

BLACK FEATHER

By HAROLD TITUS

© Harold Titus
WNU Service

CHAPTER V—Continued

"Yes, small, Basile!"—a hand on the Frenchman's shoulder, gripping and shaking. "Not for three, but two men. For Jacques and me, and a cask of small goods. Did you spy on them as they passed? Yes? Did you note the kegs? Did you guess what their contents might mean, should they be poured down hunters' gullets before I arrive to show the token to Standing Cloud? Attendez, mon enfant!" and he slipped an arm across Basile's shoulder and drew him close and whispered excitedly in his ear.

Basile stiffened with amazement and incredulity.

"But, no! It's a fool's venture, master!"

"Fool I am, then! It's the chance . . . the one chance. Basile! You will follow, with the goods, when the canoes are finished. We keep on; we still move as free men and fight as men who starve without freedom!"

And so, two dawns later, with Jacques before him, alcohol and weapons and presents and their blankets in the canoe, Rodney shoved off in the wake of Rickman's brigade while Basile remained behind to hasten, as best he could, the canoe maker at his tasks.

Burke Rickman was no empty braggart; his reputation for competence was not without good foundation.

Convinced though he was that he had dealt Shaw a blow from which he never could recover in time to make his bid for the Pillager trade effective, he drove his men desperately on the next stage of the march.

But a light canoe makes twice the speed of a laden one. And two men work more adroitly and with less confusion than a score. So Rodney gained with each hour he and Jacques plied their paddles or grunted over portages.

When Rodney saw the brigade in the distance he went cautiously, hugging the inside of bends, scouting ahead by foot occasionally to determine that their progress was safe for still another hour from observant eyes.

Night, and Rodney Shaw wriggling on his belly through long grasses to look across and down upon the camp of his adversary. Three nights Rodney crept up on Rickman's camp, but failed to find it possible to put his plan into execution.

But the fourth night he returned and roused Jacques and they packed their baggage and embarked, the canoe making no sound that was audible above the murmur of the current.

Rickman had made an exceptionally hard day's march. Both guards dozed beside the fire.

Across the stream was a lush rice bed, and into this Rodney guided the canoe. At his whispered command Jacques ceased paddling.

"Silently, now!" he whispered. "Your task is to remain silent. And to hold the canoe when I leave it. And to return the way we have come if I fail to return!"

The glow of the fire came abreast. One guard lay prone by the blaze; the other nodded on the opposite side.

"Now! . . . Hold the canoe so!" whispered Rodney, and laid his paddle down while Jacques gathered rice blades in his hands for anchorage. Shaw, as silent as a shadow, lifted one foot overside and felt for bottom.

And then, from under his very nose as he swayed outward to stand erect, a duck lifted into the air, flapping and squawking! The sound in the stillness was, by contrast, tremendous. Another took wings to their right, and two more, and, in seconds, a dozen ducks were in alarmed flight, females squawking, drakes uttering their throaty notes of alarm.

And the sleeping guard across there was sitting up. His companion was on his feet, rifle in hand.

"Sh!"—from Rodney. "Hold so. They cannot see!"

The two boatmen by the fire muttered and then one spoke more loudly.

"A mink, disturbing the fowl!" he said. "Or a fox, slipping up for a bite . . ." He stretched and yawned. "Sacred! But this driving gives weight to a man's lids!" he growled, and, putting his rifle down, began to pace slowly back and forth, rubbing sleep from his eyes.

Rodney softly took his place in the canoe. "Let go," he whispered glumly. "The chance has passed."

And back in her house at Mackinac that night Annette's old aunt stormed and fumed while the girl sat staring absently before her, looking small and disconsolate.

"What is, is always worse!" the woman lamented. "First one is in a sweat at the way you risk your virtue with these stalwart young men. Then one is in a chill at the way you sit at home and will have none of them whatever, and grow thin

and white. It is like a sickness! And for what?" she shrieked. "For yearning over a roving trader who stoops to murder that he may—"

"It was not murder!" the girl cut in, color staining her face. "The post surgeon says so! He was told of the condition of the body. And he says no knife could have entered the body while he lived and spilled so little blood or left such a wound as was left! It was a plot to thwart Rodney!"

The old woman grumbled and rummaged in the deep pockets of her great, black skirt.

"Better for you had you wed this Rickman when he first came wooing. At least, he is respected and held law-abiding and competent by the powers that rule this place. A girl would be safe with him in years to come."

Two more days for Shaw of following closely and marking time and chafing. The river narrowed, became more tortuous in its curving. Then the northern sky clouded and rain began to fall in late afternoon.

The downpour became heavier, more insistent, and Rodney went ashore alone to observe Rickman's men making camp. He saw the



"Silently, Now," He Whispered.

goods piled on shore and covered; saw the canoes upturned and oilcloths stretched over them to shelter the men; saw Rickman's tent pitched and a fire started.

Rickman and Rich ate within the tent. The men bolted their food and slunk beneath the oilcloths. The two men on guard made efforts to keep the fire going. They were not successful and finally Shaw saw them draw blankets over their heads and sit together tight against one of the canoes.

Rodney crept closer to the encampment. A dark hulk rose above him, which was the first mound of packages, snug from the rain. Cautiously he drew out the underfolded edge of oilcloth and felt for the cold sides of the oaken casks. The first came out and he carried it quickly to the stream, rolling it in. The slight bump and splash were lost in larger noises. He carried another and surrendered it to the current and another and still another.

He warmed to the task. He jerked casks from the pile and let them roll down the slope. One and two and six and a dozen! . . . He searched frantically with his hands for more. That was all!

Then, chucking a bit he slipped into the current after them and crossed to the other side and made his way downstream. Jacques, curled like a wolf beneath the stretched cloth, awoke with an alarmed grunt at Shaw's touch.

"Come! We march!"

"Now? Tonight? In this storm?"

"Ay! Now . . . In safety! In this storm we pass the camp of the brigade without suspicion! . . ."

An hour later he was, indeed, above Rickman's uncomfortable, disastrous resting place. He was cold and drenched and weary. But he kept on until nearly dawn before landing for a snatch of sleep and a handful of food before he resumed his way.

On a green and azure and golden morning, Rodney Shaw emerged from the rice-choked stream which drained into the lake of the Pillagers.

To his right, which was the northern side of the lake, lay a clearing on a gentle slope and the stockade and buildings of a trading post gleamed against the background of forest, a blockhouse perched above the gaping gate.

"Nor westers," he muttered. "Too elaborate an establishment for an independent. And it's Astor's, by forced purchase. We won't trespass, Jacques!"

A mile further on, tucked behind a sheltering point, he saw the second stockade and outlay of buildings and headed toward it.

The place was all—was more—than he could have hoped for. The stockade was of stout pickets ten feet tall, sharpened on the end. Within was a storehouse, trader's quarters with fireplace and wet-packed earthen floor, and a house for the men, all of logs. Once they had been washed with paint made of white clay and water, but the stuff was flaked and dropping, now.

Within an hour after he had landed, three canoes approached from as many directions. Hunters, these, come to appraise this new trader and to give Rodney his first sight of the Pillagers.

He made his visitors meager presents and explained that his canoes, laden with goods, were on the way.

"But why does the trader take the small fort?" one asked. "A voice like a murmuring wind has come up the Mississippi. It has told us that the company from the island of the Great Turtle will trade in the fort. Is not the trader from the company?"

A little stab of apprehension ran through Rodney.

"That voice spoke what is true," he said. "The great company does come. It may be that its goods will arrive before mine arrive. But the great company is like a raven, waiting to pick the bones of hunters. I am not of it."

An old man grunted assent. "Voices have told here that the great company trading alone enslaves the hunters," he said. "The voices spoke truth. I will give you tobacco."

He handed small amounts of twist to each. They smoked and talked further and at what he thought a proper time Rodney asked the location of Standing Cloud's camp.

"I bear for him a token of brotherhood," he said and was somewhat nettled that the grunts which followed the statement were not more enthusiastic. But they pointed out the way to the chief's lodge and soon Rodney was headed there.

A tall gaunt Indian, naked to the waist, legs encased in finely tanned buckskin, sat on a rush mat. The chief's face betrayed no emotion, neither animosity nor friendliness. Rodney came to a halt before him, his right hand upraised.

"Standing Cloud," he said, "I have come many leagues to have talk with you. I have come to trade with you and your people. But first I have come to bring you words of praise and friendship from my brother, Leslie."

The other grunted impassively, his eyes busy on Shaw's face.

"Leslie hungered to come," Rodney continued. "Leslie waited many days to come with me. But a great sickness of the breast was upon him. He is departed. They poured sand over him at the island of the Great Turtle."

Standing Cloud stirred slowly at that.

"Your words cast a cloud across the sun," he said. "Leslie was my friend. But for him sand would have been poured over Standing Cloud many moons ago at the prairie of dogs."

"It is so. Leslie spoke of this to me. But he could not come. So he sent me to bear you words of praise as a brother and to return this stone to you."

He reached into his pouch and extended the ornament. The man took it, eyed it, turned it over. He looked long at Shaw then and grunted.

"Let us smoke," he said briefly and Rodney drew a sigh of vast relief, knowing he had been accepted without further question.

He told, then, in detail, the story of events leading up to his arrival there.

"So the great company's goods

will arrive before mine. Flaming Hair will appear burdened with presents while my hands are empty. But the Pillagers must know what evil comes to hunters when the great company alone is among them. Will my new brothers await the coming of my canoes?"

Standing Cloud pondered at length. "My pathway is clear and bright," he said. "My eyes are not clouded. There is but one way for me to travel. That is to help my brother's brother. I go, now, to the lodge of Black Beaver. I will come to your place and talk in another sun."

CHAPTER VI

"Who, then, is Black Beaver?" Shaw put this question to the Weasel, a talkative Indian who had appeared early the next day to visit him, taste his liquor, smoke his tobacco, beg for presents.

Black Beaver was the medicine man, the jessakkid, the Weasel informed him. A mighty worker of magic, Black Beaver. A man of wealth and wisdom, Black Beaver. But not always a man who walked straight and in the light. And the Weasel went on, narrating the misdeeds and evil practices of the jessakkid, and Rodney grew sober and a bit dismayed.

Standing Cloud, the principal chief, was respected; Flat Mouth, the war chief, was acknowledged a great man. But Black Beaver was the dominating influence.

Black Beaver had withheld hunter's medicine from those who traded with the independent; he had even declared Windigo the river of the Laughing Musquash so that none of these hunters, for whom it was a favorite ground, dared go there. So widely accepted was his edict that not only did the Indians believe in it but the little trader's engages would not venture up Laughing Musquash for the white clay with which the buildings had been washed.

For three days, then, Rodney campaigned to establish himself in the good will of the Pillagers and awaited the promised coming of Standing Cloud and the expected call of Black Beaver. Neither appeared, much to his annoyance and dismay.

On the third morning he walked toward the encampment on the flat. Approaching the small stream which headed in the spring outside his gate he heard voices. Women were washing blankets there and he stopped to watch and listen, screened by bushes.

"While the sun shines, they talk," a young woman said. "While the stars are hanging, they talk! The talk of the chiefs is like the talk of geese."

An old woman spoke: "One hungers for the days before Black Beaver's words were the thoughts of all the warriors and hunters. It is sad to know that Black Beaver commands such numbers. We have not had pleasant days since ears turned to him instead of to Standing Cloud."

"That is so," the other agreed. "Standing Cloud and Flat Mouth, it is said, talk loudly for the little trader. They fear if many do not accept credits from the little trader he will depart. They fear the great company if no other trader is present. Black Beaver closes his ears to their talk."

"And many hunters await the words of Black Beaver."

"That is true. They will trade where he commands them."

"He will command where gifts for him are the greatest."

Rodney went on, then, his mind filled with apprehension. So his fate was being settled in a council of chiefs.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Walking on His Hands Saved Captive of Delaware Indians, Descendant Relates

Frank Fast, Camden, Mich., blacksmith, says that he and other descendants of his family stock numbering into the hundreds in Michigan and Ohio, owe their existence to the ability of his great-grandfather to walk on his hands, writes a Camden correspondent in the Detroit Free Press.

Fast says that his great-grandfather Christian was captured by a band of Delaware Indians when he was on a George Rogers Clark expedition in 1781.

The Indians marched their prisoners for several days then demanded that the captives imitate tribal dances to amuse them.

"Young Christian was so weak from lack of food and so bruised from the hard march that he could not dance. But he told his captors that he could do one thing they could not; that was to walk on his hands.

"He proceeded to do so. At first the Indians were amazed, but soon

began to applaud and laugh uproariously. Some laughed so hard they rolled on the ground."

Christian became the Indians' favorite, Fast says, and was spared running the gauntlet. Later he was adopted by a Delaware family as their son. He wore a scalplock, had his nose and ears perforated for rings and was painted and dressed in Indian fashion.

Chances to escape, however, were slim. Finally the youth got away when he was sent for water. He left a kettle overturned on the bank to indicate that he had been swept away and drowned in the swift current.

"The strangest part of the story," Fast says, "is that 35 years later, Christian again met a band of Delaware, one of whom recognized him. They were delighted to find him alive and showered him with gifts. They had mourned him as drowned."

GRABBED BY JAPANESE



Hokey-Pokey-Man of Peiping.

Cities of North China That Have Been Occupied by Nippon

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

JAPANESE occupation is not new to the port of Tsingtao, China, where Nippon troops were recently reported to have been denied permission to land by Chinese officials. While Germany was busy in Europe during the World War, the city, then under a 99-year lease to the German government, was occupied by the Japanese until hostilities in Europe ceased.

Facing the Yellow sea, on the southern coast of Shantung peninsula, Tsingtao has been from time to time a provincial capital as well as a dilapidated fishing port. Germany, in 1898, saw the city as a great port, a "German Hong Kong"—hence the 99-year lease.

The German lease was eight years old when the harbor was opened to foreign trade. In the meantime several thousand Germans moved in, constructed new buildings and wide, tree-lined boulevards. New water and sewage systems were installed, granite piers built out in the harbor, which had been dredged and marked so that ocean-going vessels could dock and discharge or load cargoes with modern equipment. When the World War broke, Tsingtao had not only become a modern commercial Titan along the Chinese coast, but its splendid beaches and new hotel accommodations made it a vacation rendezvous for many residents of foreign colonies in the Orient.

Today Tsingtao is not the German Tsingtao. Before the Germans were driven out, they blew up its fortifications and demolished many other mementoes of their occupation. Japanese airmen did considerable damage with airplane bombs. Yet Tsingtao remains one of China's leading ports, and one of the nearest Chinese ports to Japan.

Tientsin a Commercial Center.

Another Chinese city in which Japanese troops have concentrated recently is Tientsin, 70 miles from the gates of Peiping. News dispatches from Tientsin stated that its principal railway station was converted into an army supply depot for Nippon's soldiers.

Few inland Chinese population centers display the modern aspect that the traveler discovers in Tientsin. While the city has its quarter of narrow, winding byways where children play amid odors typical of a Chinese city, the foreign quarter spreads its influence amid modern settings. Within a stone's throw of the tortuous streets are bank and commercial buildings of which most occidental cities would be proud, and there are the concessions of the British, French and Italians.

Tientsin is the chief commercial center of North China, largely because of its geographic location. The city is only about 30 miles from the sea, and nearby Tangku, on the lower Hai Ho in reality is the Tientsin seaport. The Peiyun Ho flows into the city from the northwest and the Grand canal also passes through it. Besides these trade arteries, century-old caravan routes and railroads spread from Tientsin like spokes in a gigantic wheel, penetrating Shantung, Jehol, Manchuria, Honan, Shansi, Kansu and Inner Mongolia. While traders still ply the old routes, and railroads and small vessels add to the commercial animation of Tientsin, there also are industries in the city that employ many of its 1,388,000 people. Flour milling is a chief industry while cotton mills operate more than 200,000 spindles.

As Tientsin is "on the way" from the sea to Peiping, it has long been a key to the old capital.

Fighting in the Peiping area has again thrown a world spotlight on that frequently fought-over city, former capital of China and always a center of international interests.

Many foreigners are residents of Peiping, where embassies to China are retained, although offices must

be established also in Nanking, the official capital of the central government. Such an arrangement has been adopted by the United States, which retains an embassy in Peiping guarded by a detachment of United States Marines. Other foreign embassies with armed guards are the British, French, Italian and Japanese.

Peiping the Focus of Affairs.

Peiping was the focus of perhaps the most widespread international tension on Chinese record during the anti-foreign Boxer uprising in 1900, when troops of several nations, including the United States, were landed and marched inland to rescue all Peiping's foreign residents, who had been besieged for two months in the British embassy.

As commercial and cultural mistress of China's northern plain, Peiping is the country's second largest city, being surpassed only by Shanghai. Its geographic location brings it into contact with Japanese-controlled Manchukuo on the northeast, semi-independent Tibetan provinces on the west, and Russian-controlled Mongolian republics on the northwest. The foreign embassies and branch offices of foreign business firms in Peiping give it the greatest international importance north of the Yangtze river. As center of the Hopei-Chahar council, it is a focus for the independence movement which has weakened ties between North China and the central government at Nanking.

Having lost the name of Peking, "northern capital," in 1928 when China's administrative center was moved south to Nanking, Peiping now finds its present title, "city of northern peace," threatened.

In national affairs Peiping is a stronghold of tradition. Contrasting with the present Chinese capital, the northern metropolis has had many reincarnations as seat of China's government under such romance-freighted names as Peking, Cambulac, and Purple Imperial City. Its Mandarin dialect, the "Parisian French" of Chinese speech, comes closer than any other to being generally understood throughout the nation.

Famous Marco Polo Bridge.

When the boom and rattle of heavy guns and rifles disturbed the calm of Peiping recently, newspaper men sent back word that the first clashes were in the neighborhood of the Marco Polo bridge, nine miles southwest of the city. Many foreigners make excursions from Peiping to this ancient many-arched stone bridge, one of the most picturesque in northern China, which spans the muddy Yung-ting river.

Marco Polo bridge was named by foreigners in honor of the Venetian adventurer who first described it—albeit inaccurately—to the western world when he came to the Orient to call upon the fabulous Kublai Khan. The Chinese call it Lu Kou Chiao. Marco Polo praised the magnificent solid stone span of twenty-four arches on almost the same page with such Chinese novelties as beauty contests, daily baths, and black rock which was burned as a cheap substitute for wood. Europeans found the twenty-four arches the most credible part of the story, but it was actually the one inaccuracy.

The arches numbered no more than thirteen, but countless loads of coal passed over them from western mines to supply Peiping with "black stone" fuel. The treacherous Yung-ting river in a Seventeenth-century flood clipped off two arches. Now the bridge has only eleven stone arches, mossy with age.

The Marco Polo bridge has played a significant role in the history of Peiping, to which it was once the main portal from the southwest. For centuries, when Peiping was the political as well as the cultural center of China's ancient civilization, the bridge played a dramatic part in invasions. It still bears its share of motor, caravan, and foot traffic.

Household Questions

Dainty Shoulder Straps.—When making your undies try using narrow velvet ribbon for the shoulder-straps. The velvet side next to the skin acts as a grip, while the satin on top looks dainty. You will find that ribbon-velvet straps will outlast any garment.

A Combination Dish.—Two parts of tomatoes simmered with one part of celery makes a good combination dish.

For Basting Roasts.—Leftover fruit juices, especially those from spiced fruits, make excellent basting liquid for roasts, chops and ham dishes.

Devilled Cheese.—One dessert-spoon grated cheese, one teaspoon milk, one pinch celery salt, (optional), cayenne, one-half teaspoon made mustard. Mix all ingredients to smooth paste. Spread on any unsweetened biscuit (cream crackers). Place under a red-hot grill to brown. Serve immediately.

Plenic Lemonade.—One cup sugar, one cup water, one cup strong tea infusion, six lemons, one cup crushed pineapple, three quarts water. Cook the sugar and water to a thin syrup; add the tea, lemon juice, pineapple, and water. Serve iced. Sixteen to eighteen servings. Excellent to quench thirst. Juices from canned peaches, apricots, pears or cherries can be utilized for some of the water.

Something Varied, Rare in Crochet

An opportunity to combine elegance without extravagance—and all with your own nimble fingers and crochet hook! These lovely companion squares of flat crochet, done in string or finer cotton, are handsome used together. Pattern



Pattern 1402

1402 contains directions and charts for making the squares shown and joining them to make a variety of articles; illustrations of them and of all stitches used; photograph of a single square about actual size; material requirements.

Send 15 cents in stamps or coins (coins preferred) for this pattern to The Sewing Circle Needlecraft Dept., 82 Eighth Ave., New York, N. Y.

Please write plainly your name, address and pattern number.

for WOMEN only

CARDUI is a special medicine for the relief of some of the suffering which results from a woman's weakened condition. It has been found to make monthly periods less disagreeable, and, when its use has been kept up awhile, has helped many poorly nourished women to get more strength from their food. This medicine (pronounced "Card-u-i") has been used and recommended by women for many years. Find out whether it will help you by giving it a fair trial. Of course, if not benefited, consult a physician.

True happiness consists not in the multitude of friends, but in their worth and choice.

checks
666 MALARIA
in **THREE DAYS**
first day
LIQUID, TABLETS
SALVE, NOSE DROPS—Headache, 30 minutes
Try "Rub-Ny-Thru"—World's Best Liniment

FALSE TEETH PLATES and **BRIDGES**
CLEANED LIKE NEW—Even the most careful find their false teeth lose color, get dirty, slimy black or green with use. Many become uncomfortable, causing sore spots in mouth. WE CLEAN UP ALL FALSE TEETH AND BRIDGES—No matter how old, how stained, how uncomfortable. All work guaranteed because done only by **REPUTABLE EXPERTS**. Complete, restored by insured, prepaid parcel post with month's supply of **Cleaning Powder**. (U.S. Pat. 2,100,000). Send your plate today. At home service. **EDWARDS AND COMPANY**, (Established 1888), 1051 Longfellow Ave., Camden, N. J.

CLASSIFIED DEPARTMENT

FLOWERS

1212 12 for \$1.00—One each of 12 beautiful varieties labeled. A rainbow of color. Start an Iris corner now or add to collection you have. Postage paid. **Leeds-gum, 76 Bleecker St., Newark, N. J.**