

Alice of Old Vincennes

By Maurice Thompson

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BEGIN HERE
ALICE, foster daughter of GASPARD ROUSSEILLON, was loved by LIEUT. FITZGROH BEVERLEY, American Army officer, who, with CAPTAIN HELM, surrendered Vincennes to the English general, GOVERNOR HAMILTON, during the Revolutionary War.
Beverley escaped and was captured by Hamilton's Indian scouts.
LONG HAIR, stole Beverley away, telling him he wished to protect him for the sake of Alice who had once saved the Indian's life. He returned her locket to Beverley.
On his way back to the Indian camp he was killed.
LIEUTENANT BARLOW and presented his scalp as that of Beverley to mislead his companions.
In the meantime FATHER BERET and CAPTAIN FARNSWORTH, an Englishman, infatuated with Alice, planned to spare her the punishment Hamilton had intended for her because she assisted Rousseillon to escape.

"H" AS she a comfortable place? Do you think Governor Hamilton would let me visit her?"

"It is horrible!" Farnsworth blurted. "She's penned up as if she were a dangerous beast, the poor girl. And that damned scoundrel!"

"Son, son!"

"Oh, it's no use to try, I can't help it, Father. The whole thing."

"We can converse more safely and intelligently if we avoid profanity, and undue emotion, my son."

"If you will quit swearing, I will, and if you will be calm, so will I."

Farnsworth felt the sly irony of this absurdly vicious proposition. Father Beret smiled with a kindly twinkle in his deep-set eyes.

"Well, if you don't use profane language, Father, there's no telling how much you think in expletives. What is your opinion of a man who tumbles a poor, defenseless girl into prison and then refuses to let her be decently cared for? How do you express yourself about him?"

"My son, men often do things of which they ought to be ashamed. I heard of a young officer once who maltreated a little girl that he met at night in the street. What evil he would have done, had not a passing kind-hearted man reminded him of his honor by a friendly punch in the ribs, I dare not surmise."

"True, and your sarcasm goes home as hard as your fist did, Father. I know that I've been a bad dog all my life. Miss Rousseillon saved you by shooting me, and I love her for it. Lay on, Father, I deserve more than you can give me."

"Surely you do, my son, surely you do; but my love for you will not let me give you pain. Ah, we priests have to carry all men's loads. Our backs are broad, however, very broad, my son."

"And you fists devilish heavy, Father, devilish heavy."

The gentle smile again flickered over the priest's weather-beaten face as he glanced sidewise at Farnsworth and said:

"Sometimes, sometimes, by son, a sharp weapon must break the way for a spiritual one. But we priests rarely have much physical strength; our dependence is upon—"

"To be sure, certainly," Farnsworth interrupted, rubbing his side, "your dependence is upon the first thing that offers. I've had many a blow, but yours was the softest that ever jarred my mortal frame, Father Beret."

The twain began to laugh. There is nothing like a reminiscence to stir up fresh mutual sympathy.

"If your intercostals were somewhat sore for a time, on account of a contact with priestly knuckles, doubtless there soon set in a corresponding uneasiness in the region of your conscience. Such shocks are often vigorously alternative and tonic, eh, my son?"

"You jolted me sober, Father, and then I was ashamed of myself. But where does all your tremendous"

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DULL HEADACHE AND BILIOUSNESS

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Beasley, Va.—Mrs. Jeanette S. Carnal says that she has kept Thedford's Black-Draught liver medicine in her home, here, for more than thirty years, and has given it to members of her family when they needed it. Of her own use of Black-Draught, Mrs. Carnal says:

"I have suffered from constipation. I get in such bad condition sometimes that I do not know what to do. My head aches with a dull kind of an ache, and I get bilious. I have found Black-Draught to be the best relief for this I have ever tried. We have come to depend on it in our family as a family friend."

"Black-Draught is very convenient to take. I take a half spoonful in water as long as I need it and it is the finest regulator for the bowels. I got stopped up and had a full, swollen feeling through my stomach, sometimes I would even faint, they would be so bad."

"Now, when I feel myself getting the least bit constipated, I immediately begin the use of Black-Draught. I have given it to my children and my grandchildren. Everybody here takes it so much, and this is followed by a stomach-ache runs at once for Black-Draught. I am glad to recommend it."

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He did not attempt to overstate the

strength he? You don't look strong."

While speaking Farnsworth leaned near Father Beret and grasped his arm. The young man started, for his fingers, instead of closing around a flabby, shrunken old man's limb, spread themselves upon a huge, knotted mass of iron muscles. With a quick movement Father Beret shook off Farnsworth's hand, and said:

"I am no Sanson, my son. Non sum qualls erum." Then, as if dismissing a light subject for a graver one, he sighed and added: "I suppose there is nothing that can be done for little Alice."

He called the tall, strong girl "little Alice," and so she seemed to him. He could not, without direct effort, think of her as a magnificently maturing woman. She had always been his spoiled pet child, perversely set against the Holy Church, but dear to him nevertheless.

"I came to you to ask that very question, Father," said Farnsworth. "And what do I know? Surely, my son, you are how utterly helpless an old priest is against all you British. And besides—"

"Father Beret," Farnsworth huskily interrupted, "is there a place that you know of any where in which Miss Rousseillon could be hidden, if—"

"My son,"

"Mean what? Pardon an old man's slow understanding. What are you talking about, my son?"

Father Beret glanced furtively about then quickly stepped through the doorway, walked entirely around the house and came in again before Farnsworth could respond. Once more seated on his stool he added interrogatively:

"Did you think you heard something moving outside?"

"No."

"You were saying something when I went out. Pardon my interruption."

Farnsworth gave the priest a searching and not wholly confiding look.

"You did not interrupt me, Father Beret. I was not speaking. Why are you so watchful? Are you afraid of eavesdroppers?"

"I mean, can you hide Madeleine Rousseillon in some safe place, if I take her out of the prison yonder? That's just what I mean. Can you do it?"

"Your question is a remarkable one. Have you thought upon it from all directions, my son? Think of your position: your duty as an officer."

A shrewd polemical expression beamed from Father Beret's eyes, and a very expert physiognomist might have suspected duplicity from certain lines about the old man's mouth.

"I simply know that I cannot stand by and see Alice—Madeleine Rousseillon—forced to suffer treatment too beastly for an Indian thief. That's the only direction there is for me to look at it from, and you can understand my feelings, if you will; you know that very well, Father Beret. When a man loves a girl, he loves her; that's the whole thing."

The quiet, inscrutable half-smile flickered once more on Father Beret's face; but he sat silent some time with a sneaky forefinger lying alongside his nose. When at last he spoke it was in a tone of voice indicative of small interest in what he was saying. His words rambled to their goal with the effect of happy accident.

"There are places in this neighborhood in which a human being would be as hard to find as the flag that you and Governor Hamilton have so diligently and unsuccessfully been in quest of for the past month or two. Really, my son, this is a mysterious little town."

Farnsworth's eyes widened and a flush rose in his swarthy cheeks.

"Damn the flag!" he exclaimed. "Let it lie hidden forever; what do I care? I tell you, Father Beret, that Alice Rousseillon is in extreme danger. Governor Hamilton means to put some terrible punishment on her. He has a devil's vindictiveness. He showed it to me clearly awhile ago."

"You showed something of the same sort to me, once upon a time, my son."

"Yes, I did, Father Beret, and I got loads of slugs in my shoulder for it from that brave girl's pistol. She saved my life. Now I ask you to help me save hers; or, if not her life, what is infinitely more, her honor."

"Her honor!" cried Father Beret, leaping to his feet so suddenly and with such energy that the cabin shook from base to roof. "What do you say, Captain Farnsworth? What do you mean?"

The old man was transformed. His face was terrible to see, with its narrow, burning eyes deep under the shaggy brows, its dark veins writhing snakelike on the temples and forehead, the projected mouth and chin, the hard lines of the jaws, the iron-gray gleam from all the features—he looked like an aged tiger stiffened for a spring.

Farnsworth was made of right soldierly stuff; but he felt a distinct shiver flit along his back. His past life had not lacked thrilling adventures and strangely varied experiences with desperate men. Unusually met sudden emergencies rather calmly, sometimes with phlegmatic indifference. This passionate outburst on the priest's part, however, surprised him and awed him, while it stirred his heart with a profound sympathy unlike anything he had ever felt before.

Father Beret mastered himself in a moment, and passing his hand over his face, as if to brush away the excitement, sat down again on his stool. He appeared to collapse inwardly.

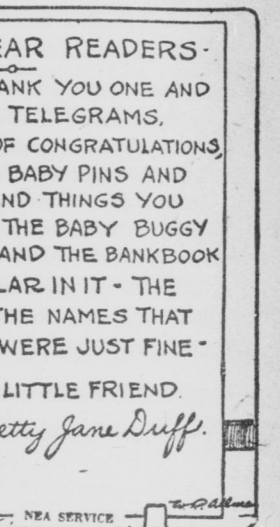
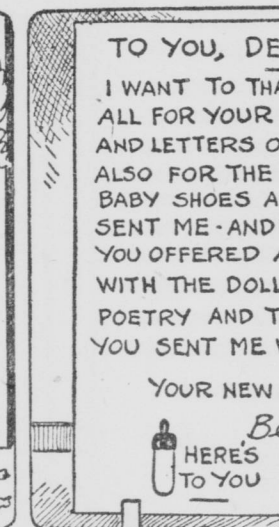
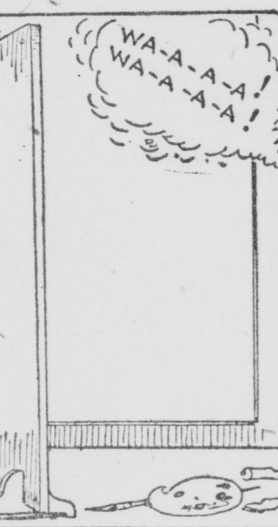
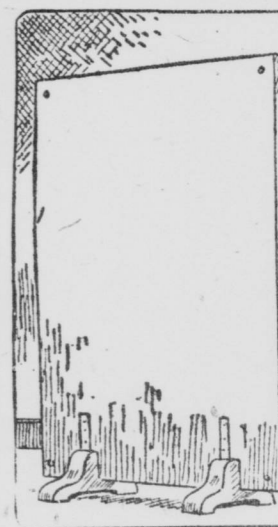
"You must excuse the weakness of an old man, my son," he said, in a voice hoarse and shaking. "But tell me what is going to be done with Alice. You word—that you said—I did not understand."

He rubbed his forehead slowly, as one who has difficulty in trying to collect his thoughts.

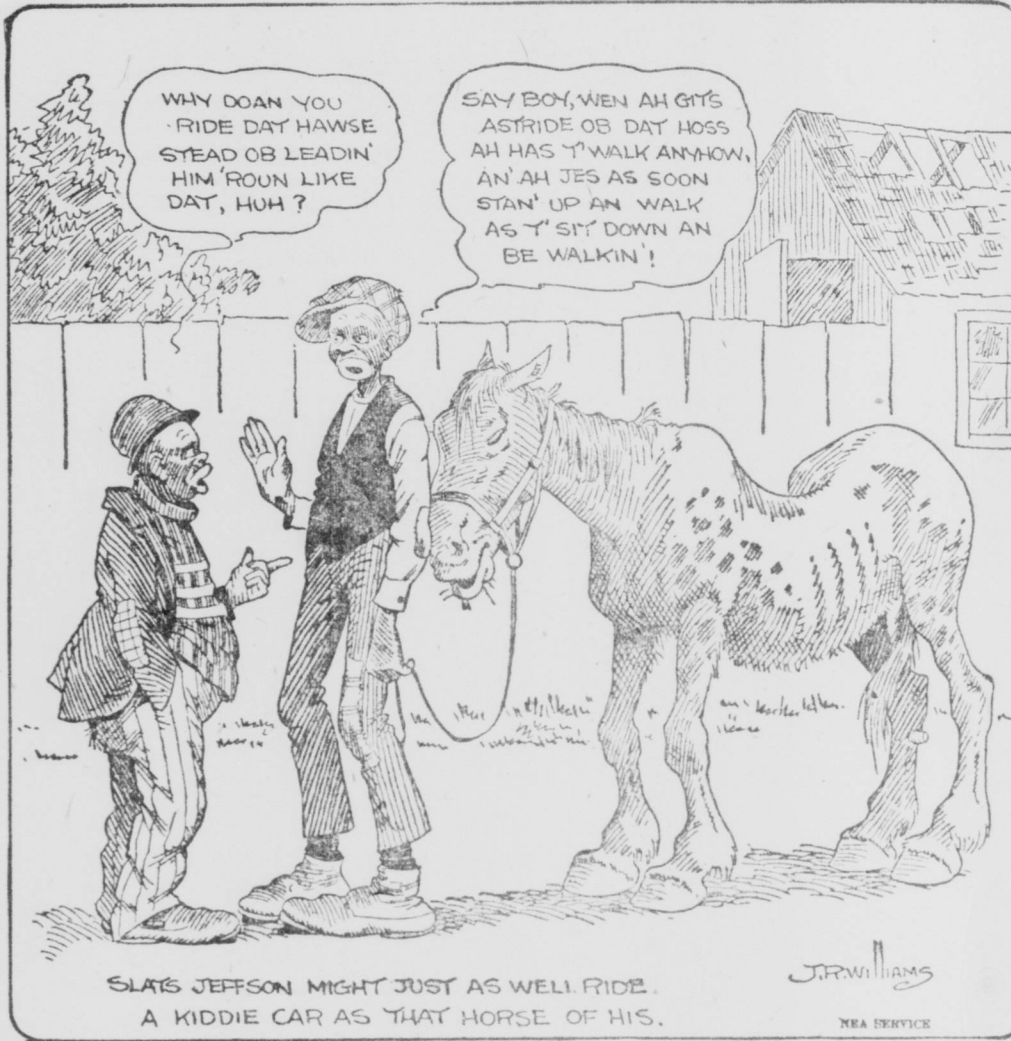
"I do not know what Governor Hamilton means to do, Father Beret. It will be something devilish, however—something that must not happen," said Farnsworth.

Then he recounted all that Hamilton had done and said. He described the dreary and comfortless room in which Alice was confined, the miserable fare given her, and how she would be exposed to the leers and low remarks of the soldiers. She had already suffered these things, and now that she could no longer have any protection, what was to become of her? He did not attempt to overstate the

DOINGS OF THE DUFFS—



OUT OUR WAY—By WILLIAMS



THEM DAYS IS GONE FOREVER—

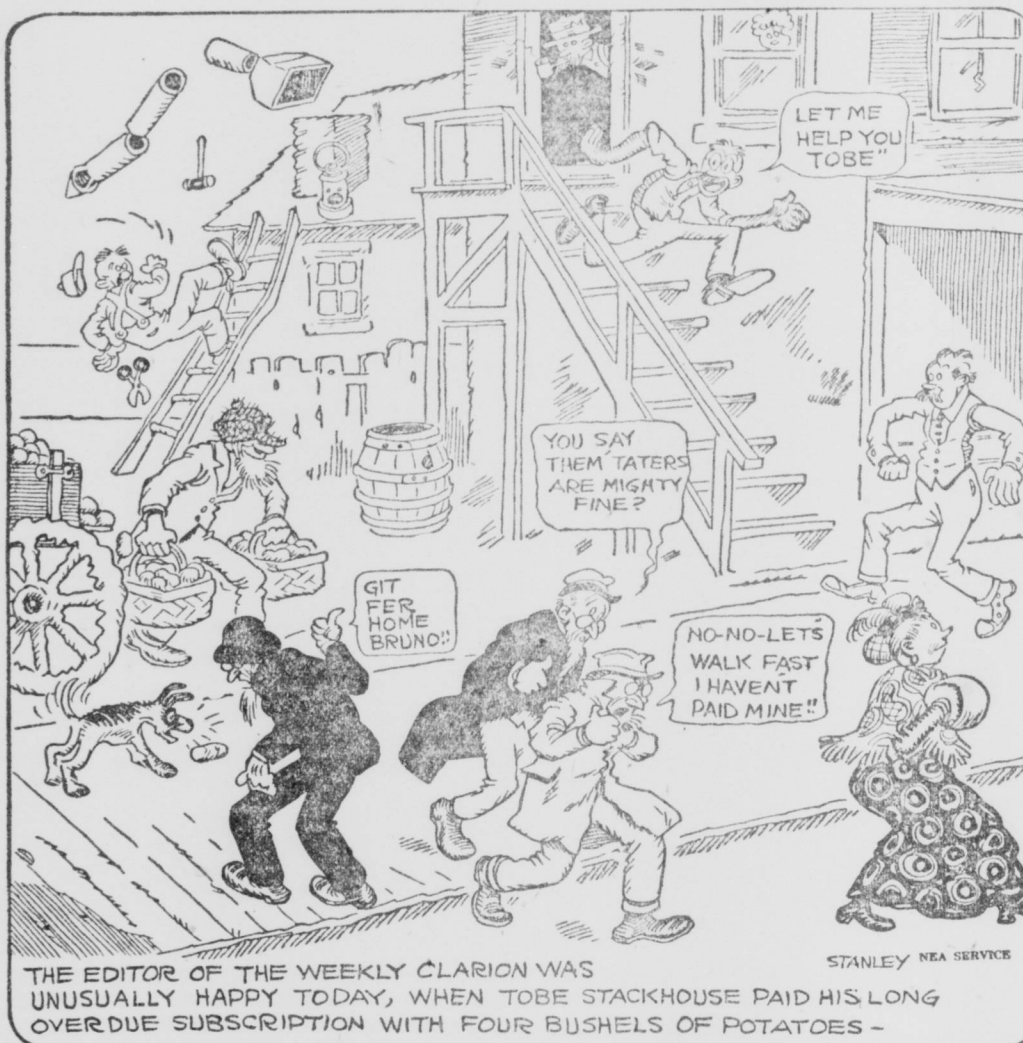
"Just A Coupla Thousand Bucks And You"

—By AL POSEN



THE OLD HOME TOWN—By STANLEY

OUR BOARDING HOUSE—By AHERN



THE EDITOR OF THE WEEKLY CLARION WAS UNUSUALLY HAPPY TODAY, WHEN TOBE STACKHOUSE PAID HIS LONG OVERDUE SUBSCRIPTION WITH FOUR BUSHELS OF POTATOES—



M199 CHURCH SOLVES THE EASTER HAT PROBLEM

cuse, but presented it with a blunt sincerity, which made a powerfully realistic impression.

Father Beret, like most men of strong feeling who have been subjected to long years of trial, hardship, multitudinous dangers and all sorts of temptation, and who have learned the lessons of self-control, had an iron will, and also an abiding distrust of weak men. He saw Farnsworth's sincerity; but he had no faith in his constancy, although satisfied that while resent-

ment of Hamilton's imperiousness lasted, he would doubtless remain firm in his purpose to aid Alice. Let that wear off, as in a short time it would, and then what? The old man studied his companion with eyes that slowly resumed their expression of smoldering and almost timid gentility. His priestly experience with desperate men was demanding of him a proper regard for that subtlety of procedure which had so often compassed most difficult ends.

He listened in silence to Farnsworth's story. When it came to an end he began to offer some but half relevant suggestions in the form of indirect cross-questions, by means of which he gradually drew out a minute description of Alice's prison, the best way to reach it, the nature of its doorfastenings, where the key was kept, and everything, indeed, likely to be helpful to one contemplating a jail delivery. Farnsworth was inwardly delighted. He felt Father Beret's

cunning approach to the central object and his crafty method of gathering details.

The shades of evening thickened in the stuffy cabin room while the conversation went on. Father Beret presently lifted a punchbowl in one corner of the floor and got out a large bottle, which bore a mottored and faded French label, and with it a small iron cup. There was just light enough left to show a brownish sparkle when,

after popping out the cork, he poured a draught in the fresh cup and in his own.

"We may think more clearly, my son, if we taste this old liquor. I have kept it a long while to offer upon a proper occasion. The occasion is here."

A ravishing bouquet quickly imbued the air. It was itself an intoxication. "The Brothers of St. Martin distilled this liquor," Father Beret added, handing the cup to Farnsworth,

"not for common social drinking, my son, but for times when a man needs extraordinary stimulation. It is said to be surpassingly good, because St. Martin blessed the vine."

(To Be Continued.)

Wall-paintings which have been hidden under whitewash for 600 years are now being restored at Paston Church, Norfolk, England.

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