

## RESCUED

### A Story of The Carolina Mountains

(By WART WIGHTMAN VANDIVER)

Among the remote regions of Western North Carolina live a people sturdy, conservative and thrifty. In this elevated land, where the general attitude is more than two thousand feet above the level of the sea, one of the evils long prevalent has been the illicit manufacture of a red hot spirit. Those who make up the personnel of this weird craft—an exorcism of the civil war—were, as a class, long without a significant and specific name; but now comes, creeping into the language, with an insistence likely to make it permanent, the term moonshiner to designate this type of a contrabandist. The typical moonshiner has his hut and the crude alembic in the densest solitudes of the mountains where intrusion and detection are most unlikely. Actual organization into bands for mutual protection has sometimes been effected. Often when the semilitary officials making a "revenue raid" into these solemn and unfrequented fastnesses in quest of offenders, the sentinels down next the "settlement," having borrowed from their aboriginal brethren the smoke signal, send up, the same in volumes of graceful curves and waves, then danger is known to be near and the operators of the illicit establishments along the upper mountains are soon safely hidden. At night the huntsman's horn so b'own, that according to their crude code; the repeated crescendo, and cadence fall on the listening ears long accustomed to such notes and instantly the message is translated—and translated too are still and "tiller."

Just under the northern shadows of the great Blue Ridge, not far west of the point where it reaches highest towards the skies, in the sparsely settled county of Henderson, lived many years ago the AdalFs in whose veins, it is said, flowed the blood of the bold vikings of old, and their ancestors having come from the north of Europe some color of veracity is given the statement. The incidents herein recounted, now passing slowly into tradition, are not without living witnesses. Two brawny boys well along in their teens and a daughter Mary a little older—a perfect type of mountain womanhood—were of this household.

Into the humble picturesque home under the mountain shadows, up to May day 1866 there had never come a great grief. Arcadian happiness had been theirs. But in an evil moment William Adalf had determined to set up an illicit distillery and did pollute with it the limpid mountain brook up the mountainside and in this precarious undertaking he was assisted by Robert his younger brother.

"Will, shurely you're not runnin' a still up thar on the mountain," said Mary. "You know what will come of it all. You'll jes' be hunted down by the revenue men and took to jail." "But Mollie" replied the boy "you don't look at this question right. Ain't this our corn? Ain't this a free country? Can't a man do what he pleases with his stuff? The government ain't got no right to take a man's liberty from him, and fur my part I'm

going to do as I please." In this crude statement on the abstruse question of the science of government Robert quite acquiesced and the two walked a mile away up the mountainside to the secluded glen where their primitive plant was established.

The summer of '66 glided away into the glorious mountain autumn. The foliage in the Adalf cove had just put on colors rivaling the fading tints of the tropical growth and looking as if a thousand overlaid rainbows had burst and scattered their wealth of gorgeous hues over the waiting forests below; or as if myriads of dryads had turned artists and had exhausted their fairy genius in decking with gay colors the glorious expanse of autumnal woods. Down the various valleys, all running to the northward, flowed the clear, pebble bottomed streams with silvery gleamings in the Indian Summer sunshine, innocuously hastening home to the sea. In the dim distance the Great Smokies lifting themselves in range beyond range and kissing the skies. Every prospect was pleasing; man alone was vile. The golden grain that had caught and locked in its heart the sunbeams of summer had been garnered and ground to feed the blockade still on the mountain. In the meantime Tom Maynard, whose father's farm a little further down the creek—the Takecoose—adjoined that of the AdalFs. Had wooed, won and wedded pretty Molly Adalf, Tom had grown to manhood thereabouts, and the sunburn on his fine honest face told of the toil to which he had bent. Mollie, the milkmaid of her father's dairy, like other country maids known to song and story, often on occasion raked the meadow sweet with hay; but she was a model of beauty, being something better, braver and true-hearted—the picture of youth and rosy health. The early morning air, inhaled while the miracle of a new day is blessing the world, the happy cheerful disposition, the heart that throbbed in sorrow over another's woe and leaped in simple joy when other hearts were glad—these made her face radiant with charms that distanced regular features and classical standards that have not behind them these dynamic forces. Happy as the birds that, full throated, trilled and twirled their vernal loves in the trees about the old Maynard home, this mountaineer and his highland Mary, unconscious (as happiness always is) of how happy they were, lived and loved the while.

Suddenly one deary day in autumn a great sorrow cast its shadow across the threshold of the AdalFs Will and Bob were arrested, and taken to be tried for violation of the Federal Statute. "Distilling, retailing, concealing and removing spirituous liquors, without license so to do, contrary to the statute in such cases made and provided." So ran the charge in the language of the law. The U. S. Commissioner in the evidence found probable cause and held them on bond to the next term of circuit and District court to be held at Asheville. The two defendants gave bond and returned

home. Brooding over their trouble and incensed at the had faith of some one whom they had considered a friend, they determined to find out who had "acted the traitor" as Will put the matter. It was no difficult matter to find out that Mitch Jones, and old moonshiner, for the reward in such cases paid, had given the location of the distillery; in order to divert attention from his own similar establishment further back in the mountains.

Imbittered with deadly hatred the two deliberated as to what course they should take towards the informer.

"He was too sly to go to the commissioner's court" said Will, "but he'll go to the big court for he knows we'll be sent up where we can't get at him."

"But there's Burnett and Norton that swore in the trial the other day—they'll have to swear the same things agin us" urged Bob.

"They'll go off and leave the country, Bob, for you know they are our friends and they didn't want to swear agin us, but had to." Will continued. And now if we can get old Mitch to leave it'll be all right."

"But how do you know" asked the younger brother "that Norton and Burnett will go away?"

"They both told me so" said Will. "Well then" instantly Bob replied, "let's go to-night and pay old Mitch to leave, and if he won't agree to do that let's put out his chunk." "No less not kill the old scamp" urged Will "cepting we can't possibly get around it, but I do say I wish he was dead."

As they sat under the dense shade of the big apple tree by the pump, in the early May time at twilight and deliberated over their trouble each talked frankly to the other until finally Will agreed that if old Mitch would not agree to leave they would pick a quarrel with him and kill him.

Unknown to the boys Mollie had been standing behind the huge pump and had been a somewhat unwilling eavesdropper during this talk; she had simply gone for a pail of water, but the serious tone the conversation had seemed to rivet her to the spot. Recovering herself she hastily and stealthily glided away, leaving her empty pail, and hastened down the creek, along the stretch of sandy road a hundred paces, to her own home where her husband was.

"Well, let's git supper and go" the impulsive Bob said earnestly.

"No, Bob, I don't want no supper. I can't think of nothin' but that old half breed scoundrel. Let's go now." So securing their pistols from their accustomed place in the house, they started up the trail in the dim light of a new moon and the stars.

"Why, Mollie, I thought you was goin' to stay all night with your mother" remarked Tom as she came through the bars. "Is anything the matter?"

"Yes, Tom, it's awful what the boys have been talkin'." Then she told him what she had heard at the pump.

"Tom, go up there and stop them, if they ain't already gone. I heard 'em say 'Let's git the pistols and go' just as I come round the corner of the orchard, an' they went in the house, I'm afraid they're gone now, but you can go to Mitch Jones the short way and git there before they do."

Tom Maynard knew what manner of men these fellows were; and this appeal from his wife, scarcely necessary, was hardly more than uttered before he was on his

way to Jones' distillery.

Through the dark places he hastened on his mission of peace. Up Dry Gulch, dim lit by the stars he hurried over a ridge, then up again climbing rapidly as only can one who is to the manner borne, he soon had only one other ridge before him to cross, but on reaching the crest he found that revenge is no less swift of foot than mercy. Loud angry words he heard coming from the direction of the sequestered distillery and he recognizing the voice of Bill Adalf he quickened his pace along the steep mountainside. But when within a few paces of the rude building he heard a pistol shot ring out on the night air; another and another followed in quick succession, and just as he entered the door of the dim, torch-lit shanty a shriek, a groan and Mitch Jones lay dying on the floor. Bob Adalf, brandishing a smoking revolver at that instant presented on George Redmon, a confederate of the dying moonshiner, when Tom Maynard quickly sprang between them and wrenched the weapon from the hand of the now half frenzied boy. Hearing approaching footsteps the AdalFs hastily passed out the back door into the mountains and the night.

Maynard, conscious of innocence, stood amazed and appalled in the midst of the wild, bloody scene, as a squad of government officials, already in quest of Mitch the informer, and guided hither by the pistol shots, stepped into the still house and arrested the three remaining men. But in a moment it proved of no avail to apprehend Mitchell Jones. He had been summoned to that high tribunal from which there lies no appeal—and the leaden messenger had been delivered at the hands of Will Adalf—who now, with his brother his accomplice, was fleeing—both to be outcasts and outlaws.

The officers with their two prisoners hastily departed George Redmon, with a bullet in his breast was placed on horseback while Tom Maynard stoutly protesting innocence of any crime, was similarly disposed of—and thus they hurried down the trail out of the range of moonshiner's gins. They rode far down into the settlement and stopped for the night. The coroner having been notified of the homicide on the mountain joined these officers early on the following morning. Redmon's wound was dressed and pronounced dangerous but not necessarily fatal. Summoning his jury the coroner held an inquest over Jones and the verdict was that of murder at the hands of Bill and Bob Adalf and Tom Maynard. While the jury were investigating the case before them Tom Maynard had been taken before a U. S. Commissioner on a charge of violating the internal revenue laws, but was discharged on the evidence of George Redmon, who swore that Maynard had had nothing to do with the "killing," but had come there along with the Adalf boys and entered the still house where the shooting commenced. The moment Maynard was discharged from the custody of the government officials he was arrested by the sheriff who had just come from the scene of the killing where the coroner's jury had rendered its verdict of murder. The prisoner was committed to the old rock jail in Hendersonville to await the action of the grand jury. When that day the story of the tragedy was told at the humble homes of the AdalFs and Maynards the first great sorrow of their simple lives cast its shadow across their paths.

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To be Continued Next Week.

## Clifford Shelton Killed

Clifford Shelton, a man about 65 years of age and having only one leg was killed Sunday afternoon Sept. 6th, by Oscar Shelton a deaf and dumb boy of twenty five years. Clifford Shelton, the deceased before he died made a statement that Oscar Shelton came to his house, and made signs that he had some whiskey hid out in the woods, whereupon Clifford went with Oscar out in the woods, a distance of about one hundred yards from Oscar's home. Oscar took out his pistol and hit Clifford on the head knocking him down, then searched Clifford's pockets taking from them \$63.00 in bills. Oscar then shot Clifford four times and threw him behind a log thinking he was dead. Oscar then fled to Tenn. In something like an hour Pearson Briggs and Charley Summy found Clifford behind this log, and Clifford himself made the statement as set out above.

They then carried Clifford to the White Rock hospital where he died some time during Sunday night, having lived something like twelve hours after he was shot.

Oscar Shelton was followed into Tenn., by Major and Elmer Tweed. They first went to Erwin, not finding him there, they came back near the place of the shooting. Getting some information they left for Limestone Tenn. The Tweed boys hid in front of Chester Cutshall's house, in some weeds, before daylight. Cutshall, an uncle of Oscar Shelton sent his boy out to bring Oscar to breakfast. Oscar came in with some bedding and when he got in the house, Major and Elmer rushed in and arrested him, before he realized they were in the house. Cutshall had nothing to say. Oscar was captured about 8 o'clock Monday morning, brought to Marshall Monday afternoon and placed in jail. Oscar denies the killing of Clifford. The dying declaration of Clifford Shelton at this writing seems to be the only proof in the case, except the fact that Oscar fled from the state and was found bringing his bed in from a hay stack where he had slept the night before. From all accounts this is one of the most heinous murders that has occurred in Madison. Oscar seems to have been a friend of Clifford, having carried him food at different times from his own home. Clifford Shelton lived by himself, and is said to have been a man that did not do any one any harm.

He carried the mail for several years in this section of the country and was to go on the job again soon. Oscar Shelton appears to have a normal mind. He attended the state school in N. C. for the deaf and dumb. Major Tweed took off the prisoner \$71.50, and turned the same over to Clerk of the Court. Oscar and Clifford Shelton lived at Carmen.

## Toll Of Carelessness

Figures recently compiled by the state of Oregon show that 93 per cent of its automobile wrecks are caused by carelessness. Of 9,131 accidents reported from January 1 to June 30, last 5,457 are charged entirely to carelessness. Added to these may be included the following: speeding, 183; failure to give right of way, 1381; reckless driving, 260; cutting corners, 372; double at intersections, 155; driving while

## Resolutions Adopted By The Baptist Church Of Marshall, September 7 1924.

Reviewing the Status of our Church Work in Marshall Baptist Church of one year ago—And with a well established memory, that our financial problems were not being met, our membership was divided in opinion and malice existed in numerous instances among the membership. We were without a pastor, and in fact all of our church duties were being not only neglected, but abused by us all. Attendance was very low, and seventy-five million pledges practically forgotten, in this great dilemma or predicament, we called Bro. P. L. Elliott who accepted our call, and fell into our work so completely, and put forth such vigorous and strenuous efforts, that today our Church is united in one mass or body, seeking under our budget system as directed and put into effect by our Pastor to defray our local expense on time each month. Our membership has increased 25% during the year. Our revival meant much to us all, and in fact every effort put forth by Bro. Elliott has been liberally rewarded. And the effects speak for itself.

In view of the fact that Bro. Elliott is about to sever his relations with us as our pastor, Therefore be it resolved by the Baptist Church of Marshall, N. C.

That: We express to Bro. Elliott and his wife our most sincere appreciation for their untiring efforts, unceasing loyalty, and exalted Christian example set before us during their stay in our midst.

That: We express our congratulations to Bro. Elliott, that the golden door of opportunity has opened for him to pursue his studies further, and commend him for grasping this opportunity.

That: We express regret and sorrow that Bro. Elliott can not labor with us, and to him and his wife and baby we say—you have a lot more yourselves into our lives and love that we are hesitant to give you up.

We pray that your every effort may be crowned with success in all that you undertake to do. May the blessings of heaven ever attend you all is the fervent wish of every member of Baptist Church of Marshall, N. C.

W. A. SAMS  
A. W. WHITEHURST  
J. M. BAILEY  
Committee

at intoxicated, 123; failure to give signal, 290; driving on left side of street or highway, 64; improper parking, 79; reverse direction in middle of block, 40; passing to left of street cars while discharging passengers, 31; inexperience, 24; jockeying on bridges, 21; a total of 8480 accidents which might have been avoided, according to the report of the secretary of state, had the drivers been careful. It is probable that these Oregon figures would be a fair average for other states.

That too many automobile drivers "let the insurance company pay the bill" is responsible for many avoidable accidents. Let drivers remember that no insurance policy has yet been devised which will return the life of a person killed through an automobile driver's carelessness. Safety to life and property rests almost wholly in the hands of the automobile driver.