using one of his old camps that had stood deserted for thirty years or more. It happened this way. As every one knows, most bunkhouses have a certain number of bedbugs. These don't annoy a real lumberjack to

amount to anything, although you'll hear the greenhorns holler plenty when they first come into camp. But they either make friends with the little beasts or they don't last long. The story is that the loggers all had their pet bugs that followed them around camp and out in the woods like dogs, some even being trained, it is said, to steal blankets off adjoining bunks for their masters on especially cold nights. However, that is as it may be; I never saw it.

But it is a well-known fact that the intelligent little beasts always knew when camp was to be moved, and the night before would come out of wherever they were in the habit of staying and climb into the bedding rolls so as not to be left behind. Then when the new camp was set up, there they were, jumping up and down with excitement to greet the men when they came in from their first day's work.

One time, though, they got fooled. That was the time the Indian, Squatting Calf, comes running into camp just after breakfast with the news that gold has been discovered in the Black Hills. Right away all the men tear out over the hills without even waiting to pick up their blankets. Within three minutes the camp is as empty as an old maid's letter box on Valentine's Day. That night at sundown the little bugs are all lined up at the bunkhouse door waiting for the men to come home as usual. But they don't come.

Ol' Paul's in town at the time, and when he hears the news, he knows there's no use figuring on logging till the gold fever passes, so he goes on a timber cruising trip. He locates some fine timber down Kansas way, and when he finds his men ready to work, he starts a new camp there, as he has a ready market for his lumber in the new gold towns. And, what with one thing and another, it's about thirty years before he comes back to the old camp. But when he does, he finds trouble waiting for him.

He and the men get there about noon and start cleaning out the old buildings. They're a little surprised to find the bunks filled up with the bones of rabbits and other small animals, but suppose that owls or bobcats have been living there. By night the camp is ready, and after supper the men turn in early. Ol' Paul suddenly wakes up, hearing wild yells and snarls from the bunkhouse, and comes running out of his office to see the men clawing over one another in their underwear, trying to get out in the open. They swear that their bunks are full of wildcats which have been crawling all over them. Now Paul knows wildcats, and he's never heard of one that'll come within a hundred yards of a logger if it has its 'druthers. As he can find nothing in there when he looks, he figures that being as it's the day after payday, the men have probably eaten something that disagrees with them. But they won't go back in the bunkhouse, so he lets them sleep in the stables that night.

But the next night the same thing happens, so Paul decides to get his pistol and sleep in the bunkhouse himself. When a bunch of lumberjacks are scared to sleep in a place there must be something wrong somewhere. For a time things are quiet enough to suit anybody, and Paul finally

decides that the men have been reading too many old mystery magazines, and dozes off. But he wakes up mighty soon. What feels like a couple of full-grown wildcats seem to have gotten tangled up in his beard, and his blanket is heaving around like he has a runaway cat show under it. The whole bunk is full of animals of some kind, hissing and snarling like all get out. It's none too comfortable there, but Ol' Paul doesn't lose his head. He grabs out in the dark and gets a couple of the beasts and stuffs them into a sack he's got handy. Of course as soon as he starts floundering around the things clear out, like any wild animal, and by the time the men come running with lanterns the place is quiet again.

They carefully open up the sack to see what they've caught. The animals inside are not bobcats. In fact nobody has ever seen anything like them. They are the size of bobcats, but they have several pairs of legs. They are covered with a heavy coat of reddish-brown fur, which is quite long on the back, but due to the shortness of their legs, is worn down to the length of plush on the bottom. Naturally Paul and the men are more than a little puzzled.

It is not until the Indians come into camp that they find out what it is they have caught. The Indians call them Bedcats, and from them Paul learns the story.

It seems that the little bugs, being left alone in camp, had to forage for themselves. At first many died, but the stronger ones survived and grew larger, soon attacking small mice and sparrows. As the years passed, they grew fur to keep them warm, and became more and more savage, each generation a little larger and wilder than the one before. Eventually they were bringing in gophers and small rabbits to feed their young. Later, it seems, they crossed with bobcats and the half-breeds were really fierce hunters. They took to running in packs like wolves, baying at the moon, and in a pitched fight a full-grown bobcat was no match for even an ordinary-sized Bedcat. The Indians set deadfalls for them, and made warm fur robes and mittens from the pelts. But with the return of the lumberjacks, some forgotten instinct seemed to urge them into the blankets in the bunks, which upset even the soundest sleepers.

Something had to be done. Ol' Paul buys the Indians a lot of number four wolf traps and offers a five-dollar bounty for the scalps, so they are soon trapped out. I haven't heard of any quite that big being seen since.

V. JOHNNY INKSLINGER

Soon after Ol' Paul invented mass production in the logging business and got the system to working right, he found himself in a peck of trouble. It seems that the logging went so fast he couldn't begin to keep up with his office work.

At that time there were no figures as we know them now. So he has to do all his figuring in his head and keep all his records there too. It takes eight days and forty-seven hours to figure the payroll alone, and that's

only the beginning. There are the commissary accounts, the logging records, hay and grain bills, and a thousand and one other things.

His fingers get blistered from counting on them, but he doesn't stop, and new blisters form and push the old ones back towards his wrists, and still he keeps on counting. Finally the tips of his fingers are blistered clear to his elbows. Luckily, they have time to get well by the time they reach the elbows, so go no farther. But strain as he may, he can never get more than half done.

In desperation he takes some time off and goes up to the North Pole, where he had left the Day-Stretcher he'd invented when he was logging off the Arctic. (Afterwards he'd sold it to the Eskimos, they being so pleased with the long nights it gave them.) Arriving there, he gives old chief Fancypants a broken jack-knife and a lead quarter to stretch a sackful of days he's brought with him. He only has them stretched to twice the usual length, being as how he's in quite a sweat to get back to camp, and doesn't want to wait.

As it turns out, this is just as well, for he finds that when he tries to use them he's worse off than before. Naturally, if he was getting behind with the figuring when he worked an ordinary day, it stands to reason that working twice as long a day, he'd get just twice as far behind. And that's exactly what happened, so after a few days he has to give the idea up.

However, he doesn't throw those extra long days out. But being very thrifty, he ships them to a second-hand dealer in the East who has been peddling them out ever since. Perhaps you yourself can remember days that seemed endless, especially of a Monday. If so, you may be sure that it was just one of those days. Almost every school and business has a supply of them.

But to get back to Paul's problem. He's in a stew, sure enough! It looks as though he'll have to invent mass production for figuring the same as he's done for logging. But seeing as how it takes a certain amount of time for even Paul to invent inventions, and him being so busy, he thinks he'll first look around camp and see if he can find someone who can help him.

Here he runs into trouble. He finds a top loader who can figure a little, but Shot Gunderson, the woods boss, insists that he can't be spared from the woods, seeing as how he hasn't any too many top loaders as it is. Then there's the fellow in the cookshack helping Hot Biscuit Slim, who's been heard to say he can both spell and cipher. But Sam lets it be known, in no uncertain terms, that dreadful things will probably find their way into the food if his helpers are interfered with. And not even Paul dares rile a camp cook.

So it looks like the only thing left is to try and teach Backward Bill Barber, the bull cook, to figure. You see, a fellow that's no good for anything else is given the job of carrying wood and water for the cooks, and looking after the bunkhouses. He's called the bull cook, for no good

reason that I ever heard of. Naturally he can very easily be replaced, so Backward Bill gets the job. It's surprising how often people like Backward Bill get put into important jobs because they can be so easily replaced where they are.

For a while he seems to do all right. But soon Paul discovers that his figures never come out in anything but odd numbers, and finds that Bill has had a finger cut off at some time, which throws his counting into nines instead of tens. Being an odd number, nine is much harder to figure with than ten. So that finishes Backward Bill as a figurer.

Next Ol' Paul tries a crude system of bookkeeping by means of notches chopped in trees. On one tree he chops payroll notches, and on another commissary bills, and so on. For a time he keeps a crew of men busy chopping notches as he calls out the numbers. He gets so he can call out three numbers at once, and that's something not everyone can do. This system works fairly well for a time, although Paul hates to keep so many men out of the woods. But these men, not being real figurers, make many mistakes. A notch-chopper chopping payroll notches'll climb a timber record tree by mistake, or a commissary notch-chopper'll get onto a hay and grain tree, and soon the records get as badly mixed as before.

So again he's right back where he started from. He's losing sleep and weight from worrying, and even then he isn't really getting it all done, as he's so busy with other things. And he has so many notch-chopping crews out that he's kind of lost track of them and isn't at all sure that he's called them all in. He's haunted by the fear that maybe he's left a crew out in the woods somewhere to starve.

For a while he thinks seriously about going back to the great cave where he grew up, and spending the rest of his life whittling. I think this was the only time that any problem threatened to be more than Ol' Paul could solve. He kept getting thinner and thinner, and he didn't even have the heart to comb his great beard any more. It is said that the mess-hall was thrown into an uproar one morning at breakfast when two full-grown bobcats chased a snowshoe rabbit out of his whiskers. But that may or may not be true.

He gets in the habit of roaming the woods at night, with the faithful Ox at his heels, just worrying. One morning, finding himself in a part of the country that is strange to him, he decides to explore a little before going back to camp. (Although he doesn't know it, he is near Boston, which everyone knows is the seat of Learning, Culture, and Baked Beans. However, it is unlikely that he'd have cared even if he had known, as he's already learned practically everything there is to know. He's not interested in culture, and beans are no novelty to a logger.)

About ten-thirty he's sitting on a low hill, resting, when he's startled by a yell that uproots trees all around him. Up to that time he's supposed that he's the only man that can holler loud enough to knock down trees, so he's more than somewhat curious.

He stands up and steps over a couple of small mountains, and gets the surprise of his life. Sitting on a hill is a fellow almost as large as Paul himself. He has a high, smooth forehead, and instead of wearing a fur cap he's bareheaded, which even then was a sign of high learning. But the thing that takes Paul's eye is the collar. It is very high, stiff, and pure white, and looks very uncomfortable. (It is said that after he went to work for Paul he kept a crew of thirty-nine men busy every Sunday whitewashing it.)

The strange giant is busy scraping the limestone bluff on the other side of the river with a jack-knife the size of a fourhorse double-tree, scattering the pieces for miles around. When the rock is smooth enough to suit him, he takes an enormous pencil from behind his ear and starts writing down columns of queer marks with it. The pencil is over three feet in diameter and seventy-six feet long—the first one ever used.

Paul stands around, first on one foot and then on the other, waiting for him to look up so he can find out who he is and what he's doing. But it seems that the fellow has just invented concentration and is busy practicing it as he works. So of course he never bats an eye when Paul shuffles his feet, knocking down thirty-five acres of standing timber. Nor does he seem to hear when Paul says, "Reckon-as how it's goin' to be a mighty dry summer if it don't rain soon." As I said before, he was concentrating, and concentrating is a mighty exacting operation when it's done right.

After a while, however, he finishes what he's doing and turns around to look at Paul. But he still says nothing, and Paul says the same thing, as the white collar has him impressed more than somewhat. So Paul gets out his can of Copenhagen and offers the stranger a chew; then they both sit and squirt tobacco juice at ants for a bit until they raise the river almost to flood stage. After they discuss the chances of rain, Paul asks him what he's doing with the marks on the cliff. (He thinks maybe they're some kind of pictures.)

The fellow tells him he's Johnny Inkslinger and those are figures. But naturally Paul knows that figures are something that you think but can't see.

"Them is figures, and I'm sole owner and inventor of them," Johnny insists.

He shows Paul a little of how they work, even working out a couple of problems that Paul thinks up, and finally convinces him that they really work. Then Paul wants to know what he figures, and is completely flabbergasted when Johnny tells him that he just figures for the fun of it, as he has everything that needs figuring all figured.

Paul can't imagine a full-grown man sitting around all day figuring just for the fun of it, but Johnny tells him that he always liked it. As he grew older he got dissatisfied with just figuring in his head as everyone else did, so one day he sat down and instead of just sitting, he sat and thought about what he could do to make figuring more fun.

Finally he hit on the idea of inventing figures that could be seen as well as thought. He worked for many months, and the result was a system whereby he could not only figure anything, but see the figures at the same time. Moreover, figures figured this way could be written down in books and saved for future reference. (This is the system now used in all our schools.)

As you can well imagine, Ol' Paul is pretty excited by this time. Here is mass production in figures, the same as he has in logging. And the fellow seems to be a real artist, so probably could be hired for practically nothing. If he can get Johnny to work for him his worries will be over and he can get out in the woods again. So he puts on the expression a man wears when he holds a royal flush and wants to give the other fellow the impression he's bluffing on a pair of deuces, and asks Johnny how he'd like to have a job figuring for him.

Johnny reckons that would be mighty fine, but that he's a poor man and can't afford such luxuries. Finally Paul convinces him that he means it when he says that he'll furnish him with all the figuring he can do, besides giving him books to write them in, and pay him thirty dollars a month. He right away starts off for camp at a run, he's that anxious to begin work. He was the first bookkeeper in history, and his job with Ol' Paul lasted for many years, to the great advantage of both.

VII. PIPELINE DAYS AND PAUL BUNYAN

It was evening. The sun hung like a sandy ball above the rim of dull mesquite that surrounded the pipeline camp. For three weeks the line had been extending through a lifeless country of mesquite and dust. For three weeks the men had been broiling under the August sun with not even a wind to make the heat less deadening. Now they were sprawled on the grass in easy after-supper positions. Forming a half circle about the cook-shack, they rested uncomfortably and "razzed" the lone fat man who had not yet finished eating. "Fat" was always last—last to start work, last to stop eating, and certainly last to stop talking. "Fat" ate on, unconcerned with their tired humor. Gradually the men drifted into small groups and lay droning a preparation for the evening's talk.

"Git a scoop. That's what you need, Fat."

"Move the chuck wagon and he'll starve to death. He's too damn lazy to follow it."

"Hey, Fat, did you ever get all you wanted to eat?"

"They ought to grow square beans so he could get more of them on his knife."

"Talk about eating. Tell you what I saw once," said one who aspired to Fat's position as the camp's chief liar. "I saw a man eat a whole ham

once—well, not exactly a whole ham, we had eaten a meal off it—not exactly we, my brother-in-law Jim and his family. The man came to the house one morning and wanted something to eat. Sis was busy and didn't have no time to be fooling with him; so she just set the table and put this ham on it and then went on about her housework or whatever she was doing. Well, when she come back the man was gone and so was the ham—all except the bone and it had been gnawed so dry that even the dog wouldn't touch it. That's the God's truth. Jim swears it's the truth."

The men howled derisively, and Fat, who had been listening half attentively, arose from his stool and sauntered into the center of the group.

"Did you say something about eating?" he said. "Well, I had a funny thing happen to me the other day in Wichita Falls. I goes into one of them restaurants down by the railroad tracks to eat. When I come in I saw a couple of tough hombres setting at the counter and they looks me over kind of amused like. But I just goes on back and sets down a couple of seats from them. After a while the waiter comes out from behind and goes over to where they are setting and asks them what they want.

"They was sure tough-looking birds, and one of them speaks up and says, 'Gimme a T-bone steak a inch and a quarter thick. Just scorch it.' And he looks over at me kinda mean like.

"But I didn't pay him no mind but just set there. So the other one pulls his hat 'way down over his eye, and says, 'Gimme a hind quarter. Raw.' And then they both looks over at me.

"Well, when the waiter come over to where I am setting, I says to him, 'Gimme a sharp butcher knife and then just cripple a steer and run him through here. I'll cut off what I want!'"

"Speaking of steers," the Contender put in, "did you ever hear about the cattle line that Paul Bunyan laid from his ranch to Chicago?

"Well, Paul he got tired of paying such high freight to get his stock to market; so he just laid a pipeline all the way to the stockyards in Chicago and pumped them through it. Everything went all right except that the pipe was so big that the calves and half-grown yearlin's would get lost in the threads and starve to death before they could get to the outside. And one time the line sprung a leak and Paul lost thirty-five carloads of cattle before he could get it corked [caulked]. But he sure did do a good job of corking when he did get to it."

"How the devil did he cork a hole that big?" asked Fat after a minute or two of silence.

"Why with B. S., you big windbag, same as that that you have been spouting off."

Fat sat for a moment trying to think of a way to get "back at" the Contender. Then he started off on a new trail.

"You know so much about Paul Bunyan," he said. "Did you ever hear about that big steer that he had? He called her Babe and she just

measured forty-two pick-handles lengths and the width of a size seven derby hat between the eyes. And strong! Why that steer could pull anything!

"I remember one time when we was drilling a well down Breckenridge way. Wasn't much of a hole, just sixteen inches. Well, we drilled and drilled and didn't ever strike nothing—except dust, and a God's plenty of that; so finally Paul he said we might as well give it up as a dry hole and let it go at that.

"But Paul was mad! He swore around for two or three days and smashed the derrick into kindling wood and was about to quit drilling when he saw a advertisement in the paper by some bird out on the plains that wanted to buy some post-holes. Ten thousand post-holes it was he wanted. Ten thousand holes three feet long.

"Well, Paul he hitched a chain around this duster hole and hooked up Babe and pulled fifteen thousand feet of it out of the ground. He got mad again because the hole broke off and left over half of it in the ground. But directly he said that they wasn't no use of a post-hole being sixteen inches across; so he just quartered the hole and then sawed it up into the right lengths.

"You know out on the plains they have a awful hard time digging post-holes, or any other kind of holes for that matter. The soil out there is only about a foot deep till you strike solid rock and they can't dig through this rock a-tall.

"Why, them guys used to come down into East Texas and buy all the old wells and dug-outs that they could get a-hold of and cut them up to use for post-holes. I used to know a feller down there that could dig and stack on cars more old wells than any man I ever saw before. He could stack twenty-nine of them on cars in a day and take two hours off for dinner.

"They finally moved so many wells from down there that they ruined the water; so they was a ordinance passed against it. But that didn't stop it. They bootlegged them out to the plains. I knew one guy that got rich bootlegging them. He had a patented jack that would lift a well or a dug-out right out of the ground.

"It don't do much good to build fences out on the plains, though. That there wind out there is awful. Soon as a man gets a good fence built, along comes the wind and blows it away, posts, post-holes, and all. Why, that wind even blows wells away and a guy told me that he seen it turn prairie dog holes wrong side out it blew so hard. But I never did believe it. Them guys are awful liars. One of them told me he had a horse throw him so high one time that he had to catch a-holt of a cloud to keep from falling and killing himself. It's cold out there too——"

"I'll say it is," a pipeliner broke in. "Like that guy that was up in Canada somewheres when it was fifty degrees below. He come up to another guy and said, 'God, man, wouldn't you hate to be in Amarillo today?'"

"Ja ever hear about them wells out in Colorado where the oil freezes when it comes out of the ground?" asked the Contender. "They can't pipe it away; so they just let it spout out on the ground and then shovel it into wagons with scoops and haul it off."

"That's like some of them wells that Paul Bunyan drilled in over at Smackover," said someone. "They was gushers and blew in so strong that they had to put roofs over the derricks to keep the oil from spouting a hole in the sky."

"I worked for Paul out in Arizona on the biggest well that I ever worked on," resumed the Contender. "It was a seventy-five inch hole, it was, and we had to make a derrick so tall that it had to be hinged in two places and folded up before the sun and stars could pass. Took a man fourteen days to climb to the top of it. It did. And Paul had to hire thirty derrick men so we could have a man on top all of the time. They was always fourteen men going up and fourteen men coming down, a man on top and a man off tower,¹ all the time. And they was dog houses built a day's climbing apart for the men to sleep in while they was going up and down.

"Why, when that well blew in, it took three days for the oil to reach the top of the derrick, and it rained oil for a week after we had got it capped.

"It was some well. We drilled it with one of Paul's patented rotary rigs. Never could have drilled so deep—it was sixty thousand feet—if Paul hadn't used flexible drill pipe. We just wound the drill stem up on the draw-works. Take a devil of a long time to come out of the hole if we had had to stack it.

"Well, when we was down sixty thousand and three feet, the well blew in. And when we had come out of the hole we seen that we had forgot to case it. Well, Paul he called out both towers and made up the casing on the ground—about ten miles of seventy-five-inch casing—and then he just picked it up and dropped it down into place."

"I worked for Paul on one of them deep wells once," said Fat. "It was out in Arkansas. Jimmy Blue was running the rig and we was drilling with standard tools. We got down thirty thousand feet and struck a rock formation that a bit wouldn't touch. And we was using a pretty good sized bit too, drilling a fifty-inch hole.

"Well, we worked on this formation for three weeks without doing any good and then we called up Paul. Paul he come out there and took charge of the rig himself and worked for three more weeks, day and night, without doing anything except ruin a lot of bits. And finally he got so mad that he jumped down on the derrick floor and pulled up the bit with

¹The reader may take his choice of spellings: "tower" or "tour." The word is pronounced "tower," and means a shift of men. The drilling crews work in two towers of twelve hours each, from twelve o'clock to twelve. The tower that goes on at midnight is the "graveyard tower," the one that goes on at noon is the "gravy tower."—A. G.

his hands. Then he threw it down into the hole as hard as he could throw it. Well, we busted the rock that time. The bit just kept on going and when the line run out it pulled derrick, rig, and all into the hole after it.

"We got a gusher that time. But when Paul seen that the rig had pulled Jimmy into the hole with it he was just about to plug off the hole and abandon it. But in a few days we got a telegram from Jimmy in China saying that he had a 100,000 barrel gusher and was spudding in on another location."

"Did any of you guys work for Paul on that big line he laid?" asked the Contender. "Well, I worked for him on that 101-inch aluminum line that he laid from Pennsylvania to California. We laid it to pipe buttermilk out to his camp out there. Paul liked buttermilk so well himself that he had a twenty-four-inch petcock running wide open all the time to catch enough for him to drink."

"Yeh," said Fat, "I know all about that. I helped Paul drill the buttermilk well that furnished that line. We drilled down thirty-two thousand feet and then struck a formation of cornbread. We drilled for five hundred feet through the cornbread and then for twelve hundred feet through solid turnip greens—except that every few feet would be a layer of fried sow-belly. That's where the old song started: 'Cornbread, Buttermilk, and Good Old Turnip Greens.'"

"Fat, did you ever see Paul's wife?" asked a young boll-weevil who had started to work only a few days before. "She had a wooden leg and she was so homely that we used to scrape enough ugly off her face every day to mud off a well. The hardest six months' work I ever put in was painting that wooden leg of hers."

"When Paul worked on the highlines he had a wooden leg himself," added an ex-linesman. "It was ninety feet long and the men used to wear one out every three days climbing up to bum him for cigarettes."

"Paul discovered perpetual motion—of the jaw—when he got Fat to work for him," said the Contender.

"Huh," said Fat, "only perpetual motion Paul ever discovered was one time down in India. We was drilling a ninety-inch hole with standard tools. And when we got down twenty-seven thousand feet we struck the root of a rubber tree and the bit never did stop bouncing. Had to abandon the hole."

"I worked—" the Contender began.

"Yeh, and on another one of them wells we was drilling a eighty-inch offset. Had them big derricks all around us. And our camp was setting so far back in them derricks that we had to pipe the daylight in. We drilled down nearly fifty thousand feet and struck a flowing vein of alum water and the hole, rig, and everything drew up until we had to abandon it."

"Paul sure had drilling down to a fine point," said the Contender. "Why I worked for him on one hole where we was using rubber tools. We would just start the tools bouncing and then go to sleep until it was time to change the bit. And the men was so fast that the driller would

just bounce the bit out of the hole and they would change it before it could fall back."

"Paul's camps wasn't nothing like this dump," said Fat. "I worked for him on a ninety-inch line once and we had so many men in the camp that it took fifteen adding machines running day and night to keep track of their time. Paul invented the first ditching machine while we was laying this line through Arkansas. He bought a drove of them razorback hogs and trained them to root in a straight line."

"You telling about that cattle line of Paul's a while back reminds me of the trees that used to grow down on the Brazos," said the "Old Man." "One time I was working through that country with a herd of cattle and come up to the river where I couldn't ford it. While I was setting on my horse looking at the water I heard a big crash up the river and when I went up to see what it was, it was a tree had fallen across the river. It was one of them big holler trees. So I just drove my herd across the river through the holler of it. But when I got to the other side and counted the herd I seen that they was nearly three hundred steers missing and I went back to look for them. They had wandered off into the limbs and got lost."

"That reminds me of the sand storms that they used to have down in East Texas," said the Contender. "One time they was a nigger riding along one of them sandy roads on a jackass and he stoped to go down to the creek and get a drink and tied his mule to a sapling by the side of the road. While he was gone it come one of them sand storms and when he come back he seen his ass hanging by the tie-rope about seventy feet up in a tree. The sand had blown away from under him and just left him hanging there."

"Say," said Fat, "did any of you guys ever see Paul Bunyan in a poker game. The cards he used were so big that it took a man five hours to walk around one of them. Paul used to play a lot of poker that time we was digging Lake Michigan to mix concrete in when he was building the Rocky Mountains. A little while after that we dug Lake Superior for a slush pit for one of them big wells we was drilling. Any of you birds want to play some poker?"

This, from Fat, was the signal for retiring. The sun was long past set and mosquitoes were buzzing in the darkened mesquite. Silently the men stalked off toward their tents—all except two or three who followed Fat to his tent for a session at poker.

Febold Feboldson

I. REAL AMERICAN WEATHER

SOMEBODY ought to do something about the weather. It's downright disgraceful that in most parts of the United States the climate is of foreign

By Paul R. Beath. From *Nebraska Folklore Pamphlets*, Number Five, pp. 2-3. Lincoln: Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration for the State of Nebraska. July 1, 1937.

origin. Florida and California brazenly boast of Mediterranean sunshine. Winter resorts in the Adirondacks are only imitations of those in Switzerland. Even the famous blizzard of 1888 came from Siberia. In fact, there's only one place where you can get real, genuine, American weather, and that's on the great plains between the Mississippi and the Rockies.

In the early days, I guess, it was even more American than it is now. At least that's what Bergstrom Stromberg says. He's way past ninety and has seen some big weather in his day. Besides, he's heard all about the climate of the early days directly from his uncle, the famous Febold Feboldson. Febold was the first white settler west of the Mississippi, not counting Spaniards and Frenchmen who don't count anyway.

Take 1848 for instance. That was the year the Petrified Snow covered the plains all summer and held up the '48ers in their gold rush to California with the result that they became '49ers. At that time Febold was operating an ox train between San Francisco and Kansas City, because the snow prevented him from doing anything else.

Since Febold was the only plainsman able to make the trip that year, the '48ers appealed to him for help. His secret was to load up with sand from Death Valley, California. The sands of the desert never grow cold, nor did Febold and his oxen. This sand he sold to the gold rushers at fifty dollars a bushel, and they were glad to get it.

Then the '49ers began to swarm over the snow-covered plains in their prairie schooners. But before they reached the Rockies the jolting of the wagons scattered the sand and covered up every bit of the Petrified Snow. And that's the reason, according to Bergstrom Stromberg, that the prairies are so all fired hot in the summer.

Febold cursed himself twenty times a day for twenty years for selling the '48ers that sand. Then he spent the next twenty years trying various schemes to moderate the climate. He finally gave up in disgust and moved to California. Thus he set an example which all good Middlewesterners have followed ever since.

Or take the popcorn ball. There's a genuine American product. Most people think that someone invented the popcorn ball, but it's actually a product of the American weather. It invented itself, so to speak, on Bergstrom Stromberg's ranch in the early days when Febold owned the place.

It was during that peculiar year known as the Year of the Striped Weather which came between the years of the Big Rain and the Great Heat. This year the weather was both hot and rainy. There was a mile strip of scorching sunshine and then a mile strip of rain. It so happened that on Febold's farm there were both kinds of weather. The sun shone on his cornfield until the corn began to pop, while the rain washed the syrup out of his sugar cane.

Now the cane field was on a hill and the cornfield was in a valley. The syrup flowed downhill into the popped corn and rolled it into great balls. Bergstrom says some of them were hundreds of feet high and looked like

big tennis balls from a distance. You never see any of them now, because the grasshoppers ate them all up in one day, July 21, 1874.

But the Great Fog, I suppose, was the biggest piece of American weather that ever hit the great plains. It followed the year of the Great Heat which killed off the Dirtyleg Indians and Paul Bunyan's Blue Ox. Near the end of that remarkable year, according to Bergstrom Stromberg, it began to rain and kept it up for the proverbial forty days and forty nights.

"But nary a drop of water hit the ground," said Bergstrom.

"Then what became of it?" I asked.

"Why, it turned into steam, of course. That there rain had no more chance of hittin' the ground than you have of spittin' into a blast furnace."

This steam, as Bergstrom tells it, cooled enough to turn into fog. The whole country was fogbound. It was so thick that people had to go around in pairs, one to hold the fog apart while the other walked through it. The pioneer ranchers didn't need to water their stock. The cattle would simply drink the fog. It looked funny to see pigs with their noses up in the air rooting for fish and frogs. But the dirt farmers were as mad as the stockmen were happy. The sun couldn't shine through the fog and the seeds didn't know which way was up. So they grew downward.

Things were getting pretty serious. All the farmers had just about decided to go to California when Febold came to their rescue. He hit upon the idea of importing some English fog-cutters from London. But the English were so slow that Febold didn't get his fog-cutters until Thanksgiving, and then the fog had turned to slush. He finally got to work and cut up the fog and slush into long strips which he laid along the roads so as not to spoil the fields. In course of time the dust covered up the roads and today you can hardly tell where Febold buried the Great Fog.

But many a rural mail carrier has cursed Febold and his English fog-cutters. For every spring when it rains or thaws, that old fog comes seeping up and makes rivers of mud out of all the country roads.

II. WHY FEBOLD WENT TO CALIFORNIA

Just why and when Febold went to California and whether he went for good or only for a visit no one perhaps will ever know. Bergstrom Stromberg thinks he's gone only for a visit. Eldad Johnson is probably of the same opinion, but in Bergstrom's presence he always takes the opposite view and gives vent to his exasperation with his native prairies and his own suppressed desire to go to California. All you need to start them off is to ask in a casual manner when Febold is coming back.

"He ain't never coming back," Eldad will snap at you in a voice anything but casual.

"How do you know he ain't?" Bergstrom will ask.

"Because any man as smart as Febold would know enough to stay away from this here man-killing, God-forsaken country. If you ain't burned up

by drouth and winds hot as hell or frozen out by blizzards and hail storms, you're eat up by grasshoppers, speculators, and politicians. Febold tried his damnedest to make this country fit for a white man to live in. But it can't be done and I don't blame him for going off to California with the rest of the sensible people."

"Whoa, there, ain't you just a little strong," Bergstrom will say. "Remember, Febold ain't no lily-livered cake-eater like you. These here plains is a tough country and it takes tough people to live here and Febold never backs out."

"Just the same he did go to California and he ain't back yet and never will be. Damned if I wouldn't go myself if I only had the time and money. I know Febold was a tough feller and liked a good big job, but he was smart, too, smart enough to know when he was licked."

"Licked, hell! He ain't begun to fight yet. All those tricks he used to pull in the early days ain't nothing to what's going to be done when he gets back. Say, do you really want to know just why Febold went to California?"

"Want to know! Cripes, I do know! And so does anybody else with a lick of sense. He went to get away from here and enjoy his old age without fighting this damned country for a living all the time. I heard he was a bartender at Tia Juana till he made a little money on the horses. Then he bought some steamships trading with China or somewhere. I think he had a fruit farm, too, and was in the movies for a while."

"Rot, you old fool! You ought to know Febold's too big a man to monkey with such things. Horse races, steamships, fruit farms, movies, bah! Do you think Febold would mess around with that stuff? Never! What he went to California for was to study."

"Study what?" Eldad always asks in a tone of utmost contempt.

"Irrigation and forestry," Bergstrom always replies. "Science, you know. Things is done different now. When Febold gets back he's going to put some water and trees on these here plains and no fooling."

"Can't be done," says Eldad.

"You just wait and see," says Bergstrom.

Thus Bergstrom and Eldad are wont to dispute the second coming of their famous Uncle far into the proverbial night, but just why and when Febold went to California and whether he went for good or only for a visit no one perhaps will ever know.

John Henry

I. JOHN HENRY, THE HERO

I¹

ALL questions of authenticity of the John Henry tradition fade into insignificance before the incontrovertible fact that for his countless ad-

¹ From *John Henry: Tracking Down a Negro Legend*, by Guy B. Johnson, pp. 142-146. Copyright, 1929, by The University of North Carolina Press. Chapel Hill.

mirers John Henry is a reality. To them he will always be a hero, an idol, a symbol of the "natural" man.

It is often charged against the Negro that he glorifies his tough characters, his "bad men." But when one considers that the Negro has had little opportunity to develop outside the fields of labor and hell-raising, this tendency is not surprising. Bad men are nearly always interesting, and, incidentally, no one can sing of them any more heartily than the white man. But a working man fits into the drab scene of everyday life, and it is a miracle if he achieves any sort of notoriety by his hard labor. John Henry, then, is a hero indeed. With his hammer and his determination to prove his superiority over a machine, he made a name for himself in folk history. His superstrength, his grit, his endurance, and his martyrdom appeal to something fundamental in the heart of the common man. John Henry stands for something which the pick-and-shovel Negro idolizes—brute strength. He epitomizes the tragedy of man versus machine. In laying down his life for the sake of convincing himself and others that he could beat a machine, he did something which many a Negro would gladly do. The whole thing is a sort of alluring tragedy which appeals strongly to one's egotism.

So strong, indeed, has been the admiration, the envy, of other men for John Henry that some have tried to repeat his drama. I have no doubt but that some of these John Henry episodes said to have happened at so many places throughout the country (the Alabama episode, for instance) are based on real incidents in which would-be John Henry's did their best to put themselves beside the god of the hammer.

Mention John Henry to a group of Negro working men and the chances are that you start an admiration contest. The rare man who intimates that *he* could beat John Henry is laughed down by his fellows. "Why man," said a true John Henryite on such an occasion, "John Henry could take that hammer between his teeth and drive with his hands tied and beat you like all git-out." "Yes, Lawd," affirmed another, "that man had a stroke like a Alabama mule." "They tells me," said a third, "that he used to keep six men runnin' just to carry his drills back and forth from the man that sharpened 'em." And so on until no one could think of anything else to say about him.

F. P. Barker, an old Alabama steel driver who claimed to have known John Henry, said, "I could drive from both shoulders myself, and I was as far behind John Henry as the moon is behind the sun. The world has not yet produced a man to whip steel like John Henry."

A young woman in Georgia concluded an account of John Henry's life as follows:

When he died people came from all parts of the world to see this Famous man John Henry. His wife had it engraved on his tombstone.

his Epitah [*sic*]
 "Here lies the steel driving man."

John Henry has a way of cropping up at unexpected times and places. I was standing on the street at Chapel Hill one night in a throng of people gathered to hear the Dempsey-Sharkey fight on the radio. When things looked bad for Dempsey, a Negro man who stood near me began to show his displeasure. "If they'd put old Jack Johnson in there," he said, "he'd lay that Sharkey man out." At the end of the round we discussed colored prize fighters. Suddenly he came out with, "I'll tell you another colored man would've made a real prize-fighter—that's John Henry. Yessir, anybody that could handle a thirty-pound hammer like that man could would make a sure-'nough fighter."

There is, on the whole, a surprisingly small amount of exaggeration in the stories about John Henry told by those who worship at his shrine. Occasionally you hear that John Henry used a thirty-pound hammer or that he wore out six shakers on the day of the famous contest or that his statue has been carved in solid rock at the portal of Big Bend Tunnel, but around John Henry there has not yet grown up a body of fantastic lore like that which surrounds certain other folk characters—Paul Bunyan, for example. The only really bizarre tale I have ever heard about John Henry is one which Professor Howard W. Odum obtained from a construction-camp Negro at Chapel Hill three years ago. I repeat it here just as it was published in *Negro Workday Songs*.

One day John Henry lef' rock quarry on way to camp an' had to go through woods an' fiel'. Well, he met big black bear an' didn't do nothin' but shoot 'im wid his bow an' arrer, an' arrer went clean through bear an' stuck in big tree on other side. So John Henry pulls arrer out of tree an' pull so hard he falls back 'gainst 'nother tree which is so full o' flitterjacks, an' first tree is full o' honey, an' in pullin' arrer out o' one he shaken down honey, an' in fallin' 'gainst other he shaken down flitterjacks. Well, John Henry set there an' et honey an' flitterjacks, an' after while when he went to get up to go, button pop off'n his pants an' kill a rabbit mo' 'n a hundred ya'ds on other side o' de tree. An' so up jumped brown baked pig wid sack o' biscuits on his back, an' John Henry et him too.

So John Henry gits up to go on through woods to camp for supper, cause he 'bout to be late an' he mighty hongry for his supper. John Henry sees lake down hill and thinks he'll get him a drink o' water, 'cause he's thirsty, too, after eatin' honey an' flitterjacks an' brown roast pig an' biscuits, still he's hongry yet. An' so he goes down to git drink water an' finds lake ain't nothin' but lake o' honey, an' out in middle dat lake ain't nothin' but tree full o' biscuits. An' so John Henry don't do nothin' but drink dat lake o' honey dry. An' he et the tree full o' biscuits, too. An' so 'bout that time it begin' to git dark, an' John Henry sees light on hill an' he think maybe he can git sumpin to eat, 'cause he's mighty hongry after big day drillin'. So he look 'roun' an' see light on hill an' runs up to

house where light is an' ast people livin' dere, why'n hell dey don't give him sumpin to eat, 'cause he ain't had much. An' so he et dat, too.

Gee-hee, hee, dat nigger could eat! But dat ain't all, cap'n. Dat nigger could wuk mo' 'n he could eat. He's greates' steel driller ever live, regular giaunt, he was; could drill wid his hammer mo' 'n two steam drills, an' some say mo' 'n ten. Always beggin' boss to git 'im bigger hammer. John Henry was cut out fer big giaunt driller. One day when he was jes' few weeks ol' settin' on his mammy's knee he commence cryin' an' his mommer say, "John Henry, whut's matter, little son?" An' he up an' say right den an' dere dat nine-poun' hammer be death o' him. An' sho' 'nough he grow up right 'way into bigges' steel driller worl' ever see. Why dis I's tellin' you now wus jes' when he's young fellow; waits til' I tells you 'bout his drillin' in mountains an' in Pennsylvania. An' so one day he drill all way from Rome, Georgia, to D'catur, mo' 'n a hundred miles drillin' in one day, an' I ain't sure dat was his bes' day. No, I ain't sure dat was his bes' day.

But, boss, John Henry was a regular boy, not lak some o' dese giaunts you read 'bout not likin' wimmin an' nothin'. John Henry love to come to town same as any other nigger, only mo' so. Co'se he's mo' important an' all dat, an' co'se he had mo' wimmin 'an anybody else. Some say mo' 'n ten, but as to dat I don't know. I means, boss, mo' wimmin 'an ten men, 'cause, Lawd, I specs he had mo' 'n thousand wimmin. An' John Henry was a great co'tin man, too, cap'n. Always was dat way. Why, one day when he settin' by his pa' in san' out in front o' de house, jes' few weeks old, wimmin come along an' claim him fer deir man. An' dat's funny, too, but it sho' was dat way all his life. An' so when he come to die John Henry had mo' wimmin, all dressed in red an' blue an' all dem fine colors come to see him dead, if it las' thing dey do, an' was mighty sad sight, people all standin' 'roun', both cullud an' white.

II¹

John Henry drove steel with a ten pound sheep-nose hammer with a regular size switch handle four feet long. This handle was made slim from where the hammer fitted on to a few inches back where it reduced to one half inch in thickness, the width being five eighths in this slim part. It was kept greased with tallow to keep it limber and flexible, so as not to jar the hands and arms.

He would stand from five and one half feet to six feet from his steel and strike with full length of his hammer. The handle was so limber that when it was held out straight the hammer would hang nearly half way down. He drove steel from his left shoulder and would make a stroke of more than nineteen and one half feet spending his power with all his might

¹ From *John Henry, A Folk-Lore Study* by Louis W. Chappell, pp. 22-23, 32-33. Jena: Frommannsche Verlag, Walter Biedermann. 1933.

making the hammer travel with the speed of lightning. He would throw his hammer over his shoulder and nearly the full length of the handle would be down his back with the hammer against his legs just below his knees. He would drive ten long hours with a never turning stroke.

. . . John Henry could stand on two powder cans and drive a drill straight up equally as fast as he could drive it straight down—with the same long sweep and rapidity of the hammer. He could stand on a powder can with two feet together, toes even and drive all day never missing a stroke. He was the steel driving champion of the country and his record has never been equalled.¹

* * * * *

John Henry was the best driver on the C. & O. He was the only man that could drive steel with two hammers, one in each hand. People came from miles to see him use the two 20 lb. hammers he had to drive with.

It seems that two different contracting companies were meeting in what is called Big Bend Tunnel. One had a steam drill while the other used man power to drill with. When they met everyone claimed that the steam drill was the greatest of all inventions, but John Henry made the remark he could sink more steel than the steam drill could. The contest was arranged and the money put up. John Henry was to get \$100.00 to beat the steam drill.

John Henry had his foreman to buy him 2 new 20 lb. hammers for the race. They were to drill 35 minutes. When the contest was over John Henry had drilled two holes 7 feet deep, which made him a total of 14 feet. The steam drill drilled one hole 9 feet which of course gave the prize to John.

When the race was over John Henry retired to his home and told his wife that he had a queer feeling in his head. She prepared his supper and immediately after eating he went to bed. The next morning when his wife awoke and told him it was time to get up she received no answer, and she immediately discovered that he had passed to the other world some time in the night. His body was examined by two Drs. from Baltimore and it was found his death was caused from a bursted blood vessel in his head.

The information I have given you came to me through my grandfather. He was present at Big Bend Tunnel when the contest was staged, at that time he was time keeper for the crew that John Henry was working with. I have often heard him say that his watch started and stopped the race. There was present all of the R. R. officials of the C. & O. The crowd that remained through the race at the mouth of the tunnel was estimated at 2500, a large crowd for pioneer days.

John Henry was born in Tenn. and at the time of his death he was 34 years old. He was a man weighing from 200 to 225 lbs. He was a full blooded negro, his father having come from Africa. He often said his

¹Newton Redwine, *The Beattyville Enterprise*, Beattyville, Ky., Feb. 1, 1929.

strength was brought from Africa. He was not any relation of John Hardy as far as I know. . . .¹

II. JOHN HENRY

The image shows a musical score for the song 'John Henry'. It consists of five staves of music in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes. The lyrics are: 'John Hen-ry was a li-'l ba-by, (uh-huh,) Sit-tin' on his ma-ma's knee, (oh, yeah,) Said: "De Big Bend Tun-nel on de C. and O. road Gon-na de death of me, (L cause de death of me." There are some markings above the notes, possibly indicating phrasing or breath marks.

I

John Henry was a li'l baby, uh-huh,²
 Sittin' on his mama's knee, oh, yeah,
 Said: "De Big Bend Tunnel on de C. & O. road
 Gonna cause de death of me,
 Lawd, Lawd, gonna cause de death of me."

¹ George Johnston, Lindside, W. Va.

Considerable verisimilitude hardly characterizes all these details. The presence of all the officials of the road, with a crowd of 2,500, at the drilling-contest had better be accepted as fictional embroidery. But the purpose of this study is not to emphasize the tissue of falsehood in popular reports. Big Bend Tunnel was built by a single contractor, as will be shown later, but the "two different contracting companies" may well represent two crews of workmen. The steel driver may have had "2 new 20 lb. hammers" and used only one at a time. Two doctors from Baltimore may have examined Henry's body, but that they came to the tunnel for that purpose seems impossible of belief. His John Henry suggests the frontier strong man, who does impossible things.—L. W. C.

From *American Ballads and Folk Songs*, collected and compiled by John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax, pp. 5-9. Copyright, 1934, by the Macmillan Company. New York.

² The syllables "uh-huh" and "oh, yeah" are to be repeated in each stanza.—J. A. L. and A. L.

John Henry, he had a woman,
 Her name was Mary Magdalene,
 She would go to de tunnel and sing for John,
 Jes' to hear John Henry's hammer ring,
 Lawd, Lawd, jes' to hear John Henry's hammer ring.

John Henry had a li'l woman,
 Her name was Lucy Ann,
 John Henry took sick an' had to go to bed,
 Lucy Ann drove steel like a man,
 Lawd, Lawd, Lucy Ann drove steel-like a man.

Cap'n says to John Henry,
 "Gonna bring me a steam drill 'round,
 Gonna take dat steam drill out on de job,
 Gonna whop dat steel on down,
 Lawd, Lawd, gonna whop dat steel on down."

John Henry tol' his cap'n,
 Lightnin' was in his eye:
 "Cap'n, bet yo' las' red cent on me,
 Fo' I'll beat it to de bottom or I'll die,
 Lawd, Lawd, I'll beat it to de bottom or I'll die."

Sun shine hot an' burnin',
 Wer'n't no breeze a-tall,
 Sweat ran down like water down a hill,
 Dat day John Henry let his hammer fall,
 Lawd, Lawd, dat day John Henry let his hammer fall.

John Henry went to de tunnel,
 An' dey put him in de lead to drive;
 De rock so tall an' John Henry so small,
 Dat he lied down his hammer an' he cried,
 Lawd, Lawd, dat he lied down his hammer an' he cried.

John Henry started on de right hand,
 De steam drill started on de lef'—
 "Before I'd let dis steam drill beat me down,
 I'd hammer my fool self to death,
 Lawd, Lawd, I'd hammer my fool self to death."

White man tol' John Henry,
 "Nigger, damn yo' soul,
 You might beat dis steam an' drill of mine,
 When de rocks in dis mountain turn to gol',
 Lawd, Lawd, when de rocks in dis mountain turn to gol'."

John Henry said to his shaker,
 "Nigger, why don' you sing?
 I'm throwin' twelve poun's from my hips on down,
 Jes' listen to de col' steel ring,
 Lawd, Lawd, jes' listen to de col' steel ring."

Oh, de captain said to John Henry,
 "I b'lieve this mountain's sinkin' in."
 John Henry said to his captain, oh my!
 "Ain' nothin' but my hammer suckin' win',
 Lawd, Lawd, ain' nothin' but my hammer suckin' win'."

John Henry tol' his shaker,
 "Shaker, you better pray,
 For, if I miss dis six-foot steel,
 Tomorrow'll be yo' buryin' day,
 Lawd, Lawd, tomorrow'll be yo' buryin' day."

John Henry tol' his captain,
 "Looka yonder what I see—
 Yo' drill's done broke an' yo' hole's done choke,
 An' you cain' drive steel like me,
 Lawd, Lawd, an' you cain' drive steel like me."

De man dat invented de steam drill,
 Thought he was mighty fine.
 John Henry drove his fifteen feet,
 An' de steam drill only made nine,
 Lawd, Lawd, an' de steam drill only made nine.

De hammer dat John Henry swung
 It weighed over nine pound;
 He broke a rib in his lef'-han' side,
 An' his intrels fell on de groun',
 Lawd, Lawd, an' his intrels fell on de groun'.

John Henry was hammerin' on de mountain,
 An' his hammer was strikin' fire,
 He drove so hard till he broke his pore heart,
 An' he lied down his hammer an' he died,
 Lawd, Lawd, he lied down his hammer an' he died.

All de womens in de Wes',
 When de heared of John Henry's death,
 Stood in de rain, flagged de eas'-boun' train,
 Goin' where John Henry fell dead,
 Lawd, Lawd, goin' where John Henry fell dead.

John Henry's li'l mother,
 She was all dressed in red,
 She jumped in bed, covered up her head,
 Said she didn' know her son was dead,
 Lawd, Lawd, didn' know her son was dead.

John Henry had a pretty li'l woman,
 An' de dress she wo' was blue,
 An' de las' words she said to him:
 "John Henry, I've been true to you,
 Lawd, Lawd, John Henry, I've been true to you."

II

Well, ev'ry Mon—day morn—in',
 When the blue—birds be—gin to sing,
 You can hear those ham—mers a mile or
 more, You can hear John Hen—ry's ham—mer
 ring, Oh, Lord—y! Hear John Hen—ry's ham—mer ring.

The musical score consists of four staves of music. The first two staves are in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature change to two flats (Bb, Eb) for the second line. The second staff has a bass clef and a key signature change to one flat (Bb). The third and fourth staves are in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The third staff has a treble clef and a key signature change to two flats (Bb, Eb) for the second line. The fourth staff has a bass clef and a key signature change to one flat (Bb).

Well, ev'ry Monday mornin',
 When the bluebirds begin to sing,
 You can hear those hammers a mile or more,
 You can hear John Henry's hammer ring, Oh, Lordy!
 Hear John Henry's hammer ring.

John Henry told his old lady,
 "Will you fix my supper soon?
 Got ninety miles o' track I've got to line,
 Got to line it by the light of the moon, Oh, Lordy!
 Line it by the light o' the moon."

John Henry had a little baby,
 He could hold him in his hand;
 Well, the last word I heard that po' child say,
 "My daddy is a steel-drivin' man, Oh, Lordy!
 Daddy is a steel-drivin' man."

John Henry told his old captain,
 Said, "A man ain't nothin' but a man;
 Before I let your steel gang down
 I will die with the hammer in my hand, Oh, Lordy!
 Die with the hammer in my hand."

From *Folk Music of the United States*, Album III, edited by Alan Lomax. Washington, D. C.: Archive of American Folk Song, Library of Congress, 1942. Sung by Arthur Bell, Gould, Arkansas, 1939. Recorded by John A. and Ruby T. Lomax. Transcribed by Ruth Crawford Seeger.

John Henry told his captain,
 "Next time you go to town
 Uh-jes' bring me back a ten-pound maul
 For to beat your steel-drivin' down, Oh, Lordy!
 Beat your steel-drivin' down."

John Henry had a old lady,
 And her name was Polly Ann.
 John Henry tuck sick and he had to go to bed;
 Pauline drove steel like a man, Oh, Lordy!
 'Line drove steel like a man.

John Henry had a old lady,
 And the dress she wo' was red.
 Well, she started up the track and she never looked back,
 "Goin' where my man fell dead, Oh, Lordy!
 Where my man fell dead."

Well, they taken John Henry to Washington,
 And they buried him in the sand.
 There is peoples from the East, there's peoples from the West
 Come to see such a steel-drivin' man, Oh, Lordy!
 See such a steel-drivin' man.

Well, some said-uh he's from England,
 And some say he's from Spain;
 But-uh I say he's nothin' but a Lou's'ana man,
 Just a leader of the steel-drivin' gang, Oh, Lordy!
 Leader of the steel-drivin' gang.

III. THE BIRTH OF JOHN HENRY

Now John Henry was a man, but he's long dead.

The night John Henry was born the moon was copper-colored and the sky was black. The stars wouldn't shine and the rain fell hard. Forked lightning cleaved the air and the earth trembled like a leaf. The panthers squalled in the brake like a baby and the Mississippi River ran upstream a thousand miles. John Henry weighed forty-four pounds.

John Henry was born on the banks of the Black River, where all good rouserbouts come from. He came into the world with a cotton-hook for a right hand and a river song on his tongue:

"Looked up and down de river,
 Twice as far as I could see.
 Seed befo' I gits to be twenty-one,
 De Anchor Line gonter b'long to me, Lawd, Lawd,
 Anchor Line gonter b'long to me."

They didn't know what to make of John Henry when he was born. They looked at him and then went and looked at the river.

"He got a bass voice like a preacher," his mamma said.

"He got shoulders like a cotton-rollin' rousterbout," his papa said.

"He got blue gums like a conjure man," the nurse woman said.

"I might preach some," said John Henry, "but I ain't gonter be no preacher. I might roll cotton on de boats, but I ain't gonter be no cotton-rollin' rousterbout. I might got blue gums like a conjure man, but I ain't gonter git familiar wid de sperits. 'Cause my name is John Henry, and when fo'ks call me by my name, dey'll know I'm a natchal man."

"His name is John Henry," said his mamma. "Hit's a fack."

"And when you calls him by his name," said his papa, "he's a natchal man."

So about that time John Henry raised up and stretched. "Well," he said, "ain't hit about supper-time?"

"Sho hit's about supper-time," said his mamma.

"And after," said his papa.

"And long after," said the nurse woman.

"Well," said John Henry, "did de dogs had they supper?"

"They did," said his mamma.

"All de dogs," said his papa.

"Long since," said the nurse woman.

"Well, den," said John Henry, "ain't I as good as de dogs?"

And when John Henry said that he got mad. He reared back in his bed and broke out the slats. He opened his mouth and yowled, and it put out the lamp. He cleaved his tongue and spat, and it put out the fire. "Don't make me mad!" said John Henry, and the thunder rumbled and rolled. "Don't let me git mad on de day I'm bawn, 'cause I'm skeered of my ownse'f when I gits mad."

And John Henry stood up in the middle of the floor and he told them what he wanted to eat. "Bring me four ham bones and a pot full of cabbages," he said. "Bring me a bait of turnip greens tree-top tall, and season hit down wid a side er middlin'. Bring me a pone er cold cawn bread and some hot potlicker to wash hit down. Bring me two hog jowls and a kittleful er whippowill peas. Bring me a skilletful er red-hot biscuits and a big jugful er cane molasses. 'Cause my name is John Henry, and I'll see you soon."

So John Henry walked out of the house and away from the Black River Country where all good rousterbouts are born.

Casey Jones

I. CASEY JONES, ENGINEER

I¹

ON the last day of April [1928] occurs the 28th anniversary of the death of Casey Jones,—probably the most famous of a long line of locomotive engineer heroes who have died at their post of duty, one hand on the whistle and the other on the airbrake lever. Casey Jones' fame rests on a series of nondescript verses, which can hardly be called poetry. They were written by Wallace Saunders, a Negro engine wiper who had been a close friend of the famous engineer, and who sang them to a jigging melody all his own.

Mrs. Casey Jones still lives in Jackson, Tenn. She has two sons and a daughter. Charles Jones, her younger son, lives in Jackson; Lloyd, the older son, is with a Memphis auto agency; and her daughter, Mrs. George McKenzie, lives at Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Although 41 years have flitted by since Miss Janie Brady said "I do" and became the bride of John Luther (Casey) Jones, Mrs. Jones still keeps green the memory of that glad occasion. Today, still on the sunny side of 60, the plump blond woman with her cheery smile tells graphically the story of how her husband was killed, and how Wallace Saunders composed the original air and words that later swept the country for years as the epic ballad of the railroader.

"My husband's real name was John Luther Jones," she told her latest interviewer. "He was a lovable lad—6 feet 4½ inches in height, dark-haired and gray-eyed. Always he was in good humor and his Irish heart was as big as his body. All the railroaders were fond of Casey, and his wiper, Wallace Saunders, just worshipped the ground he walked on."

The interviewer asked Mrs. Jones how her husband got the nickname Casey.

"Oh, I supposed everyone knew that!" she replied. "He got it from the town of Cayce, Kentucky, near which he was born. The name of the town is locally pronounced in two syllables, exactly like 'Casey.'"

Mrs. Jones remembers Wallace Saunders very well, although she has not seen him for years.

"Wallace's admiration for Casey was little short of idolatry," she said. "He used to brag mightily about Mr. Jones even when Casey was only a freight engineer."

Casey Jones was known far and wide among railroad men, for his peculiar skill with a locomotive whistle.

"You see," said Mrs. Jones, "he established a sort of trade mark for

¹ From *Erie Railroad Magazine*. Vol. 24 (April, 1928), No. 2, pp. 13, 44.

himself by his inimitable method of blowing a whistle. It was a kind of long-drawn-out note that he created, beginning softly, then rising, then dying away almost to a whisper. People living along the Illinois Central right of way between Jackson and Water Valley would turn over in their beds late at night and say: 'There goes Casey Jones,' as he roared by."

After he had put in several years as freight and passenger engineer between Jackson and Water Valley, Casey was transferred early in 1900 to the Memphis-Canton (Miss.) run as throttle-puller of the Illinois Central's crack "Cannonball" train.

Casey and his fireman, Sim Webb, rolled into Memphis from Canton about 10 o'clock Sunday night, April 29. They went to the checking-in office and were preparing to go to their homes when Casey heard somebody call out: "Joe Lewis has just been taken with cramps and can't take his train out tonight."

"I'll double back and pull Lewis' old No. 638," Casey volunteered.

At 11 o'clock that rainy Sunday night Casey and Sim Webb clambered aboard the big engine and eased her out of the station and through the South Memphis yards.

"All the switchmen knew by the engine's moans
That the man at the throttle was Casey Jones."

Four o'clock of the 30th of April. The little town of Vaughn, Miss. A long, winding curve just above the town, and a long sidetrack beginning about where the curve ended.

"There's a freight train on the siding," Casey yelled across to Sim Webb.

Knowing the siding there was a long one, and having passed many other freights on it, Casey figured he would do the same this night.

But there were two separate sections of a very long train on the sidetrack this night. And the rear one was a little too long to get all its length off the main line onto the siding. The freight train crews figured on "sawing by"; that is as soon as the passenger train passed the front part of the first train, it would move forward and the rear freight would move up, thus clearing the main track.

But Casey's speed—about fifty miles an hour—was more than the freight crews bargained for.

But when old 638 was within a hundred feet of the end of the siding the horrified eyes of Casey Jones and Sim Webb beheld through the gloom the looming shape of several boxcars in motion, swinging across from the main line to the side-track. In a flash both knew there was no earthly way of preventing a smashup.

"Jump, Sim, and save yourself!" was Casey's last order to his fireman. As for himself, Casey threw his engine in reverse and applied the air-brakes—all any engineer could do, and rode roaring 638 into a holocaust of crashing wood that splintered like match boxes. Sim Webb jumped, fell into some bushes and was not injured.

When they took Casey's body from the wreckage (old 638 had plowed through the cars and caboose and turned over on her side a short distance beyond) they found one hand on the whistle cord, the other on the air-brake lever.

"I remember," Sim Webb told Casey's widow, "that as I jumped Casey held down the whistle in a long, piercing scream. I think he must have had in mind to warn the freight conductor in the caboose so he could jump."

Probably no individual, excepting a member of Casey's family, was more affected by the sad news than Wallace Saunders.

A few days later he was going about singing a song to a melody all his own. The air had a lilt that caught the fancy of every one who heard it. But Wallace, honest old soul, had no idea of doing more than singing it as a sort of tribute to his white friend's memory.

But one day a song writer passed through Jackson and heard the song and the details of Casey's tragic death. He went off and changed the words, but retained the lilting refrain and the name of Casey Jones. That was about 1902.

II ¹

There are many railroad men still living who knew and worked with Jones. The affection he aroused among all his acquaintances seems to have been an outstanding characteristic. He was 6 feet 4½ inches tall, dark-haired and gray-eyed. An excellent photograph of him, which has just come to light from the Memphis Press-Scimitar, is reproduced as a frontispiece in this issue.

His old friend R. E. Edrington, a fellow engineer on the Illinois Central writes: "The reputation which Casey enjoyed was richly earned by numerous feats of resourcefulness, skill and downright daring. He could perform feats with his famous 638 that no other engineer could equal with locomotives of the same class, or even with the same engine. Firing for him was a back-breaking and hair-raising job, but his mulatto fireman, Sim Webb, was equal to every demand, and held Casey in almost idolatrous regard, following him from one run to another through his entire career."

A. J. ("Fatty") Thomas, who often ran as conductor on trains pulled by Casey and the 638, writes: "I had often heard the song about Casey Jones, but on account of the phrases in it about the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe, rounder, Frisco, and 'another papa on the Salt Lake Line,' I never figured that the song was intended for my Illinois Central Casey. For he was not a rounder but a car roller, and in my estimation the prince of them all. We had a number of fast men, and since then I have had hundreds of good engineers pull me on different western roads. But I never met the equal of Casey Jones in rustling to get over the road.

"The 'whistle's moan' in the song is right. Casey could just about play

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. 28 (April, 1932), No. 2, pp. 12, 46.

a tune on the whistle. He could make the cold chills run up your back with it, and grin all the time. Everybody along the line knew Casey Jones' whistle.

"I never saw him with his mouth closed—he always had a smile or a broad grin. The faster he could get his engine to roll, the happier he was. He would lean out of the cab window to watch his drivers, and when he got her going so fast that the side rods looked solid, he would look at you and grin all over, happy as a boy with his first pair of red boots. Yet he had a reputation as a safe engineer. With all his fast running I never knew of him piling them up, of any but a few derailments and never a rear-ender. He was either lucky, or else his judgment was as nearly perfect as human judgment can be."

Ed Pacey, another conductor who knew Casey Jones, writes: "In the early days of railroading there was a real glamor to the rails. Into this setting Casey, engineer of the Cannonball Express, fitted perfectly. He was a giant and came of a great railroad family. His nickname was derived from his native village, Cayce, Tenn., pronounced 'Casey.'

"Jones was famous for two things: he was a teetotaler in days when abstinence was rare, and he was the most daring of all engineers in the days when schedules were simply 'get her there and make the time, or come to the office and get your time.'"

Mr. Pacey lodges a protest against the popular song's line to the effect that Casey Jones' widow informed her orphan children that "you've got another papa on the Salt Lake line." Mr. Pacey chafes at the implied disrespect toward Mrs. Jones in that stanza. "There never was any other papa on the Salt Lake or any other line," he says. "Instead, the widow devoted her life to the hard struggle to maintain herself and educate her three children."

The common story of the wreck in which Jones was killed is that Casey had to meet two freight trains which were too long to clear the siding. For some reason, never clearly explained, Casey failed to stop and he piled them up when he struck the caboose and cars protruding out on the main line.

According to R. E. Edrington, however, the situation was even more complicated. "It was characteristic," he says, "of the desperate chances which were part of the period of railroading, when the engines were rapidly growing in size and the sidings, safety equipment and other appliances not keeping pace with them.

"There were not two but three trains. Two of these were north bound and had pulled into the siding. The third was racing, on short time, ahead of the Cannonball. As this train scurried down to the siding it dropped off a flagman but, after it had pulled down, this flagman rode in with the idea that the mother train would protest against the Cannonball.

"But the other train crew thought that he was still out and did not flag. So Casey came down, as fast as he could turn a wheel, with the result of one of the worst wrecks in the history of the road. . . ."

II. THE "CASEY JONES" SONG

Four years ago the Erie Railroad Magazine gathered up the real story of Casey's life and death, as told by his widow, who still lives in Jackson, Tenn. The article was reprinted in railroad magazines and newspapers all over the world and has brought a continuous stream of letters ever since. Scores of correspondents have sent in various versions of the Casey Jones song, not only in English but in French, German and even in the language of the native laborers on the South African railways.

Every branch of railroading has at least one version of the song. The hobo jungles and the I.W.W. song books contribute others. Still others come from the campfires and boarding cars of construction gangs, and several weird and often unprintable variations were composed by doughboys in France during the world war.

Come all you round-ers for I want you to hear The
sto - ry told of a brave en - gi - neer;
Ca - sey Jones was the round - er's name, On a
heav - y six - eight wheel - er he rode to fame.

Come all you rounders for I want you to hear
The story told of a brave engineer;
Casey Jones was the rounder's name
On a heavy six-eight wheeler he rode to fame.

Caller called Jones about half-past four,
Jones kissed his wife at the station door,
Climbed into the cab with the orders in his hand,
Says, "This is my trip to the promised land."

Through South Memphis yards on the fly,
He heard the fireman say, "You've got a white-eye,"
All the switchmen knew by the engine's moans,
That the man at the throttle was Casey Jones.

Erie Railroad Magazine, Vol. 28 (April, 1932), No. 2, p. 12. The present text (*ibid.*, Vol. 24, April, 1928, No. 2, p. 12), like the tune, is traditional, differing from the

It had been raining for more than a week,
The railroad track was like the bed of a creek.
They rated him down to a thirty mile gait,
Threw the south-bound mail about eight hours late.

Fireman says, "Casey, you're runnin' too fast,
You run the block signal the last station you passed."
Jones says, "Yes, I think we can make it though,
For she steams much better than ever I know."

Jones says, "Fireman, don't you fret,
Keep knockin' at the firedoor, don't give up yet;
I'm goin' to run her till she leaves the rail
Or make it on time with the south-bound mail."

Around the curve and a-down the dump
Two locomotives were a-bound to bump.
Fireman hollered, "Jones, it's just ahead,
We might jump and make it but we'll all be dead."

'Twas around this curve he saw a passenger train;
Something happened in Casey's brain;
Fireman jumped off, but Casey stayed on,
He's a good engineer but he's dead and gone—

Poor Casey was always all right,
He stuck to his post both day and night;
They loved to hear the whistle of old Number Three
As he came into Memphis on the old K.C.

Headaches and heartaches and all kinds of pain
Are not apart from a railroad train;
Tales that are earnest, noble and gran'
Belong to the life of a railroad man.

The Saga of Joe Magarac: Steelman

WHILE working in the steel mills along the Monongahela valley of Pennsylvania, I often heard one of the many Slavs who worked in the mills call one of his fellow-workers "*magarac*." Knowing that literally translated the word *magarac* meant jackass, but knowing also, from the tone of voice and the manner in which it was used, that it was seldom used derisively,

popular song version principally in the absence of the chorus. Copyright 1909 by Newton & Seibert. Copyright renewed. By permission of Shapiro, Bernstein & Co., Inc.

By Owen Francis. From *Scribner's Magazine*, Vol. XC (November, 1931), No. 5, pp. 505-511. Copyright, 1931, by Charles Scribner's Sons.

I questioned my Hunkie leverman as to its meaning as understood by the Hunkie workers. He gave me a vivid explanation. He said:

"Magarac! Dat is mans. who is joost same lak jackass donkey. Dat is mans what joost lak eatit and workit, dats all."

Pointing a finger toward another of his race, a huge Hunkie by the name of Mike, who was walking from the open hearth, he yelled:

"Hay! Magarac!"

At once, Mike's thumbs went to his ears, and with palms outspread his hands waved back and forth while he brayed lustily in the best imitation of a donkey that he could give.

"See," my leverman said, "dere is *magarac*. Dat is Joe Magarac for sure."

Then they both laughed and spoke in their mother tongue, which I did not understand.

It was evident enough there was some definite reason for the use of the word, and obviously that reason was, to their way of thinking, very humorous.

By working for a considerable number of years with a Hunkie on my either side, by sitting many evenings in their homes, and, since turning my thoughts to writing, by spending a good deal of my time with them, I have been fortunate enough to hear considerably more about Mr. Joe Magarac.

I find that Joe Magarac is a man living only in the imagination of the Hunkie steel-mill worker. He is to the Hunkie what Paul Bunyan is to the woodsman and Old Stormalong is to the men of the sea. With his active imagination and his childlike delight in tales of greatness, the Hunkie has created stories with Joe Magarac as the hero that may in the future become folklore of our country. Conceived in the minds of Hunkie steel-mill workers, he belongs to the mills as do the furnaces and the rolling-mills. Although the stories of Joe Magarac are sagas, they have no tangible connection so far as I have been able to find, with the folklore of any of the countries which sent the Hunkie to these United States. It seems that the Hunkie, with the same adaptability that has made him into the best worker within our shores, has created a character and has woven about him a legend which admirably fits the environment in which he, the Hunkie, has been placed. Basically, the stories of Joe Magarac are as much a part of the American scene as steel itself.

I did not hear the story which I have set down here as accurately as I have been able, at one time. Some of it I heard in the mill; some of it while sitting on the hill above the mill on pleasant Sunday afternoons; the most of it while sitting in Agnes's kitchen with Hunkie friends at my side and well-filled tin cups of prune-jack before us.

The saga of Joe Magarac is more typical of the Hunkie than any tale or incident or description I might write. It shows his sense of humor, his ambitions, his love of his work, and, in general, shows what I know the Hunkie to be: a good-natured, peace- and home-loving worker.

One time long time ago mebbe one, two hundred years, dere was living by Hunkietown, Steve Mestrovich. Steve he workit by open-hearth and he have daughter Mary. Oh, my, Mary was pretty girls: she have big, blue eyes, hairs yellow lak hot steel, hands so little lak lady, and big strong teeths. She was prettier as Hunkie girls from any place and all fellows what workit for mill comit around and say for Steve:

"Mebbe pretty soon now be plenty good ting Mary gone catch hoosband."

Den Steve he always laughtit and he say:

"Gone on home little mans. Mary no gone marry some one lak you who not catch much steam dis time. Mary gone marry only strongest mans what ever lived, ya betcha."

Mary say nothing. She joost sit around and hope dat pretty soon mans who be all right comit, for she was seventeen year old already and she no lak dat business of wait around. Steve get sick too from wait around and nobody comit. Steve say:

"What the hells kind business is dat. I catch best young girls as any body: she pretty lak hell, she wantit mans, she wantit be good for mar.s and joost stay home and raise kids and no say nothing, dats all. And, by Gods, I catch two hundred dollar I give myself for wedding present and I no find mans for her. By Gods, I tink gone have party dis time and ask everybody comit and den we see who is best mans for Mary, ya damn right.

"So, Old Womans, next Sunday we gone have party. You makit plenty prune-jack and I gone to Pittsburgh and gone have two barrel beer sent out on truck."

Well, Steve's old lady she makit plenty prune-jack and all week she workit makit cake and Mary she help and she was glad lak anyting because Sunday gone be party and she tink mebbe she gone catch mans lak 'nother Hunkie girls who have mans who workit in mills. Steve tell everybody what gone be on Sunday and all dem young fellers start lift 'em up dolly bars in eighteen-inch mill, its big hunk steel what is heavy lak anyting, so dat dey strong for Sunday. Some people say dey betcha dat Pete Pussick be strongest mans for Pete lift 'em up dolly bars same lak it was toothpicks; other peoples tink maybe Eli Stanoski be better mans and he gone catch fine girls lak Mary for *frau*. But everybody wish it gone be him who is best mans and everybody dey lookit at Mary and dey feel strong lak anyting.

So pretty soon next Sunday be dere and Hunkie mans comit from Monesson, comit from Homestead, comit from Duquesne, comit from every place along Monongahela River and dey gone show everybody how strong dey be dis time. Steve have everything fix 'em up: in big field down by river bank he put two barrel beer what comit from brewery, he put table what he makit where Old Lady gone put prune-jack and cakes, and he have three dolly bar what he get from mill.

One dose dolly bar its joost little one what weigh three hundred fifty

pound, 'nother dolly bars weigh five hundred pounds, and big ones she weigh more as 'nother two put together. On side of field Steve has fixed 'em up benches where womans can sit and nurse baby and see what gone happen and right by dere is platform lak have on Fourth July with red paper and flags and everyting, Mary she sit on platform where all young fellow can see good and see what dey gone get after dey lift 'em up dolly bars. Mary was dressed up lak dere was big funeral: she have on dress what mudder had made from wedding dress and it was pretty I tell you. It was all red and green, silk too, and on front was big bunch lace what *Groszmutter* in old country makit. On finger was ring with nice red stone what Steve buy from company store and on head was nice scarf. Oh, sure, when Mary go on platform everybody say she was prettier as Queen.

Steve was happy mans dat day, I tell you. He was dressed up with sleeves down and tie on his neck and he walkit 'round lak he was Boss everyting and he yell lak dis:

"Hi, yah, Pete. You tink you feelit all right to-day? By Gods, better you no be sick and have lots steam. It take plenty strong mans to lift 'em up dolly bars."

And den he say:

"Hi, yah, Eli. What matter you? Mebbe better you take 'nother drink prune-jack. You lookit little bit white in face lak you was 'fraid Pete nor Sam gone be stronger as you. By Gods, was I young mans same as you I lift 'em up whole damn three bars one time to catch fine girls lak Mary."

Den he laughit and pull mustache and walkit up and down same like nigger mans on pay day.

After everybody visit 'round little bit and everybody havit one, two, three drink all around, Steve get on platform and makit speech. He say:

"For coople year now everybody what is young mans and feelit pretty good dey comit for me and dey say: 'Pretty soon Mary gone lookit for mans. Me! I catch good job for blast furnace. Me, I be best mans what workit for mills, best mans what ever poke 'em out tap hole. Sure! I be strong lak anyting. Whats matter Mary no be *frau* for me?'"

Den Steve he stopit speech and he stickit out tongue lak he was not feelit so good for stomach and he say:

"By Gods, I hear so many mans talk lak dat dat it makit me sick. So I fix 'em up plan and now we gone see who be good mans for marry Mary, daughter of Steve Mestrovich, me, by Gods, what is best mans who was cinderman for open hearth any place. First, everybody gone lift 'em up small dolly bars. If anybody no lift 'em up dat little one den he joost go and play with little kids, dats all. Next, everybody gone to lift 'em up second dolly bars. Anybody no lift 'em up dat second dolly bars den dey go and sit with womans and stay out road of strong mans while strong mans gone show him something. Den, everybody gone lift 'em up last dolly bars. By Gods, dis dolly bar she be from bloomer mill and she is so heavy dis time dat I no can lift him myself. Somebody gone lift

'em up dat hunk steel den by Jezus, dats mans what gone marry Mary, ya damn right, ya betcha."

So all young fellows pull off shirt and get ready to lift dolly bars. First mans was Pete. Pete he walkit over by dolly bars and he lookit 'round for make sure everybody see and den he reach down and lift 'em up easy lak anyting. Everybody holler:

"Dats big mans, you Pete! Dats good fellow!"

Pete he no say nothing. He joost walkit away and he laughit lak he feel sure he gone be plenty strong dis time. Den Eli gone over by dolly bars and he lift 'em up easier as Pete and everybody yell some more. Two fellows what comit from Homestead try and lift 'em up and dey no can move dolly bars from ground. Den everybody laughit and say:

"Ho! Ho! Ho! What kinds mans you have dat place, Homestead? At home I got boy joost two year old and I tink mebbe I better send him over by your mill to help you out little bit. Better you go and play with kids little mans so dat you no monkey 'round with big mans and get hurt dis time."

Well, after dat dey lift 'em up second dolly bars and what you tink? Only three mans catch enough steam to do dat. Dat was Pete, dat was Eli, and dat was 'nother mans from Johnstown. Dis fellow from Johnstown was plenty big mans all right and he catch plenty steam to lift 'em up dolly bars. He do dat easy as anyting. Den all his friends dey yell hoorah for him and dey make face at Pete and Eli same lak dey was sure dat dis fellow was gone be strongest mans and take Mary Mestrovich back to Johnstown with him. People from dis place no lak dat business. Dey lak much better Pete nor Eli gone be strongest and den Mary Mestrovich stay dis place which have better mills as Johnstown anytime. Dat mills at Johnstown is joost little place what when do best she can no makit more as one, two hundred tons steel a day. So peoples get mad at dese peoples from Johnstown and dey gone makit bet dat Pete nor Eli gone be stronger as dis fellow. Pete say dat is good business and nobody gone worry nothing, he gone lift 'em up big dolly bars joost same lak he lift 'em up little ones. Den Pete he gone over take big, big drink prune-jack and he spit on hands. Den he reach down and grab hold dat big dolly bars. His arm crack lak paper bag, his eyes stick out from head lak apple, sweat run down face same lak he was workit in front furnace in July. By Jezus, dat dolly bars no movit one inch from ground. Den Eli try it and he was no good dis time. People from dis place groan lak somebody kick in stomach when dey see dat. Dey tink for sure now dey gone lose Mary Mestrovich, dey gone lose money, and den dey must listen when peoples from Johnstown say:

"Ho! Ho! Ho! Over by dis place mans is joost same lak old womans who talkit all time and no doit nothing. Comit over by Johnstown where mans so strong dat dey tear down mill and fix 'em up again every day joost for fun."

Den dis fellow from Johnstown takit two big, big drinks prune-jack, he twist mustache so she look lak King, and he wave hand for everybody. Den he fixit his feets so he no be shaky and bend down and grabit dat dolly bars. He give big pull, and den another big pull and he grunt all time lak pig at dinner time. He pullit so damn hard on dat dolly bars dat his hand come loose and he fallit down on ground.

Peoples from dis place feelit much better: she is not so easy as dis fellow tink. Johnstown fellow mad lak *frau* when hoosband get drunk and spend all money on pay days. He joomp up from ground and he cuss lak hell and he grabit dolly bars again. No good dis time neither.

"Ho! Ho! Ho!"

A laugh lak dat comit from somebody in crowd. Everybody lookit 'round to see who laughtit lak dat; mans from Johnstown straighten back and he say:

"Who laughtit for me? By Jezus Christ a Mighty, if dat fellow who laughtit tink he be so strong mans whats matter he no comit here and pick 'em up dolly bars? Den after he do dat I gone broke his neck."

Den out from crowd walkit biggest mans whatever I see: he have back bigger as door, hands bigger as Pete nor Eli together, neck lak big bulls, and arm bigger as somebodys round waist. I betcha my life he was more as seven feets tall. Oh, he was prettiest mans whatever anybody ever see. Everybody lookit everybody and everybody say:

"Who is dat fellow anyhow?"

And everybody shake heads no dey never see before.

Dat fellow he walkit over to dolly bars and he was laughtit so hard he have to holdit his belly so dat he can stand on feet. Dat fellow from Johnstown he takit pull at trousers, he spit on hands and he gone take slug at dat fellow. But dat mans he grabit fellow from Johnstown with one hands and with 'nother he pick 'em up dolly bars. Den he hold 'em out and shake until mans from Johnstown yell he was so 'fraid.

By Gods, everybody was white lak sheet. Dey never see before mans what was so strong lak dat. But dat fellow put dat fellow from Johnstown down so easy as little baby by mudder and he say:

"Nobody be 'fraid nothing. I no wantit hurt nobody, no wantit makit trooble. Joost havit little bit fun, dats all."

Steve Mestrovich walkit over and he say:

"What kind mans you are? Which place you comit from?"

And dat fellow answer:

"My name is Joe Magarac, what you tink of dat, eh?"

Everybody laughtit for dat for *magarac* in Hunkie mean jackass donkey. Dey know dis fellow is fine fellow all right when he say his name is Joe Jackass. Den dis fellow say:

"Sure! Magarac, Joe. Dats me. All I do is eatit and workit same lak jackass donkey. Me, I be only steelmans in whole world, ya damn right. Lookit for me; I show you something."

He pull 'em off shirt and everybody lookit. By Gods, he no tell lie. He was steelmans all right: all over he was steel same lak is from open hearth, steel hands, steel body, steel everything. Everybody say:

"What the hells you tink of dat?"

Joe Magarac say:

"Dats all right, dats good business for me. Me, I was born inside ore mountain many year ago. To-day I comit down from mountain in ore train and was over in ore pile by blast furnace."

Den he laughit and twist dolly bars in two with hands.

Steve Mestrovich smile lak somebody givit him cold beer on hot day and he takit Mary by hand and leadit her over to Joe Magarac: dis time he gone catch best hoosband for Mary dat was in whole country. Joe Magarac takit long look at Mary and he say:

"Oh, boy, I never see such pretty girls as dat. You makit fine *frau* for anybodies. But dat is no business for me. What you tink, I catch time for sit around house with womans? No, by Gods, not me. I joost catch time for workit dats all. Be better all right if Mary have hoosband and I tink I see her get little bit dizzy in head when she lookit for Pete. Dats good, for after me dis Pete is best mans in country."

Joe Magarac close one eyes for Steve and Steve close one eyes for Joe Magarac and Mary was happy lak anyting for she lak dat Pete all right better as anybody. Fellow from Johnstown get black in face and he stomp 'round mad lak anyting, but he 'fraid say anyting for fellow who was made out of steel and who comit from ore mountain. So he go away.

Everyting was fixed 'em up all right den: Priest comit with altar boy and Pete and Mary kneel down and pretty soon dey was hoosband and *frau*. First one to dancit with bride was Joe Magarac. Den everybody get drunk, have big time and was happy as anyting.

So next day, Joe Magarac gone down to Mrs. Horkey, who catch boardin-house by mill gate and he say:

"Howdy do, Mrs. Horkey. My but you lookit nice dis morning and from kitchen comit smell of best breakfast whatever I smell anyplace. Dis place lookit all right for me. I gone work in mill dis place and I want good place for eat. I no want room, joost five big meals a day, dats all, for I workit night turn and day turn all at same time."

So Joe Magarac livit by Horkey's boarding-house and he catch job in mill. He workit on Noomber Seven furnace by open hearth and he workit all night and all day without finish and he no get tired nothing. He standit before Noomber Seven and he throw 'em in limestone, ore, scrap and everyting and den he go sit in furnace door with fires from furnace licking 'round chin. When steel melt 'em up, Joe Magarac put in hands and stir steel 'round while she was cookit and when furnace was ready for tap 'em out he crawl into furnace and scoop up big handfuls steel and dump 'em into ingot mould. After dat he run down to lower end and grab dat steel in hands and squeeze 'em out from fingers and he makit rails. Eight rails one time, four by each hand, he makit by Gods. Pretty

soon he makit more steel as all other furnace together. Nobody ever see before such business lak dat, so boss of open hearth have big sign made and he put sign on mill fence where everybody see and dis sign say:

THE HOME OF JOE MAGARAC

Joe Magarac was workit every day and every night at mill and same lak before he was makit rails with hands. Pretty soon dat pile of rails in yard get bigger and bigger for Joe Magarac is workit so hard and after couple months yard was full, everyplace was rails. When Joe Magarac see dat he joost laught and workit harder as ever. So one day roller-boss he comit up from down by finishing mills and he say to Joe Magarac who was workit by his furnace in open hearth. Roller-boss he say:

"Well, Joe Magarac, I guess we gone shut mill down early dis week. Dis time we catch plenty rails everyplace and we no catch many orders. So by Gods, we gone shut mill down Thursday night and we no start 'em up again until Monday morning. Mebbe you gone put slow heat in furnace: you tell stockman give you fifty-ton stock. You put 'em in stock and give furnace slow fire so dat she keepit warm and be ready for start 'em up on Monday."

Joe Magarac he act lak he gone say something and den he no say nothing and roller-boss tink everyting gone be all right dis time and he gone away.

When next Monday comit mans gone back to work for open hearth. Den dey see dat Joe Magarac is not workit on furnace dat morning. Everyplace dey lookit and dey no see Joe anyplace. 'Nother mans was workit on Noomber Seven and pretty soon when Noomber Seven was ready for tap 'em out melter-boss gone down to platform to see what kind steel dat slow heat makit. He was standit by ingot mould and pretty soon he hear voice what say:

"How she lookit dis time?"

Melter-boss lookit 'round and he no see nobody and den dat voice say again:

"It's me, Joe Magarac. I'm inside ladle."

Melter-boss turn around and he lookit inside ladle and he see Joe. Joe was sitting inside ladle with hot steel boiling up around neck. Melter-boss was scared lak anything and he say:

"What the hells you do in dere, Joe Magarac? Better you gone crawl out dat ladle right 'way or I tink maybe for sure dat she gone melt you up."

Joe Magarac close one eyes for melter-boss and he say:

"Dats fine. Dats good business, dats joost what I want. By Gods, I be sick dis time of mill what shut down on Thursday and no start 'em up again until Monday. What the hells I gone do all time mill is shut down anyway? I hear big boss say dat he was gone makit two, three good heats steel so dat he gone have best steel what we can makit for buildit new mill dis place. Dey gone tear down dis old mills and makit new ones what is gone be best mills in whole Monongahela valley, what gone be best

mills in whole world. Den by Gods, I get plan: I gone joomp in furnace when steel is melted down and dey gone melt 'em up me, who was made from steel, to makit steel to makit dat mills. Now Mr. Boss you gone listen for me and I gone tell you someting. You gone take dis ladle steel what has me inside and you gone pour 'em out in ingot mould and den you gone roll 'em out and makit beam, channel, and maybe one, two piece angle and you gone take dat steel and makit new mills. You do lak I say for you and you gone see you gone have best mills for anyplace. Good-by."

Den Joe Magarac sit back down in ladle and hold his chin down in boiling steel until he was all melted up. Pretty soon dey pour him out in ingot mould.

Well, after dey roll 'em out dat heat and dey cut 'em up dey see dat dis time dey have best steel what was ever made. Oh, my, dat steel was smooth and straight and it no have seam or pipe nothing. Den melter-boss he gone 'round for everybody and he say:

"Now we gone have best mills for sure. You see dat steel? By Gods, nobody ever see steel lak dat before and dats joost because Joe Magarac he makit dat steel. Sure, he's inside and now we gone takit dat beam and dat channel and we gone build finest mills what ever was."

Dey do lak melter-boss say and dat is why all young boys want to go for mill, and dat is why when somebody call Hunkie *magarac* he only laughit and feel proud as anyting, and dat is why we catch the best mill for anyplace, ya damn right!

Songs of Popeye

I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.
I yam what I yam
'Cause tha's what I yam.
I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.

I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.
Never more will I roam,
Fer I feels right to home.
I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.

From *Popeye starring in Choose Your Weppins*. A Creation of E. C. Segar. Adaptation by Charles T. Clinton from the Max Fleischer Cartoon. A Paramount Picture. Copyright, 1935, 1936, by King Features Syndicate, Inc., New York. Akron, Ohio, and New York: The Saalfield Publishing Company.

I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.
I yam jus' a little feller,
But I hasn't any yeller.
I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.

I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.
I have said I hates strife,
But I'll fight fer me life.
I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.

I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.
When spinach I eat
I kin not be beat.
I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.

I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.
I fights fer the right
With all of me might.
I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.

I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.
I yam strong as the breezes
Wich blows down big treeses.
I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.

I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.
I yam strong at the finitch
'Cause I eats me spinitch.
I yam Popeye,
The Sailor Man.

VI. PATRON SAINTS

The hero is a man who has fought impressively for a cause of which we approve.—DUMAS MALONE.

ON THE purely patriotic level our heroes are apt to be too good to be true. Such is the case with that "typically good man," Washington, whose integrity is traditionally taught by means of what the Doubter in the

Sazerac Lying Club characterizes as the "doggonedest biggest lie as was ever told in this here Club." Yet in spite of more robust and even backwoods traits and episodes in young manhood, the juvenile Washington of Parson Weems' cherry-tree legend is of a piece with the "supercilious postage-stamp" likeness that the older Washington has become in the hearts of his countrymen.

As human being and folk hero, as American image and symbol, Lincoln is more satisfying. His "log cabin to White House" career fits the Horatio Alger pattern (which is essentially the fairy-tale pattern) of the poor boy who makes good; his genius as a folk story-teller helped in the making of his own legend; and he suffered the martyrdom which is the hero's apotheosis. He is also the perfect exemplar of the Freudian formula which sees in his homeliness the potentiality of our own impotence and of the American democratic creed of the self-made man. ("Any boy can become President.") Rather than too good to be true, Lincoln was great because he was not afraid to be common.

Although Americans as a rule have clung less tenaciously to the ideal of the good life than to that of the useful one, following Mr. Hoover's "American way" of "stimulating their ingenuity to solve their own problems," the doctrine of plain living and high thinking has produced spiritual heroes—saints and martyrs in whom self-abnegation is combined with service. That saints are not far from cranks is seen in the fanatic Johnny Appleseed, whose resemblance to Saint Francis is balanced by his likeness to a Yankee peddler, as the primitive Christian in him merged with the footloose type of hero. His "benevolent monomania" of "planting apple-seeds in remote places" has overshadowed his less beneficent fixation of sowing the seed of dog-fennel, from a belief that it possessed valuable anti-malarial virtues. His inner meaning as a mystical pioneer cast in the unique rôle of a savior among wastrels is the intent of these lines written to be spoken in a pageant:

"My name is Johnny Appleseed. I lived in this part of the country a long time ago, when it had hardly been touched. I liked the Indians and I liked the white people and I liked the animals, and I didn't hurt any of them. I planted seeds and set out apple trees for the settlers and I took care of them. I told the people about God, and I tried to be a good man myself. I tried to be a good American, on this land we had found. Maybe I was, a little. Maybe I'm not dead yet."¹

"I Cannot Tell a Lie"

NEVER did the wise Ulysses take more pains with his beloved Telemachus, than did Mr. Washington with George, to inspire him with an *early love*

¹ "The Return of Johnny Appleseed," by Charles Allen Smart, *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. 179 (August, 1939), pp. 233-234.

From *The Life of George Washington*, by Mason Locke Weems (fifth edition), 1806. Parson Weems, itinerant preacher and book peddler, published *The Life and Memorable Actions of George Washington* in 1800. The cherry-tree story was first included in the fifth of the more than seventy editions of the work.

of truth. "Truth, George," said he, "is the loveliest quality of youth. I would ride fifty miles, my son, to see the little boy whose heart is so *honest*, and his lips so *pure*, that we may depend on every word he says. O how lovely does such a child appear in the eyes of everybody! his parents doat on him. His relations glory in him. They are constantly praising him to their children, whom they beg to imitate him. They are often sending for him to visit them; and receive him, when he comes, with as much joy as if he were a little angel, come to set pretty examples to their children.

"But, Oh! how different, George, is the case with the boy who is given to lying, that nobody can believe a word he says! He is looked at with aversion wherever he goes, and parents dread to see him come among their children. Oh, George! my son! rather than see you come to this pass, dear as you are to my heart, gladly would I assist to nail you up in your little coffin, and follow you to your grave. Hard, indeed, would it be to me to give up my son, whose little feet are always so ready to run about with me, and whose fondly looking eyes, and sweet prattle make so large a part of my happiness. But still I would give him up, rather than see him a common liar."

"Pa," said George very seriously, "do I ever tell lies?"

"No, George, I *thank* God you do not, my son; and I rejoice in the hope you never will. At least, you shall never, from me, have cause to be guilty of so shameful a thing. Many parents, indeed, even compel their children to this vile practice, by barbarously beating them for every little fault: hence, on the next offence, the little terrified creature slips out a *lie!* just to escape the rod. But as to yourself George, you know I have *always* told you, and now tell you again, that, whenever by accident, you do anything wrong, which must often be the case, as you are but a poor little boy yet, without *experience* or *knowledge*, you must never tell a falsehood to conceal it; but come *bravely* up, my son, like a *little* man, and tell me of it: and, instead of beating you, George, I will but the more honour and love you for it, my dear."

This, you'll say, was sowing good seed!—Yes, it was: and the crop, thank God, was, as I believe it ever will be, where a man acts the true parent, that is, the *Guardian Angel*, by his child.

The following anecdote is a *case in point*. It is too valuable to be lost, and too true to be doubted; for it was communicated to me by the same excellent lady to whom I am indebted for the last.

"When George," said she, "was about six years old, he was made the wealthy master of a *hatchet!* of which, like most little boys, he was immoderately fond, and was constantly going about chopping every thing that came in his way. One day, in the garden, where he often amused himself hacking his mother's pea-sticks, he unluckily tried the edge of his hatchet on the body of a beautiful young English cherry-tree, which he barked so terribly, that I don't believe the tree ever got the better of it. The next morning the old gentleman, finding out what had befallen his tree, which, by the by, was a great favourite, came into the house; and

with much warmth asked for the mischievous author, declaring at the same time, that he would not have taken five guineas for his tree. Nobody could tell him anything about it. Presently George and his hatchet made their appearance. 'George,' said his father, 'do you know who killed that beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden?' This was a *tough question*; and George staggered under it for a moment; but quickly recovered himself: and looking at his father, with the sweet face of youth brightened with the inexpressible charm of all-conquering truth, he bravely cried out, 'I can't tell a lie, Pa; you know I can't tell a lie. I did cut it with my hatchet.'—'Run to my arms, you dearest boy,' cried his father in transports, 'run to my arms; glad am I, George, that you killed my tree; for you have paid me for it a thousand fold. Such an act of heroism in my son is more worth than a thousand trees, though blossomed with silver, and their fruits of purest gold.'"

It was in this way by interesting at once both his *heart* and *head*, that Mr. Washington conducted George with great ease and pleasure along the happy paths of virtue.

Honest Abe

I. THE YOUNG STORE-KEEPER

As a clerk he proved honest and efficient, and my readers will be interested in some illustrations of the former trait which I find in Dr. Holland's interesting volume.

One day a woman came into the store and purchased sundry articles. They footed up two dollars and six and a quarter cents, or the young clerk thought they did. We do not hear nowadays of six and a quarter cents, but this was a coin borrowed from the Spanish currency, and was well known in my own boyhood.

The bill was paid, and the woman was entirely satisfied. But the young store-keeper, not feeling quite sure as to the accuracy of his calculation, added up the items once more. To his dismay he found that the sum total should have been but two dollars.

"I've made her pay six and a quarter cents too much," said Abe, disturbed.

It was a trifle, and many clerks would have dismissed it as such. But Abe was too conscientious for that.

"The money must be paid back," he decided.

This would have been easy enough had the woman lived "just round the corner," but, as the young man knew, she lived between two and three miles away. This, however, did not alter the matter. It was night, but

From *Abraham Lincoln, The Backwoods Boy*; or How a Young Rail-Splitter Became President, by Horatio Alger, Jr., pp. 64-66. Copyright, 1883, by Horatio Alger, Jr. New York: John R. Anderson & Henry S. Allen.

he closed and locked the store, and walked to the residence of his customer. Arrived there, he explained the matter, paid over the six and a quarter cents, and returned satisfied. If I were a capitalist, I would be willing to lend money to such a young man without security.

Here is another illustration of young Lincoln's strict honesty:

A woman entered the store and asked for half a pound of tea.

The young clerk weighed it out, and handed it to her in a parcel. This was the last sale of the day.

The next morning, when commencing his duties, Abe discovered a four-ounce weight on the scales. It flashed upon him at once that he had used this in the sale of the night previous, and so, of course, given his customer short weight. I am afraid that there are many country merchants who would not have been much worried by this discovery. Not so the young clerk in whom we are interested. He weighed out the balance of the half pound, shut up store, and carried it to the defrauded customer. I think my young readers will begin to see that the name so often given, in later times, to President Lincoln, of "Honest Old Abe," was well deserved. A man who begins by strict honesty in his youth is not likely to change as he grows older, and mercantile honesty is some guarantee of political honesty.

II. SPELL "DEFIED!"

"Spell *defied!*"

This question was put to a class in spelling by the master.

The first pupil in the straggling line of backwoods boys and girls who stood up in class, answered with some hesitation: "D-e-f-i-d-e, defied."

The master frowned.

"Next!" he called sharply.

The next improved upon the effort of the first speller, and in a confident tone answered:

"D-e-f-y-d-e."

"Wrong again! The next may try it," said the teacher.

"D-e-f-y-d!" said the third scholar.

"Worse and worse! You are entitled to a medal!" said Crawford, sarcastically. "Next!"

"D-e-f-y-e-d!" was the next attempt.

"Really, you do me great credit," said the teacher, a frown gathering on his brow. "You can't spell an easy word of two syllables. It is shameful. I'll keep the whole class in all the rest of the day, if necessary, till the word is spelled correctly."

It now became the turn of a young girl named Roby, who was a favorite with Abe. She was a pretty girl, but, nevertheless, the terrible word puzzled her. In her perplexity she chanced to turn toward the seat at the window occupied by her long-legged friend, Abe.

Abe was perhaps the best speller in school. A word like defied was easy enough to him, and he wanted to help the girl through.

As Miss Roby looked at him she saw a smile upon his face, as he significantly touched his *eye* with his finger. The girl took the hint, and spelled the word correctly.

"Right at last!" said Master Crawford, whose back was turned, and who had not seen Abe's dumb show. "It's lucky for you all that one of the class knew how to spell, or I would have kept my word, and kept you all in."

III. WORKING OUT A BOOK

All the information we can obtain about this early time is interesting, for it was then that Abe was laying the foundation of his future eminence. His mind and character were slowly developing, and shaping themselves for the future.

From Mr. Lamon's *Life* I quote a paragraph which will throw light upon his habits and tastes at the age of seventeen:

"Abe loved to lie under a shade-tree, or up in the loft of the cabin, and read, cipher, and scribble. At night he sat by the chimney 'jamb,' and ciphered by the light of the fire, on the wooden fire-shovel. When the shovel was fairly covered, he would shave it off with Tom Lincoln's drawing-knife, and begin again. In the day-time he used boards for the same purpose, out of doors, and went through the shaving process everlastingly. His step-mother repeats often that 'he read every book he could lay his hands on.' She says, 'Abe read diligently. He read every book he could lay his hands on, and when he came across a passage that struck him, he would write it down on boards if he had no paper, and keep it there until he did get paper. Then he would rewrite it, look at it, repeat it. He had a copy-book, a kind of scrap-book, in which he put down all things, and thus preserved them.'"

I am tempted also to quote a reminiscence of John Hanks, who lived with the Lincolns from the time Abe was fourteen to the time he became eighteen years of age: "When Lincoln—Abe—and I returned to the house from work, he would go to the cupboard, snatch a piece of corn-bread, take down a book, sit down on a chair, cock his legs up as high as his head, and read. He and I worked barefooted, grubbed it, ploughed, mowed, and cradled together; ploughed corn, gathered it, and shucked corn. Abraham read constantly when he had opportunity."

It may well be supposed, however, that the books upon which Abe could lay hands were few in number. There were no libraries, either public or private, in the neighborhood, and he was obliged to read what he could get rather than those which he would have chosen, had he been able to select from a large collection. Still, it is a matter of interest to know what books he actually did read at this formative period. Some of

them certainly were worth reading, such as "Aesop's Fables," "Robinson Crusoe," "Pilgrim's Progress," a History of the United States, and Weems' "Life of Washington." The last book Abe borrowed from a neighbor, old Josiah Crawford (I follow the statement of Mr. Lamon, rather than of Dr. Holland, who says it was Master Crawford, his teacher). When not reading it, he laid it away in a part of the cabin where he thought it would be free from harm, but it so happened that just behind the shelf on which he placed it was a great crack between the logs of the wall. One night a storm came up suddenly, the rain beat in through the crevice, and soaked the borrowed book through and through. The book was almost utterly spoiled. Abe felt very uneasy, for a book was valuable in his eyes, as well as in the eyes of its owner.

He took the damaged volume and trudged over to Mr. Crawford's in some perplexity and mortification.

"Well, Abe, what brings you over so early?" said Mr. Crawford.

"I've got some bad news for you," answered Abe, with lengthened face.

"Bad news! What is it?"

"You know the book you lent me—the 'Life of Washington?'"

"Yes, yes."

"Well, the rain last night spoiled it," and Abe showed the book, wet to a pulp inside, at the same time explaining how it had been injured.

"It's too bad, I vum! You'd ought to pay for it, Abe. You must have been dreadful careless!"

"I'd pay for it if I had any money, Mr. Crawford."

"If you've got no money, you can work it out," said Crawford.

"I'll do whatever you think right."

So it was arranged that Abe should work three days for Crawford, "pulling fodder," the value of his labor being rated at twenty-five cents a day. As the book had cost seventy-five cents this would be regarded as satisfactory. So Abe worked his three days, and discharged the debt. Mr. Lamon is disposed to find fault with Crawford for exacting this penalty, but it appears to me only equitable, and I am glad to think that Abe was willing to act honorably in the matter.

Johnny Appleseed: A Pioneer Hero

THE "far West" is rapidly becoming only a traditional designation: railroads have destroyed the romance of frontier life, or have surrounded it with so many appliances of civilization that the pioneer character is rapidly becoming mythical. The men and women who obtain their groceries and dry-goods from New York by rail in a few hours have nothing in common with those who, fifty years ago, "packed" salt a

hundred miles to make their mush palatable, and could only exchange corn and wheat for molasses and calico by making long and perilous voyages in flat-boats down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans. Two generations of frontier lives have accumulated stores of narratives which, like the small but beautiful tributaries of great rivers, are forgotten in the broad sweep of the larger current of history. The march of Titans sometimes tramples out the memory of smaller but more useful lives, and sensational glare often eclipses more modest but purer lights. This has been the case in the popular demand for the dime novel dilutions of Fenimore Cooper's romances of border life, which have preserved the records of Indian rapine and atrocity as the only memorials of pioneer history. But the early days of Western settlement witnessed sublimer heroisms than those of human torture, and nobler victories than those of the tomahawk and scalping-knife.

Among the heroes of endurance that was voluntary, and of action that was creative and not sanguinary, there was one man whose name, seldom mentioned now save by some of the few surviving pioneers, deserves to be perpetuated.

The first reliable trace of our modest hero finds him in the Territory of Ohio, in 1801, with a horse-load of apple seeds, which he planted in various places on and about the borders of Licking Creek, the first orchard thus originated by him being on the farm of Isaac Stadden, in what is now known as Licking County, in the State of Ohio. During the five succeeding years, although he was undoubtedly following the same strange occupation, we have no authentic account of his movements until we reach a pleasant spring day in 1806, when a pioneer settler in Jefferson County, Ohio, noticed a peculiar craft, with a remarkable occupant and a curious cargo, slowly dropping down with the current of the Ohio River. It was "Johnny Appleseed," by which name Jonathan Chapman was afterward known in every log-cabin from the Ohio River to the Northern lakes, and westward to the prairies of what is now the State of Indiana. With two canoes lashed together he was transporting a load of apple seeds to the Western frontier, for the purpose of creating orchards on the farthest verge of white settlements. With his canoes he passed down the Ohio to Marietta, where he entered the Muskingum, ascending the stream of that river until he reached the mouth of the Walhonding, or White Woman Creek, and still onward, up the Mohican, into the Black Fork, to the head of navigation, in the region now known as Ashland and Richland counties, on the line of the Pittsburgh and Fort Wayne Railroad, in Ohio. A long and toilsome voyage it was, as a glance at the map will show, and must have occupied a great deal of time, as the lonely traveler stopped at every inviting spot to plant the seeds and make his infant nurseries. These are the first well-authenticated facts in the history of Jonathan Chapman, whose birth, there is good reason for believing, occurred in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1775. According to this, which was his own statement in one of his less reticent moods, he was, at the time of

his appearance on Licking Creek, twenty-six years of age, and whether impelled in his eccentricities by some absolute misery of the heart which could only find relief in incessant motion, or governed by a benevolent monomania, his whole after-life was devoted to the work of planting apple seeds in remote places. The seeds he gathered from the cider-presses of Western Pennsylvania; but his canoe voyage in 1806 appears to have been the only occasion upon which he adopted that method of transporting them, as all his subsequent journeys were made on foot. Having planted his stock of seeds, he would return to Pennsylvania for a fresh supply, and, as sacks made of any less substantial fabric would not endure the hard usage of the long trip through forests dense with underbrush and briars, he provided himself with leathern bags. Securely packed, the seeds were conveyed, sometimes on the back of a horse, and not unfrequently on his own shoulders, either over a part of the old Indian trail that led from Fort Duquesne to Detroit, by way of Fort Sandusky, or over what is styled in the appendix to "Hutchins's History of Boguet's Expedition in 1764" the "second route through the wilderness of Ohio," which would require him to traverse a distance of one hundred and sixty-six miles in a west-northwest direction from Fort Duquesne in order to reach the Black Fork of the Mohican.

This region, although it is now densely populated, still possesses a romantic beauty that railroads and bustling towns can not obliterate—a country of forest-clad hills and green valleys, through which numerous bright streams flow on their way to the Ohio; but when Johnny Appleseed reached some lonely log-cabin he would find himself in a veritable wilderness. The old settlers say that the margins of the streams, near which the first settlements were generally made, were thickly covered with low, matted growth of small timber, while nearer to the water was a rank mass of long grass, interlaced with morning-glory and wild pea vines, among which funereal willows and clustering alders stood like sentinels on the outpost of civilization. The hills, that rise almost to the dignity of mountains, were crowned with forest trees, and in the coverts were innumerable bears, wolves, deer, and droves of wild hogs, that were as ferocious as any beast of prey. In the grass the massasauga and other venomous reptiles lurked in such numbers that a settler named Chandler has left the fact on record that during the first season of his residence, while mowing a little prairie which formed part of his land, he killed over two hundred black rattlesnakes in an area that would involve an average destruction of one of these reptiles for each rod of land. The frontiersman, who felt himself sufficiently protected by his rifle against wild beasts and hostile Indians, found it necessary to guard against the attacks of the insidious enemies in the grass by wrapping bandages of dried grass around his buckskin leggings and moccasins; but Johnny would shoulder his bag of apple seeds, and with bare feet penetrate to some remote spot that combined picturesqueness and fertility of soil, and there he would plant his seeds, place a slight inclosure around the place, and leave them

to grow until the trees were large enough to be transplanted by the settlers, who, in the mean time, would have made their clearings in the vicinity. The sites chosen by him are, many of them, well known, and are such as an artist or a poet would select—open places on the loamy lands that border the creeks—rich, secluded spots, hemmed in by giant trees, picturesque now, but fifty years ago, with their wild surroundings and the primal silence, they must have been tenfold more so.

In personal appearance Chapman was a small, wiry man, full of restless activity; he had long dark hair, a scanty beard that was never shaved, and keen black eyes that sparkled with a peculiar brightness. His dress was of the oddest description. Generally, even in the coldest weather, he went barefooted, but sometimes, for his long journeys, he would make himself a rude pair of sandals; at other times he would wear any cast-off foot-covering he chanced to find—a boot on one foot and an old brogan or a moccasin on the other. It appears to have been a matter of conscience with him never to purchase shoes, although he was rarely without money enough to do so. On one occasion, in an unusually cold November, while he was traveling barefooted through mud and snow, a settler who happened to possess a pair of shoes that were too small for his own use forced their acceptance upon Johnny, declaring that it was sinful for a human being to travel with naked feet in such weather. A few days afterward the donor was in the village that has since become the thriving city of Mansfield, and met his beneficiary contentedly plodding along with his feet bare and half frozen. With some degree of anger he inquired for the cause of such foolish conduct, and received for reply that Johnny had overtaken a poor, barefooted family moving Westward, and as they appeared to be in much greater need of clothing than he was, he had given them the shoes. His dress was generally composed of cast-off clothing, that he had taken in payment for apple-trees; and as the pioneers were far less extravagant than their descendants in such matters, the homespun and buckskin garments that they discarded would not be very elegant or serviceable. In his later years, however, he seems to have thought that even this kind of second-hand raiment was too luxurious, as his principal garment was made of a coffee sack, in which he cut holes for his head and arms to pass through, and pronounced it "a very serviceable cloak, and as good clothing as any man need wear." In the matter of head-gear his taste was equally unique; his first experiment was with a tin vessel that served to cook his mush, but this was open to the objection that it did not protect his eyes from the beams of the sun; so he constructed a hat of pasteboard with an immense peak in front, and having thus secured an article that combined usefulness with economy, it became his permanent fashion.

Thus strangely clad, he was perpetually wandering through forests and morasses, and suddenly appearing in white settlements and Indian villages; but there must have been some rare force of gentle goodness dwelling in his looks and breathing in his words, for it is the testimony of all who knew him that, notwithstanding his ridiculous attire, he was always treated

with the greatest respect by the rudest frontiersman, and, what is a better test, the boys of the settlements forbore to jeer at him. With grown-up people and boys he was usually reticent, but manifested great affection for little girls, always having pieces of ribbon and gay calico to give to his little favorites. Many a grandmother in Ohio and Indiana can remember the presents she received when a child from poor homeless Johnny Appleseed. When he consented to eat with any family he would never sit down to the table until he was assured that there was an ample supply for the children; and his sympathy for their youthful troubles and his kindness toward them made him friends among all the juveniles of the borders.

The Indians also treated Johnny with the greatest kindness. By these wild and sanguinary savages he was regarded as a "great medicine man," on account of his strange appearance, eccentric actions, and, especially, the fortitude with which he could endure pain, in proof of which he would often thrust pins and needles into his flesh. His nervous sensibilities really seem to have been less acute than those of ordinary people, for his method of treating the cuts and sores that were the consequences of his barefooted wanderings through briars and thorns was to sear the wound with a red-hot iron, and then cure the burn. During the war of 1812, when the frontier settlers were tortured and slaughtered by the savage allies of Great Britain, Johnny Appleseed continued his wanderings, and was never harmed by the roving bands of hostile Indians. On many occasions the impunity with which he ranged the country enabled him to give the settlers warning of approaching danger in time to allow them to take refuge in their block-houses before the savages could attack them. Our informant refers to one of these instances, when the news of Hull's surrender came like a thunder-bolt upon the frontier. Large bands of Indians and British were destroying everything before them and murdering defenseless women and children, and even the block-houses were not always a sufficient protection. At this time Johnny travelled day and night, warning the people of the approaching danger. He visited every cabin and delivered this message: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, and he hath anointed me to blow the trumpet in the wilderness, and sound an alarm in the forest; for, behold, the tribes of the heathen are round about your doors, and a devouring flame followeth after them." The aged man who narrated this incident said that he could feel even now the thrill that was caused by this prophetic announcement of the wild-looking herald of danger, who aroused the family on a bright moonlight midnight with his piercing voice. Refusing all offers of food and denying himself a moment's rest, he traversed the border day and night until he had warned every settler of the approaching peril.

His diet was as meagre as his clothing. He believed it to be a sin to kill any creature for food, and thought that all that was necessary for human sustenance was produced by the soil. He was also a strenuous opponent of the waste of food, and on one occasion, on approaching a log-cabin, he observed some fragments of bread floating upon the surface of a

bucket of slops that was intended for the pigs. He immediately fished them out, and when the housewife expressed her astonishment, he told her that it was an abuse of the gifts of a merciful God to allow the smallest quantity of any thing that was designed to supply the wants of mankind to be diverted from its purpose.

In this instance, as in his whole life, the peculiar religious ideas of Johnny Appleseed were exemplified. He was a most earnest disciple of the faith taught by Emanuel Swedenborg, and himself claimed to have frequent conversations with angels and spirits; two of the latter, of the feminine gender, he asserted, had revealed to him that they were to be his wives in a future state if he abstained from a matrimonial alliance on earth. He entertained a profound reverence for the revelations of the Swedish seer, and always carried a few old volumes with him. These he was very anxious should be read by everyone, and he was probably not only the first colporteur in the wilderness of Ohio, but as he had no tract society to furnish him supplies, he certainly devised an original method of multiplying one book into a number. He divided his books into several pieces, leaving a portion at a log-cabin, and on a subsequent visit furnishing another fragment, and continuing this process as diligently as though the work had been published in serial numbers. By this plan he was enabled to furnish reading for several people at the same time, and out of one book; but it must have been a difficult undertaking for some nearly illiterate backwoodsman to endeavor to comprehend Swedenborg by a backward course of reading, when his first installment happened to be the last fraction of the volume. Johnny's faith in Swedenborg's works was so reverential as almost to be superstitious. He was once asked if, in traveling barefooted through forests abounding with venomous reptiles, he was not afraid of being bitten. With his peculiar smile, he drew his book from his bosom, and said, "This book is an infallible protection against all danger here and hereafter."

It was his custom, when he had been welcomed to some hospitable log-house after a weary day of journeying, to lie down on the puncheon floor, and, after inquiring if his auditors would hear "some news right fresh from heaven," produce his few tattered books, among which would be a New Testament, and read and expound until his uncultivated hearers would catch the spirit and glow of his enthusiasm, while they scarcely comprehended his language. A lady who knew him in his later years writes in the following terms of one of these domiciliary readings of poor, self-sacrificing Johnny Appleseed: "We can hear him read now, just as he did that summer day, when we were busy quilting up stairs, and he lay near the door, his voice rising denunciatory and thrilling—strong and loud as the roar of wind and waves, then soft and soothing as the balmy airs that quivered the morning-glory leaves about his gray beard. His was a strange eloquence at times, and he was undoubtedly a man of genius." What a scene is presented to our imagination! The interior of a primitive cabin, the wide, open fire-place, where a few sticks are burning beneath

the iron pot in which the evening meal is cooking; around the fire-place the attentive group, composed of the sturdy pioneer and his wife and children, listening with a reverential awe to the "news right fresh from heaven"; and reclining on the floor, clad in rags, but with his gray hairs glorified by the beams of the setting sun that flood through the open door and the unchinked logs of the humble building, this poor wanderer, with the gift of genius and eloquence, who believes with the faith of apostles and martyrs that God has appointed him a mission in the wilderness to preach the Gospel of love, and plant apple seeds that shall produce orchards for the benefit of men and women and little children whom he has never seen. If there is a sublimer faith or a more genuine eloquence in richly decorated cathedrals and under brocade vestments, it would be worth a long journey to find it.

Next to his advocacy of his peculiar religious ideas, his enthusiasm for the cultivation of apple-trees in what he termed "the only proper way"—that is, from the seed—was the absorbing object of his life. Upon this, as upon religion, he was eloquent in his appeals. He would describe the growing and ripening fruit as such a rare and beautiful gift of the Almighty with words that became pictures, until his hearers could almost see its manifold forms of beauty present before them. To his eloquence on this subject, as well as to his actual labors in planting nurseries, the country over which he traveled for so many years is largely indebted for its numerous orchards. But he denounced as absolute wickedness all devices of pruning and grafting, and would speak of the act of cutting a tree as if it were a cruelty inflicted upon a sentient being.

Not only is he entitled to the fame of being the earliest colporteur on the frontiers, but in the work of protecting animals from abuse and suffering he preceded, while, in his smaller sphere, he equaled the zeal of the good Mr. Bergh. Whenever Johnny saw an animal abused, or heard of it, he would purchase it and give it to some more humane settler, on condition that it should be kindly treated and properly cared for. It frequently happened that the long journey into the wilderness would cause the new settlers to be encumbered with lame and broken-down horses, that were turned loose to die. In the autumn Johnny would make a diligent search for all such animals, and, gathering them up, he would bargain for their food and shelter until the next spring, when he would lead them away to some good pasture for the summer. If they recovered so as to be capable of working, he would never sell them, but would lend or give them away, stipulating for their good usage. His conception of the absolute sin of inflicting pain or death upon any creature was not limited to the higher forms of animal life, but every thing that had being was to him, in the fact of its life, endowed with so much of the Divine Essence that to wound or destroy it was to inflict an injury upon some atom of Divinity. No Brahmin could be more concerned for the preservation of insect life, and the only occasion on which he destroyed a venomous reptile was a source of long regret, to which he could never refer without manifesting sadness.

He had elected a suitable place for planting apple seeds on a small prairie, and in order to prepare the ground he was mowing the long grass, when he was bitten by a rattlesnake. In describing the event he sighed heavily, and said, "Poor fellow, he only just touched me, when I, in the heat of my ungodly passion, put the heel of my scythe in him, and went away. Some time afterward I went back, and there lay the poor fellow dead." Numerous anecdotes bearing upon his respect for every form of life are preserved, and form the staple of pioneer recollections. On one occasion, a cool autumnal night, when Johnny, who always camped out in preference to sleeping in a house, had built a fire near which he intended to pass the night, he noticed that the blaze attracted large numbers of mosquitoes, many of whom flew too near his fire and were burned. He immediately brought water and quenched the fire, accounting for his conduct afterward by saying, "God forbid that I should build a fire for my comfort which should be the means of destroying any of His creatures!" At another time he removed the fire he had built near a hollow log, and slept on the snow, because he found that the log contained a bear and her cubs, whom, he said, he did not wish to disturb. And this unwillingness to inflict pain or death was equally strong when he was a sufferer by it, as the following will show. Johnny had been assisting some settlers to make a road through the woods, and in the course of their work they accidentally destroyed a hornets' nest. One of the angry insects soon found a lodgment under Johnny's coffee-sack cloak, but although it stung him repeatedly he removed it with the greatest gentleness. The men who were present laughingly asked him why he did not kill it. To which he gravely replied that "It would not be right to kill the poor thing, for it did not intend to hurt me."

Theoretically he was as methodical in matters of business as any merchant. In addition to their picturesqueness, the locations of his nurseries were all fixed with a view to a probable demand for the trees by the time they had attained sufficient growth for transplanting. He would give them away to those who could not pay for them. Generally, however, he sold them for old clothing or a supply of corn meal; but he preferred to receive a note payable at some indefinite period. When this was accomplished he seemed to think that the transaction was completed in a business-like way; but if the giver of the note did not attend to its payment, the holder of it never troubled himself about its collection. His expenses for food and clothing were so very limited that, notwithstanding his freedom from the *auri sacra fames*, he was frequently in possession of more money than he cared to keep, and it was quickly disposed of for wintering infirm horses, or given to some poor family whom the ague had prostrated or the accidents of border life impoverished. In a single instance only he is known to have invested his surplus means in the purchase of land, having received a deed from Alexander Finley, of Mohican Township, Ashland County, Ohio, for a part of the southwest quarter of section twenty-six; but with his customary indifference to matters of value, Johnny

failed to record the deed, and lost it. Only a few years ago the property was in litigation.

We must not leave the reader under the impression that this man's life, so full of hardship and perils, was a gloomy or unhappy one. There is an element of human pride in all martyrdom, which, if it does not soften the pains, stimulates the power of endurance. Johnny's life was made serenely happy by the conviction that he was living like the primitive Christians. Nor was he devoid of a keen humor, to which he occasionally gave vent, as the following will show. Toward the latter part of Johnny's career in Ohio an itinerant missionary found his way to the village of Mansfield, and preached to an open-air congregation. The discourse was tediously lengthy, and unnecessarily severe upon the sin of extravagance, which was beginning to manifest itself among the pioneers by an occasional indulgence in the carnal vanities of calico and "store tea." There was a good deal of the Pharisaic leaven in the preacher, who very frequently emphasized his discourse by the inquiry, "Where now is there a man who, like the primitive Christians, is traveling to heaven barefooted and clad in coarse raiment?" When this interrogation had been repeated beyond all reasonable endurance, Johnny rose from the log on which he was reclining, and advancing to the speaker, he placed one of his bare feet upon the stump which served for a pulpit, and pointing to his coffee-sack garment, he quietly said, "Here's your primitive Christian!" The well-clothed missionary hesitated and stammered and dismissed the congregation. His pet antithesis was destroyed by Johnny's personal appearance, which was far more primitive than the preacher cared to copy.

Some of the pioneers were disposed to think that Johnny's humor was the cause of an extensive practical joke; but it is generally conceded now that a widespread annoyance was really the result of his belief that the offensively odored weed known in the West as the dog-fennel, but more generally styled the May-weed, possessed valuable antimalarial virtues. He procured some seeds of the plant in Pennsylvania, and sowed them in the vicinity of every house in the region of his travels. The consequence was that successive flourishing crops of the weed spread over the whole country, and caused almost as much trouble as the disease it was intended to ward off; and to this day the dog-fennel, introduced by Johnny Applesseed, is one of the worst grievances of the Ohio farmers.

In 1838—thirty-seven years after his appearance on Licking Creek—Johnny noticed that civilization, wealth, and population were pressing into the wilderness of Ohio. Hitherto he had easily kept just in advance of the wave of settlement; but now towns and churches were making their appearance, and even, at long intervals, the stage-driver's horn broke the silence of the grand old forests, and he felt that his work was done in the region in which he had labored so long. He visited every house, and took a solemn farewell of all the families. The little girls who had been delighted with his gifts of fragments of calico and ribbons had become sober matrons, and the boys who had wondered at his ability to bear the pain caused

by running needles into his flesh were heads of families. With parting words of admonition he left them, and turned his steps steadily toward the setting sun.

During the succeeding nine years he pursued his eccentric avocation on the western border of Ohio and in Indiana. In the summer of 1847, when his labors had literally borne fruit over a hundred thousand square miles of territory, at the close of a warm day, after traveling twenty miles, he entered the house of a settler in Allen County, Indiana, and was, as usual, warmly welcomed. He declined to eat with the family, but accepted some bread and milk, which he partook of sitting on the door-step and gazing on the setting sun. Later in the evening he delivered his "news right fresh from heaven" by reading the Beatitudes. Declining other accommodation, he slept, as usual, on the floor, and in the early morning he was found with his features all aglow with a supernal light, and his body so near death that his tongue refused its office. The physician, who was hastily summoned, pronounced him dying, but added that he had never seen a man in so placid a state at the approach of death. At seventy-two years of age, forty-six of which had been devoted to his self-imposed mission, he ripened into death as naturally and beautifully as the seeds of his own planting had grown into fibre and bud and blossom and the matured fruit.

Thus died one of the memorable men of pioneer times, who never inflicted pain or knew an enemy—a man of strange habits, in whom there dwelt a comprehensive love that reached with one hand downward to the lowest forms of life, and with the other upward to the very throne of God. A laboring, self-denying benefactor of his race, homeless, solitary, and ragged, he trod the thorny earth with bare and bleeding feet, intent only upon making the wilderness fruitful. Now "no man knoweth of his sepulchre"; but his deeds will live in the fragrance of the apple blossoms he loved so well, and the story of his life, however crudely narrated, will be a perpetual proof that true heroism, pure benevolence, noble virtues, and deeds that deserve immortality may be found under meanest apparel, and far from gilded halls and towering spires.