

ERSKINE DALE—PIONEER

By JOHN FOX, Jr.

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OFF FOR VIRGINIA

SYNOPSIS.—To the Kentucky wilderness outpost commanded by Jerome Sanders, in the time immediately preceding the Revolution, comes a white boy fleeing from a tribe of Shawnees by whom he had been captured and adopted as a son of the chief Kahtoo. He is given shelter and attracts the favorable attention of Dave Yandell, a leader among the settlers. The boy warns of the coming of a Shawnee war party. The fort is attacked, and only saved by the timely appearance of a party of Virginians. The leader of these is fatally wounded, but in his dying moments recognizes the fugitive youth as his son. At Red Oaks, plantation on the James river, Virginia, Colonel Dale's home, the boy appears with a message for the colonel, who after reading it introduces the bearer to his daughter Barbara as her cousin Erskine Dale. Erskine meets two other cousins, Harry Dale and Hugh Willoughby. Yandell visits Red Oaks. At the county fair at Williamsburg Erskine meets a youth, Dane Grey, and there at once arises a bitter antagonism between them. Grey, in liquor, insults Erskine, and the latter, for the moment all Indian, draws his knife. Yandell disarms him. Ashamed, Erskine leaves Red Oaks that night to return to the wilderness. Yandell, with Harry and Hugh, who have been permitted to visit the Sanders fort, overtakes him. At the plantation the boy had left a note in which he gave the property, which is his as the son of Colonel Dale's older brother, to Barbara. The party is met by three Shawnees, who bring news to Erskine (whose Indian name is White Arrow) that his foster father, Kahtoo, is dying and desires him to come to the tribe and become its chief. After a brief visit to the fort Erskine goes to the tribe. He finds there a white woman and her half-breed daughter, Early Morn, and saves the woman from death. He tells Kahtoo he is with the Americans against the British. An enemy, Crooked Lightning, overhears him. Kahtoo sends Erskine to a council where British envoys meet Indian chiefs. Dane Grey is there, and the bitter feeling is intensified. Crooked Lightning denounces Erskine as a traitor and friend of the Americans. The youth escapes death by flight. Reaching his tribe, Erskine finds his enemies have the upper hand. He is held as a prisoner, waiting only for the arrival of Crooked Lightning, to be burned at the stake.

CHAPTER IX—Continued.

"She will not burn. Some fur traders have been here. The white chief McGee sent me a wampum belt and a talk. His messenger brought much fire-water and he gave me that—he pointed to a silver-mounted rifle—and I promised that she should live. But I cannot help you." Erskine thought quickly. He laid his rifle down, stepped slowly outside, and stretched his arms with a yawn. Then still leisurely he moved toward his horse as though to take care of it. But the braves were too keen and watchful and they were not fooled by the fact that he had left his rifle behind. Before he was close enough to leap for Firey's back, three bucks darted from behind a lodge and threw themselves upon him. In a moment he was face down on the ground, his hands were tied behind his back, and when turned over he looked up into the grinning face of Black Wolf, who with the help of another brave dragged him to a lodge and roughly threw him within, and left him alone. On the way he saw his foster-mother's eyes flashing helplessly, saw the girl Early Morn indignantly telling her mother what was going on, and the white woman's face was wet with tears. He turned over so that he could look through the tent-flaps. Two bucks were driving a stake in the center of the space around which the lodges were ringed. Two more were bringing fagots of wood and it was plain what was going to become of him. His foster-mother, who was fiercely haranguing one of the chiefs, turned angrily into Kahtoo's lodge and he could see the white woman rocking her body and wringing her hands. Then the old chief appeared and lifted his hands.

"Crooked Lightning will be very angry. The prisoner is his—not yours. It is for him to say what the punishment shall be—not for you. Wait for him! Hold a council and if you decide against him, though he is my son—he shall die." For a moment the preparations ceased and all turned to the prophet, who had appeared before his lodge.

"Kahtoo is right," he said. "The Great Spirit will not approve if White Arrow die except by the will of the council—and Crooked Lightning will be angry." There was a chorus of protesting grunts, but the preparations ceased. The boy could feel the malevolence in the prophet's tone and he knew that the impostor wanted to carry further favor with Crooked Lightning and not rob him of the joy of watching his victim's torture. So the braves went back to their fire-water, and soon the boy's foster mother brought him something to eat, but she could say nothing for Black Wolf had appointed himself sentine and sat, rifle in hand, at the door of the lodge.

came more furious and once Erskine saw a pale-brown arm thrust from behind the lodge and place a jug at the feet of Black Wolf, who grunted and drank deep. One by one the braves went to drunken sleep about the fire. The fire died down and by the last flickering flame the lad saw Black Wolf's chin sinking sleepily to his chest. There was the slightest rustle behind the tent. He felt something groping for his hands and feet, felt the point of a knife graze the skin of his wrist and ankles—felt the thongs loosen and drop apart. Noiselessly, inch by inch, he crept to the wall of the tent, which was carefully lifted for him. Outside he rose and waited. Like a shadow the girl Early Morn stole before him and like a shadow he followed. In a few minutes they were by the river-bank, away from the town. The moon rose, and from the shadow of a beech the white woman stepped forth with his rifle and powder-horn and bullet-pouch and some food. She pointed to his horse a little farther down. He looked long and silently into the Indian girl's eyes and took the white woman's shaking hand. Once he looked back. The Indian girl was stoic as stone. A bar of moonlight showed the white woman's face wet with tears.

Again Dave Yandell from a watchtower saw a topknot rise above a patch of cane, now leafless and winter-bitten—saw a hand lifted high above it with a palm of peace toward him. And again an Indian youth emerged, this time leading a black horse with a drooping head. Both came painfully on, staggering, it seemed, from wounds or weakness, and Dave sprang from



"I Told Kahtoo I Would Fight with the Americans Against the British and Indians; and With You Against Him!"

the tower and rushed with others to the gate. He knew the horse and there was dread in his heart. Perhaps the approaching Indian had slain the boy, had stolen the horse, and was innocently coming there for food.

"Don't you know me, Dave?" he asked, weakly.

"My God! It's White Arrow!"

CHAPTER X

Straightway the lad sensed a curious change in the attitude of the garrison. The old warmth was absent. The atmosphere was charged with suspicion, hostility. Old Jerome was surly, his old playmates were distant. Only Dave, Mother Sanders and Lydia were unchanged. The predominant note was curiosity, and they started to ply him with questions, but Dave took him to a cabin, and Mother Sanders brought him something to eat.

"Had a party hard time," stated Dave. The boy nodded.

"I had only three bullets, Firey went lame and I had to lead him. I couldn't eat cane and Firey couldn't eat pheasant. I got one from a hawk," he explained. "What's the matter out there?"

"Nothin'," said Dave, gruffly, and he made the boy go to sleep. His story came when all were around the fire at supper, and was listened to with eagerness. Again the boy felt the hostility and it made him resentful and haughty and his story brief and terse. Most fluid and sensitive natures have a chameleon quality, no matter what stratum of adamant be beneath. The boy was dressed like an Indian, he looked like one, and he had brought back, it seemed, the bearing of an Indian—his wildness and stoicism. He spoke like a chief in a council, and even in English his phrasing and metaphors belonged to the red man. No wonder they believed the stories they had heard of him—but there was shame in many faces and little doubt in any save one before he finished. He had gone to see his foster-mother and his foster-father—old chief

Kahtoo, the Shawnee—because he had given his word. Kahtoo thought he was dying and wanted him to be chief when the Great Spirit called. Kahtoo had once saved his life, had been kind, and made him a son. That he could not forget. An evil prophet had come to the tribe and through his enemies, Crooked Lightning and Black Wolf, had gained much influence. They were to burn a captive white woman as a sacrifice. He had stayed to save her, to argue with old Kahtoo, and carry the wampum and a talk to a big council with the British. He had made his talk and—escaped. He had gone back to his tribe, had been tried, and was to be burned at the stake. Again he had escaped with the help of the white woman and her daughter. The tribes had joined the British, and even then were planning an early attack on this very fort and all others.

The interest was tense and every face was started at this calm statement of their immediate danger. Old Jerome burst out:

"Why did you have to escape from the council—and from the Shawnees?"

"At the council I told the Indians that they should be friends, not enemies, of the Americans, and Crooked Lightning called me a traitor. He had overheard my talk with Kahtoo."

"What was that?" asked Dave, quickly.

"I told Kahtoo I would fight with the Americans against the British and Indians; and with you against him!" And he turned away and went back to the cabin.

"What'd I tell ye!" cried Dave indignantly, and he followed the boy, who had gone to his bunk, and put one big hand on his shoulder.

"They thought you'd turned Injun agin," he said, "but it's all right now." "I know," said the lad, and with a muffled sound that was half the grunt of an Indian and half the sob of a white man turned his face away.

Again Dave reached for the lad's shoulder.

"Don't blame 'em too much. I'll tell you now. Some fur traders came by here, and one of 'em said you was goin' to marry an Injun girl named Early Morn; that you was goin' to stay with 'em and fight with 'em alongside the British. Of course I knowed better, but—"

"Why," interrupted Erskine, "they must have been the same traders who came to the Shawnee town and brought whisky."

"That's what the feller said and why folks here believed him." "Who was he?" demanded Erskine. "You know him—Dane Grey."

All tried to make amends straightway for the injustice they had done him, but the boy's heart remained sore that their trust was so little. Then, when they gathered all settlers within the fort and made all preparations and no Indians came, many seemed again to get distrustful and the lad was not happy. The winter was long and hard. A blizzard had driven the game west and south and the garrison was hard put to it for food. Every day that the hunters went forth the boy was among them and he did far more than his share in the killing of game. But when winter was breaking, more news came in of the war. The flag that had been fashioned of a soldier's white shirt, an old blue army coat, and a red petticoat was now the Stars and Stripes of the American cause. Burgoyne had not cut off New England, that "head of the rebellion," from the other colonies. On the contrary, the Americans had beaten him at Saratoga and marched his army off under those same Stars and Stripes, and for the first time Erskine heard of gallant Lafayette—how he had run to Washington with the portentous news from his king—that beautiful, passionate France would stretch forth her helping hand. And Erskine learned what that news meant to Washington's "naked and starving" soldiers dying on the frozen hillsides of Valley Forge. Then George Rogers Clark had passed the fort on his way to Williamsburg to get money and men for his great venture in the Northwest, and Erskine got a ready permission to accompany him as soldier and guide. After Clark was gone the lad got restless; and one morning, when the first breath of spring came, he mounted his horse, in spite of arguments and protestations, and set forth for Virginia on the wilderness trail. He was going to join Clark, he said, but more than Clark and the war were drawing him to the outer world. What it was he hardly knew, for he was not yet much given to ransacking his heart or mind. He did know, however, that some strange force had long been working within him that was steadily growing stronger, was surging now like a flame and swinging him between strange moods of depression and exultation. Perhaps it was but the spirit of spring in his heart, but with his mind's eye he was ever seeing at the end of his journey the face of his little cousin Barbara Dale.

"You took me by surprise and you have changed—but I don't know how much."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

TEETH WIGGLED; COULDN'T TALK

Woman Tells Jury Why She Refused to Pay Her Dentist's Bill.

SHE TOOK THEM BACK

Carried the Pesky Plate in Her Handbag Rather Than in Her Mouth—Jury Hears Her Story and Decides in Her Favor.

Denver, Colo.—A set of false teeth was the bone of contention in a lawsuit in Magistrate Rice's court, in which Dr. N. Wolfson, dentist, sought to collect \$30 from Mrs. Dave Handler, patient.

Dr. Wolfson told the court he made the teeth for Mrs. Handler and that Mrs. Handler had refused to pay the



"You See Those Teeth!"

sum agreed upon before the work was undertaken. Part of the money had been paid, but he said he didn't understand why the rest still was unpaid.

"Why," exploded Mrs. Handler, "do I not pay the doctor the \$30? I'll tell you why," she told the jury.

"You see," began Mrs. Handler, fishing a set of false teeth out of her handbag. "You see those false teeth. Why should I carry them in my handbag instead of in my mouth? I'll tell you. Just as soon as I put the teeth in my mouth, I can't talk a word. When I start to talk the teeth begin to wiggle."

"I go to Dr. Wolfson and I say: 'Doctor, I can't wear these teeth. When I begin to talk the teeth begin to wiggle.' The doctor said: 'So? You should hold them down with your tongue so they won't wiggle.' But how can a person hold the teeth down with the tongue and talk at the same time? I ask you, gentlemen, how can it be done?"

You Bet She Took Them Back. Attorney Nathaniel Halpern asked Mrs. Handler if she had taken the teeth back to the doctor for adjustment.

"Did I take them back?" echoed Mrs. Handler. "I should say I took them back. Three or four times a week for a year I went to Dr. Wolfson's office. First it was pyorrhea and my teeth should come out. All right. Sixteen teeth the doctor pulls out. Then he said I should have sixteen false teeth put in. All right. I go down again in a week for the impression."

"He stuffed my mouth with some sticky white stuff. It pretty near made me sick. When I am near choking with my mouth full of this stuff, the doctor says, 'Bite!'"

"Now, how could I bite with my mouth full of the white stuff? I ask you gentlemen how could I bite?"

"Well, the doctor keep me coming down to his office for many times, each time to fill my mouth up with the white stuff. It made me sick every time. Then he say bite and I couldn't bite, so it was a long time before he got the bite."

Sent Bite Out to Have Plate Made. "After he got the bite, he sent the bite out to have a plate made; but I tell you gentlemen from the very day he put the plate in my mouth it wiggles when I try to talk and for the life of me I couldn't talk. I couldn't wear those teeth. They are crooked. On one side they bite, on the other side they miss. And I tell you they wiggle. How can a person use teeth that wiggle?"

"I will give the teeth back to the doctor, if he give me the \$100 I spent, but I won't pay him \$30. I rather I shall live till I die without teeth than wear teeth that wiggle."

The jury decided a set of teeth that deprived a woman of the privilege of talking should not be paid for and gave a verdict against Dr. Wolfson.

Mobbed for Whipping Stepchild. Muskogee, Okla.—Newton Legrande, Talliequah farmer, being brought here after arraignment in a Talliequah court on a charge of brutally whipping his six-year-old stepdaughter, was seized by a mob at Hulbert and severely whipped.

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No Doubt. Wife—John, I wish you would stop saying, "Gad!" I don't like it." Hub—I'll make a bargain with you, my dear; I'll stop my Gadding if you'll stop yours.—Boston Transcript.

Hydraulic Mining Used. Hydraulic mining is being used in Finland to gather peat, water being pumped into the bogs to form a liquid mass that can be handled with turbine pumps.

They have sown the wind and they shall reap the whirlwind.—Hosea 8:7.

There is no man suddenly either excellently good or extremely evil.—Sir Philip Sidney.

A little learning is a dangerous thing.

The potato is a native of Chile and Peru.

Step after step, the ladder is ascended.

Society to Aid Bird Study. Thirty thousand dollars has been received by the National Association of Audubon Societies to be used in aiding teachers and pupils in the study of wild birds. Teachers who form clubs are to be given free material to help them in their work. More than 1,700,000 children are already enrolled in schools throughout the United States and Canada. The headquarters of the association is in New York city.—Popular Mechanics Magazine.

Weights Cargoes in Ships. For weighing cargoes in ships a Frenchman has invented a scale operated by a pipe extending into the water, the amount of water it contains varying with the draft of a vessel as it is loaded.

At the Brink. "Can I ford this stream?" "You kin on a horse. Kin your car swim?"

Hope is the promissory note of the future.



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