

Bill Kinny's Arrest.

Bill Kinny, of Dry Fork, killed a prominent man of the community, and the authorities, after some little meditation, decided that he ought to be arrested. But Bill objected, and when three deputy sheriffs called on him he laid a Winchester rifle across one corner of his homestead, killed one of the deputies and so painfully wounded the other two that they strolled back to the Shady Grove Court House. Several days later, while Bill was sitting in front of his door, Mark Townsend, the Sheriff in chief, walked up to the fence and lazily placed his arms on the top rail. Bill reached back and took up his rifle.

"Good mornin', Bill."
"Hi, Mark."
"Had a good bit of frost last night."
"Yas, ruther. Which way you travellin', Mark?"

"Oh, no way in particular. 'Lowed you mout be lonesome, an' I thought I'd drap and talk with you awhile. Don't make no difference how lively a feller is he's apt to git lonesome once in a while specially this time of the year."

"I reckon that's true," Bill replied. "Some fellers come out here the other day, and one of them got so lonesome that he jest natafully had to lay down."

"So I hear," said the sheriff. By the way," he added, "them fellers that you speak about wanted you to go Shady Grove with them, didn't they?"

"Yas, they lowed that a jedge down thar wanted to make my acquaintance."

"You don't say so," exclaimed the sheriff. "W'y the jedge is a mighty big man an' I think you'd like to meet him, Bill."

"I would, but you see I ain't in society this year."

"Sorter retired, air you?"

"Yes, thought I was agettin' a leetle too old fur the bright foolishness an' yaller trimmins' of this here life."

"Yas, that mout be," the Sheriff replied. "A feller does withdraw mightily as he gets along in age; but say, the jedge is a friend of mine an' I want, you to meet him."

"No, I'm obleeged to you. I never bankered after these here fellers that pride themselves on their book larnin'."

"I don't exaetly crave them," the sheriff rejoined, "wallopin'" his tobacco about in his mouth, "but still I think we ought to meet them once in a while. But say, Bill, there's a man down at Shady Grove that I do want you to meet."

"Who is he?"

"Sam Powers."

"He's the jailer, ain't he?"

"Yas, an' the best one you ever seen."

"So they say," Bill replied, fondling his rifle. "In fact, them fellers that was here the other day wanted me to meet him."

"So I learn," said the Sheriff, but I lowed that mobby they didn't extend the invitation in a soft and gentle enough way.

"Oh, I didn't have no fault to find with the invitation. I jest didn't want to go, an' sorter pulled back a little an' then one of them laid down an' the other two limped might'ly."

"So I hear," said the sheriff. "Still I thought there mout be a easier an' smoother way of putting the invitation. Gentleness always pays. You can sometimes lead a man with a string of beads when you couldn't drive him with a hoop pole. You recollect old Wash Bowles, that was once the sheriff of this county, don't you?"

"Mighty well."

"Ah, hah! Well, that old feller had more gentleness and consideration for the fallings of other folks than any man I ever seen. One time he had to hang a feller named Brice, an' Brice sorter kicked against it, bein' a feller that was hard to please, anyhow, so Wash, in that soft way of his'n, stepped up to put on the rope an' says: 'Brice, you'll please excuse me, but I'll not detain you but a moment.' So I thought that if I'd come here to-day with strong consideration an' smooth gentleness you mout accept the jailer's invitation to come an' spend awhile with him."

"No, I'm obleeged to you. I don't care about goin' to-day. I've got to go over the ridge an' whip a feller to-morrer an' if I don't do it I'm afeared he mout be disappointed. Well, now, Mark," he added, "ef you ain't got no further business with me I reckon you'd better be shovin' along."

"But I have got some further business with you, Bill. I want you to go with me an' see the jailer."

"Wall, I aint goin'."

"I lowed you would, Bill."

"Take yo' arms offen that fence or I'll drop you right whar you stand."

"So I hear," said the sheriff. "Say, I come over to take you to jail."

"You don't say so."

"Yas, an' want you to go with me."

"How many men did you bring with you?"

"None at all; but you air a-goin'."

"Mebbe; after all these here cartridges is shot off."

"Now I thought you would go with me without having to waste any of the cartridges. You know the price of brass an' powder have riz might'ly of late."

"Oh, now here, Mark, I don't care nothin' fur expenses. I don't mind shootin' a few balls into a feller that wants to put me in jail and afterwards hang me."

"I am glad you ain't stingy, Bill. Some of the boys at the store said that you was mighty economical, but I am glad to see that you ain't. It hurts a man might'ly you know, to have it no-rated around that he is close."

"I know that, Mark, and I'm allus tryin' hard to keep that charge from bein' flung agin my reputation."

"I'm pleased to know that you think so much of yourself, but say, I told the boys over at Shady Grove that you would come back with me, an' I wish you would."

"I'd like to accommodate you, Mark, but I don't feel like strollin' to-day."

"Sorry to hear that, for I told the boys that I'd have you in jail by 12 o'clock to-day."

"I wish you hadn't told them, Mark, an' you oughtener done it, fur you didn't know how busy I mout be."

"Yas, mebbe I done wrong," said the Sheriff, "but I didn't know after all that you couldn't fling aside your business an' come along with me. The boys air all expectin' you."

"Yas, the boys up the river expected General Jackson once but he did not come."

"So I hear," said the Sheriff, "an' you air not coming with me?"

"That's what I aint."

"I'll bet you \$15, Bill, that you do."

"I'll take that bet, but in the meantime if you don't take yo' arms offen that fence I'll drop you right in yo' tracks."

"That's the way I like to hear a man talk, Bill. Say, last night the jailer and his two sons went 'possum huntin'. They called the dogs—and they have got some of the finest hounds you ever saw—and here they came with brightness in their eyes an' deep music in their voices. You ought to have heard them go 'ouunk, ouunk.' Well, they went out, an' about mid-night they came back with two of the biggest and fattest 'possums you ever saw. Well, they dressed them right thar an' then, an' put them out on the house so the frost could fall on them, an' began to bake them along with some sweet potatoes. Then the jailer's son he says, says he, 'Pop, we ain't got no regular wildcat licker to go with these here 'possums, so the man, havin' a mighty eye for art, gave a jug to the young feller an' told him to go up in the mountains. The young feller went but he couldn't find no licker, an' at last he seen a ole feller drivin' a wagin' an' when he asked the ole feller if he could git any licker he swore that he didn't know nothin' about it; but,' says he, 'if you will take that jug on the hillside and put a dollar under it I don't know what mout happen, but when you come back I don't believe the dollar will be there.' Wall, he went up on the mountain side and put a dollar under a jug and went away, but bless your life when he came back the dollar was gone but the jug was gone but the jug was filled with the best licker that has passed its teens. And so, at dinner to-day they are goin' to have them 'possums and sweet potatoes and that ole licker that's got a bead on it like a dew-drop; and say, that jailer says that you may enjoy the feast."

"Look here, Mark, you ain't tryin' to trifle with my feelin's air you?"

"No; I'm tellin' the Lord's truth; an' say, that aint all. The Perdue boys caught a big bear down in the bottoms and after dinner they air goin' to set the dogs on him in the jail yard right in full view of yo' cell. Think of that."

"Look here, Mark, I am about converted an' I'll go with you if you'll let me take my rifle along."

"No, can't do that, Bill, an' besides, I'll have to handcuff you. Possum, sweet potatoes, licker with a bead on it like a dewdrop an' a bear fight in full view of yo' cell."

"Mark," said Bill as he put down his rifle, "fetch on yo' handcuffs. Blamed if I aint with you.—Opie P. Read.

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