

### Exit Tony Blount

by Sydney Parkman

#### CHAPTER VIII "YOU WERE SPEAKING FRENCH"

"Not more than ten minutes," the doctor cautioned. "He is very weak, so you must not expect him to talk much. And above all, do not agitate him in any way."

The captain, with one foot on the top step of the companion ladder, nodded confidently.

"Good-oh," he said, "I won't tire him. I dare say he wants cheering up a bit, so I'll hand him a line of bright chat to start with, and then slip the questions in gradual like. You leave it to me, doc."

He descended the ladder, and turning aft at its foot, tiptoed clumsily towards the open doorway of the starboard cabin.

The door had been hooked back inside to allow such limited ventilation as was possible, and as he paused on the threshold of the diminutive compartment, he saw that the man in the bunk was lying back with his eyes closed.

The captain stood for some seconds gazing disapprovingly at the lean bearded face on the pillow. This had been his first chance of having a talk with the castaway—and now the man had gone to sleep again! As though he hadn't had enough sleep in the last two days!

He glanced over his shoulder to see if the doctor had followed him down the ladder and finding that he had not, was about to try the effect of a discreet cough on the sleeper, when he saw that the man's eyes had opened and he was regarding his visitor with languid interest.

"The captain stepped right into the cabin at that and nodded brightly.

"Mornin', mister," he greeted him. "My name's 'Barker,' an' I'm the master of this scent-packet. You ain't seen me before, I guess, but I've been in and out o' here a good few times in the last couple o' days. Well, how's it comin'?"

The man essayed a faint smile. "Not too badly," he said in a weak voice.

The captain lounged against the foot of the bunk and surveyed him critically.

"That's the stuff," he remarked. "But you're feelin' pretty well up, ain't you? Not the bright lad you was, eh?"

"I'm a bit weak," the man admitted.

The captain nodded profoundly. "I'll bet you are!" he said. "You look it, if it comes to that. But you're a king to what you was when we picked you up. You ought to ha' seen yourself then. I don't mind tellin' you I started wonderin' what I was going to use to sew you up in. There's an old fore-tops'le that would ha' done, but it's still got plenty o' wear in it for fine weather an' I didn't fancy havin' to cut it up. I'm glad I didn't now, but I never thought you'd make the grade. O' course, you ain't out o' danger yet. You might go an' have a relapse or somethin'. But anyway, I'm leavin' that old canvas down in the locker till I'm sure I'm goin' to want it. It's no good lookin' ahead too far."

"I hope I'm not going to need it now," the other suggested.

"No; maybe not," the captain agreed judiciously. "Here's hopin', anyway. As a matter of fact the doc's feelin' good an' hopeful about you now—an' he ain't no fool even if he is a frog-eater."

"He's a frog-eater?" the man repeated in double surprise.

"French," the captain explained. "He's one o' these here scientific bugs that goes around measurin' people's heads an' that. He's a guest of the French Gov'ment down at Noumea, an' he's taking a jaunt up to Fiji to see what the niggers' heads is like up there. But he's a proper doctor as well, so... Why, what's up? Got a pain or somethin'?"

The sick man had partly raised his head and was gazing at him with an odd scared look in his grey eyes.

"What is it?" the captain repeated, staring at him in some alarm. "Ain't you feelin' so good? Shall I call him down?"

The other slowly relaxed on to the pillow again and slightly shook his head.

"It's nothing," he muttered.

"But—this doctor, you say he comes from Noumea?"

"That's right," the captain affirmed. "Why? Do you know any-one there?"

"No," the man returned faintly. "No one. I—I've never been there."

"Oh, I thought maybe you did," the captain remarked. "He said you was jabberin' French when you was off your head, an' seen you're on Gov'ment service... Anyway, as I was sayin', he ain't no fool. It was him that found out who you was. O' course, I knew you was one o' the Mau-wall's crowd as soon as I see the name of the whaleboat, but it was him that opened up that pack- as an' found out you was the new Resident for Aratul. I couldn't make top nor tail of it meself. All that legal lingo reads like Dutch to me. By these presents and 'our well-beloved Richard Matthew Thurlow! I reckon it sounds dippy! But he sorted it out an' put it into plain English, an' then I tumbled to it that you was the feller that was takin' on old Porson's job."

To be continued

### Strange But True

By F. H. MacArthur

The pig was a most important animal in pioneer days in Prince Edward Island. Indeed, it was the poor man's friend and the farmers depended on it for most of their meat.

In those days the porker roamed at will, finding his food among the lush meadows and slacking his thirst at brooks and ponds. Come fall, he fattened himself on beech nuts. Only the choicest parts went into the family pork barrel, or hung in bacon from the beams of the kitchen or perhaps in some attic room.

Nowadays most people are forced to eat slaughter house pork—a poor substitute for the product put up by our forefathers—and about the only part of a pig that isn't used today is the squeal.

That elephantine has big children may be observed by a recent report from the Moscow zoo of the birth to Mamma and Papa Elephant of a son who is 41 inches tall and weighs 200 pounds.

It takes 7000 gallons of water to grow one bushel of corn.

The prong-horned antelope is the only animal known to shed its horn. It sheds only the outer shell.

Seeds from conifers range from a thousand up to nearly 1/2 million to the pound. White pine seeds average 27,000 pounds, red pine, 52,000. Atlantic white cedar 460,000, while the sorry pine has only 500 seeds to the pound.

Nests are made by mammals, fishes, and other kinds of wildlife as well as by birds.

Federal pensions still are being paid to 7735 widows of Civil War veterans by the Veteran's Administration. But there are only three former soldiers of the Union Army left to draw pensions—a case of longevity among the women.

A multi-purpose radio-television phonograph has been produced by a manufacturer with the assertion that it is the tiniest such combination ever designed. It is 3 1/2" high and 3 1/2" wide. It has a radio 17" TV receiver, a three speed phonograph, and an electric clock all rolled into one gadget.

Did you know that such flowers as the Lady Viking, the Viking Lily, and the Flame of the North all give forth profuse blossoms in the dead of winter? These strange and beautiful flower children of the winter require no gardening skill, no work, no care. You simply drop them a few inches below the surface of the earth and when the snows of winter lie white upon your lawn you'll see your garden ablaze with color!

Seven eels completely tied up

### Two \$9,000 Holstein Bulls



These two bulls each sold for \$9,000, highest price for a Holstein in Canada since the fall of 1931. Rookwood Rag Apple Revelation (left) was purchased by Martin Buenos Bros., Alres and Houkholme Re-Boho Champion (right) by W. F. Young, Terraco Farm, Titusville, N. Y. Both were sold in the sale of the herd of S. B. Roman, Kink, Ont. which brought an average of \$784, highest dispersal sale average in Canada since 1930. Spectators at the sale were Libby Gardon (left) and Joan Haughian, Toronto.

Revelation is a brother of both Grand Champions at the Royal last fall while Champion is a son of the Canadian Champion yearly milk producer.

the water-wheel of the old grist mill at Cornwall, when it was operated by Duncan Hyde.

Before the mill could be got rolling again, Mr. Hyde had to descend into the wooden cylinder (hatchet in hand) and cut the water snakes from the wheel.

This incident occurred when I was a small lad fishing in the mill pond, and I recall handing the hatchet to Hyde when he went down to investigate why the wheel had stopped turning.

Speaking of eels or water snakes, reminds me of the time my cousin Robert Jewell and I decided to de-snake an old well on the back of our farm, near the property now owned by Earl Carrier. The well had not been in use for many years. Indeed, it was partly filled up with pieces of wood and other odds and ends. So, armed with a long ladder, block and tackle, and buckets, etc., we set out to clean the old well of its debris.

When the ladder had been put into position, the question arose as to which one of us would go down first and tie the loose debris to the lift chain.

Robert was the first to descend but he was up before you could say Jack Robinson, his face bearing a very frightened look.

"That damn well is alive with snakes," he said. "The moment I planted my feet against the stones to get a hold while I placed the chain around those sticks, the critters came at me from all directions, hissing and darting their tongues in a menacing manner."

The whole thing struck me so funny that I laid aside the started

I was holding and laughed like one who had just read a prize joke.

Perhaps my laughter had something to do with Jewell's refusal to go down again. I rather think it was his terror of the snakes—but that ended his part in the expedition. I was left to do the job alone or leave it to future generations.

Recalling how Hyde had disposed of the eels in the old water wheel, I, too, armed myself with a shingling hatchet and went below.

That old well appeared to be a place of snakes unlimited. Standing on the bottom rung of the ladder I dispatched every last one of them that ventured too near.

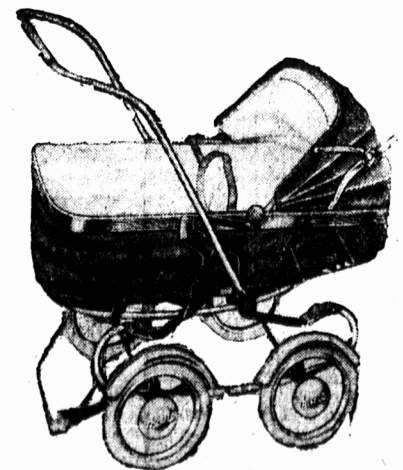
The following day, assisted by a neighbor, the last pieces of debris was taken to the surface. Then we scooped about a foot of sand from the well's bottom and the spring came into production again.

When the pieces of snakes were assembled we counted 16 dead creepers.

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