

### The Free Press Short Story

## THE RIVER ROAD

CHARLOTTE E. WILDER

"DING canoeing?" called Marion from her comfortable seat on the porch of the cottage.

"Yes, there's room for two, you know," was her sister's answer, as she unlocked the door of the little shed and began pulling the canoe down the path to the river.

"Thanks, but I'm expecting John and Edna Stafford this afternoon. I think I'll not budge."

"Who are they?"

"You remember. Those new people over at the Forks. I don't know how they're going to get here, because mother says the roads are in an awful state, but I can't risk missing them."

"Of course not," said Evelyn, picking her paddle discriminatingly from a number that lay on the shelf, and throwing an extra cushion in for good measure. "I want to meet them myself. I have to do a little errand up in the village, and then I'll hurry back."

"Well, for goodness' sake, be careful. The river's pretty swollen from the storm. You'll have to look out for the current near Burnham's bridge—sometimes it carries you right into the supports."

"My dear sister," said Evelyn haughtily, "kindly remember that I was learning to canoe when you were learning to walk. However, thank you humbly for the hint."

She waved her handkerchief airily, knelt in the stern of the canoe and drew away from the pier with long graceful sweeps of the paddle. Up the green water she slid, peeping close under the trees, where long dark shadows lay and where clouds of summer insects swarmed and dipped over the surface.

The current was strong—there was no mistake about that. Robust as she was, and accustomed to sports, Evelyn felt her arms ache with the force she had to put into each long, slow stroke. Up and up the canoe thrust its nose, until Burnham's Bridge came in sight. The river narrowed above the bridge—it was really only a tumultuous stream there; the trees seemed to put out long leafy arms trying to touch across it. Evelyn could see the water bubbling and boiling in white foam around the two strong cement pillars that held the sturdy little bridge.

"It was a regular storm, all right," she muttered and pulled her boat with difficulty through the calmer of the two passages under the bridge. With a deft push and thrust she swung her head round, so that it lay across the broad pillar, and for a moment rested there, breathing hard. When she was ready she would slide across to the nearest bank and pull her canoe up the sloping ground before she ran across the fields to the village store.

As she waited, her eyes shut, she heard a faint, far call—some one hallooing from up stream. She looked and saw a bobbing something—brown with a touch of fluttering white—floating far up the stream.

"Some silly picnickers, trying to rock the boat," she thought with quick annoyance; in the next look she saw that it was their hands they were waving and that their canoe was drifting on, without a paddle, at the mercy of the current. It came, borne like a leaf; it might capsize, though the water was not choppy, but smooth and swift. It would doubtless crash against the bridge and throw the occupants into the deep swirling flood.

Evelyn leaned forward against one of the thwart, faint at the thought of what might happen. Plans of rescue flashed through her brain, all hazardous and none carrying with it the faintest chance of success.

Suddenly her eye was caught by something on the bank a little way up the stream. A white birch, one of a clump; thrust its curved slim trunk over the water; its white latticed bark fluttered as if to gain her attention. She measured the distance quickly with her eye. It was worth trying; anything was worth trying in such a moment.

Again she forced the head of the canoe up the stream, elevating the thick, stubborn water with all her might. The prow swung to the side with every stroke; she turned it back persistently, and by slow inches crawled forward and sidewise until the boat touched the shore. Her arm shot up and round the white trunk, and crouching her elbow, she hugged it to her side. The canoe swung round and tugged at her, trying to escape, but her knees gripped it firmly. The other canoe was almost upon them, and many yards below waited the bridge with its two narrow openings.

Evelyn stretched her other arm, as far as she could, holding the paddle by the very tip. Surely the strangers' canoe would swing near enough for one of them to seize it. But there was a twist in the current; the canoe drifted outward and left a tiny breadth of space between the paddle and the finger tips of the girl who was reaching as far as she dared.

Before the length of the canoe could pass out of range, Evelyn measured the distance to the boy in the stern and, leaning far over, loosed her hold on the tree as she tossed the paddle to him. She saw his fingers close round the

handle; then her canoe rolled over, but they had had a nerve-testing moment guiding the canoe through the arch. "Wh-ew," she whistled and set down to make an inventory of her bruised person.

Another shout brought her to attention. "Does somebody else need rescuing?" she thought with humorous despair. Then she realized that her new friends on the other side of the bridge were trying to turn round and come up to the shore on the lower side of it.

She sprang up the bank, stepped on to the bridge and, leaning over and making a megaphone of her hands, called, "Don't come back. I'm going to run home to warm up. Do you know where Wilson's pier is?"

"Yes, we do."

"You can leave the paddle there when you are through with it."

"All right, and thanks awfully."

"It wasn't anything," she replied. "Good-bye."

Fifteen minutes later Evelyn might have been seen creeping through a hole in the hedge at the back of the house, if there had been anyone to look. Sixteen minutes later, sneaking in through the back door, she fell over a large-sized mop, and the large-sized clatter was answered by her sister's voice.

"Oh, so you're back, are you?" she called. "Mother's just gone down the walk to meet the Staffords. Come on with me; they'll want to see you." She had followed her voice and now stood astonished in the kitchen door. "Well, what is it?"

But Evelyn was not listening. She stood transfixed, staring over Marion's shoulder at a boy and girl who stood in the hall staring at her.

"How do you do?" she stammered.

"Very well, thanks to you," said the boy, smiling, but his eyes were serious.

"I didn't know you knew each other," said Marion in amazement.

Evelyn plucked at her skirt, which was trailing drops over the floor. She smiled mysteriously and said, "We met this afternoon—by accident—on the river road."

### FUR FARMING IN CANADA

The importance of fur farming in Canada is indicated by a report on that subject which has just been issued by the Canadian Government. From the earliest days Canada has been an important source of furs; the early history of the country is closely linked with the history of the fur trade. The raising of wild animals in captivity for their furs is, however, of comparatively recent origin. The earliest authentic record of the successful breeding of the fox in captivity was in Prince Edward Island in 1878. After 1890 came a period of rising prices for furs and the fur farming industry grew rapidly in Prince Edward Island, and the industry spread also to other provinces. Interest also developed in the raising of other kinds of animals for their fur.

The latest statistics show that there are 5,221 fox farms in Canada, on which are a total of 99,109 foxes, of which 72,703 are silver foxes. Fox farming is now carried on in all provinces of the Dominion and the number of farms has steadily increased. Other varieties of animals which are being successfully raised include mink, raccoon, skunk, marten, fisher, and coyote. There are now 643 mink farms. This animal is easily domesticated and thrives in captivity if proper care is taken. Numerous areas of marsh land are now being used for the raising of muskrats. The value of pelts sold from the fur farms in Canada during 1932 amounted to over three million dollars.

### PERFECT UNDERSTANDING

Counsel for the defendant in a criminal case had made an eloquent speech, bringing tears to the eyes of many in the court, but the jury, composed of hard-headed men on whose ears oratory and sentiment fall like snowflakes on a warm chimney, were unmoved.

Counsel for the prosecution, rising in reply took their measure at a glance. "Gentlemen," he said, "let it be understood to begin with, that I am not boring for water."

### RIDDLES

What is the difference between an engineer and a schoolmaster?

One trains the mind, and the other minds the train.

Which is the highest building in the town?

The library, because it has the most stories. (Story books.)

### Letters to the Editor

The Free Press welcomes letters to this column on matters of general interest to its readers, but does not necessarily endorse the opinion expressed. All letters must be signed, but may be published over a pen name if so desired and specified in the letter. Communications should not be over 500 words in length and must be received not later than Tuesday at noon to ensure publication in that week's issue.

Dear Free Press:

This week's issue (May 31) has several items of special interest.

There is the notice of the death of my old-time friend of fifty years ago, Mr. Joel Leslie, of Erin. For three years, 1882-85, I was in his employ, covering the time of getting out the material for, and the raising, and occupancy of the big new barn. The windfall of timber in the west fifty—recorded in your fifty year items—provided much of the timber required.

There is a special pathetic side to this bereavement from the fact of my getting the news in the paper about one day later than the telegram announcing the death of my brother in Hespeler who was the last two years of my Leslie service an additional helper there, and who for years worked beside me, in the nineties, in Beardmoore in Acton.

There is also in the fifty-years items reference to the visit of Rev. T. A. Moore, of Salford. I remember the time. He spent the Sunday among old scenes, previous to Conference in Guelph, where he was ordained the following Sunday, June 8. The first I ever heard him give an address was June 2nd, in the Lord's Army, in the Congregational Church, on the Monday night before Conference. The reception of himself and thirteen others was held on the Friday night, and many of these attended Presidency of Conference in years to follow. And when this issue of the paper reached my hand I had just come in from a session of the Montreal Conference as a visitor, at which he, now as Moderator of the great United Church, gave a powerful, impressive message of about an hour. But, time in its onward march of fifty years, has turned the red-haired young man of 1884 into the white-haired veteran of 1934. It has, of course, left some marks on the deportment.

Another matter of interest is the Pioneer Cemetery claim of the "opening" of which The Free Press will, of course, give full particulars. This worthy project has long been a care to several descendants of old-timers and while this writer years ago hinted at some such steps, years of absence and distance prevented any active participation in what contained, however, no special personal interest. And so, the world marches on!

It will be of interest to many Free Press readers that the retiring President of this Montreal Conference is Prof. M. A. Gifford of the Theological College, who gave the official address Thursday night and was to preach the official sermon Sunday morning. Being a son of a onetime Acton pastor, he will be remembered by many.

J. S. COLEMAN

4057 Wilson Avenue, Montreal, June 2nd, 1934

### THE SOWING OF GRASS SEED

There are a number of factors which contribute to the success or failure in seeding down to grass and clover. Chief among these are the quality of the seed, the condition of the soil, and the time and method of seeding.

When securing the seed, it always pays to select the best grade. By so doing the purity and germinating capacity of the seeds can now be taken more or less for granted, thanks to our inspection system and the integrity of the seedmen.

The importance of adequate preparation of the seed bed cannot be too strongly emphasized. Grass and clover seeds are very small and unless a finer pulverized surface is prepared, a considerable proportion of the germinating seed cannot make a satisfactory contact with the soil. The cost of seed can be cut down very material by careful soil preparation, since less seed is required. The best way to insure a good stand of grass and avoid a patchy crop is to seed on firm, well cultivated land. Firm soil and shallow seeding are very necessary. If the soil is loose it should be packed.

The advantage of early seeding should not be overlooked. Results in the Dominion Experimental Farm at Ottawa invariably have been better when small seeds have been sown in May, and the earlier in May the better. This permits the small seedlings to become established before the hot weather. What winter the late fall last year, which hindered fall ploughing, and the promise of a late spring the seeding of timothy and clover is likely to be seriously delayed. Every effort should be made, however, to seed down as early as possible so as to insure a good stand. This is the more important because of the depleted stocks of seed.

### MISTAKEN

Old Lady (to druggist): "I want a box of canine pills."

Druggist: "What's the matter with the dog?"

Old Lady (indignantly): "I want you to know, sir, that my husband is perfect gentleman."

The druggist put up some canine pills in profound silence.

### THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

FOR SUNDAY, JUNE 17th

#### THE RISEN LORD AND THE GREAT COMMISSION

Golden Text.—Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.—Matt. 28: 19, 20.

Lesson Text.—Matt. 28: 1-20. (Verses printed, 1-10, 16-20.) Study, also, Matt. 27: 51-56; Mark 16: 1-18; Luke 24: 56-24: 12; John 20: 1-18; Phil. 3: 8-11; 1 Peter 1: 9-5; Ps. 116: 1-9.

Places.—April and May, A. D. 33. Places.—Jerusalem and Galilee.

Exposition.—I. The Angel of the Lord, then Jesus Himself, Appears Unto the Women, 1, 10.

The love of the women for their Lord whom they fancied dead, brought the two Marys early to the sepulchre, to perform for Him the last service that lay in their power (Mark 16: 1, 2; John 20: 1). Part of their faith was gone, but all their love remained. Jesus did not need anointing, and this they ought to have known (Matt. 16: 21; 20: 19). But their service, though mistaken, was acceptable to Jesus, and He rewarded it by a revelation of the blessed truth by angelic messengers. It is only in Matthew's account of the resurrection that mention is made of the great earthquake, and an angel of the Lord rolling away the stone. He did not roll away the stone for the women to get out, but for the women to go in. The keepers were smitten with terror, and well they might be. The women, too, were frightened, but there was no need of that, and for them the angel uttered God's constant message to His saints, "Fear not." They had gone to find a crucified friend, they found, instead, a risen Saviour. The women might naturally have wished to linger about the sepulchre where their Lord's body had recently rested and where so great a wonder had recently been enacted, but the commission comes: "Go QUICKLY and tell His disciples."

The women obeyed, promptly and heartily. There was a great mingling of fear and great joy in the hearts of the women: great joy because the Saviour had risen; fear, because they had been brought face to face with the supernatural. As they went to tell the glad news to the disciples, Jesus met them; before they had the angelic messenger, now they had Jesus, Himself. Any one who really meets Him, with an eye clear enough to see who He really IS, will worship Him. Again Jesus tells the women to tell the brethren to go into Galilee, and there meet Him. Even in His resurrection glory, He still speaks of "My brethren."

#### II. The Terms of the Great Commission, 11, 19.

Jesus not only bids His disciples to go into Galilee, but appoints a definite meeting-place upon a mountain (cf. vs. 7, 10; 26: 32). Far away from the crowds of men and the din of earthly traffic they meet Him. Before commissioning them Jesus discloses to them the authority that is back of the commission, that they are about to receive. This authority is over "all flesh," over all persons and all things in heaven and earth and hell (John 17: 21; Eph. 1: 21, 22; 1 Peter 3: 22; Phil. 2: 10). They were to go "into all the world" (Mark 16: 15). Many Christians interpret "all the world" very narrowly. Every one of us should go to the ends of the earth, either by our persons, or gifts, or prayers, or all three together. Many missionaries seem to think that the Great Commission is to educate and civilize and refine. The command given by Jesus DOES NOT SO READ. The disciples were commissioned by Jesus Christ to make disciples through the preached Gospel. Having become disciples they were to be called upon to make an outward profession of their discipleship in baptism (cf. Acts 2: 38; 16: 33; 18: 25-26; 19: 3-5; Mark 16: 16). This baptism was to be made "in (into) the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." To be truly baptized into a person is to put on that person (Gal. 3: 27). The disciple of Jesus who is really baptized into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost has put on the three Persons of the Trinity. It is more than merely doubtful that these words were given, as a baptismal formula; rather do they express the fulness of the fellowship into which we enter by the Christian baptism (cf. Acts 2: 38; 19: 5). The equal deity of the Son and the Spirit, however, are clearly brought out by the way in which their names are coupled to that of the Father. And the disciple was to be taught not only to understand and believe, but to observe or keep the commandments of Jesus, and they were to keep "all" things whatsoever Jesus had commanded.

#### III. "Always With Us," 20.

The men to whom Jesus gave the Great Commission were obscure men; the commission was tremendous, but Jesus gave them an all-sufficient promise: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world (the age)." The solemn and glorious command of vs. 19, 20 is binding upon us, and the glorious promise is ours, too, if we meet the condition. We are to go HIS way, then He goes OURS. When we go out with Him in glorious, personal, strengthening companionship. And for how long? Until the end of the age. And He will

### SLATS DIARY

BY ROSS PARQUEAR

Friday—Alec Bunn got Soar at his wife yesterday and he told her she better be Care full or he might up and leave her. and when he was a telling pa about it pa sed. What did yore wife say to that, and Alec replied and answered that all she sed was she wanted to know How Much.

Saturday—pa went to a speshulist today but after a very very care full Examination he sed pa did not have nothing wrong with him. Pa says he thinks the speshulist mebbly discovered that the oney thing witch was wrong with him was that he was poor.

Sunday — Mrs. MacDugan has grew much thinner in the passed 4 months on acct. of losing so much weight. She wanted to by a course in Reducing but her husband sed he cudent afford it so he spent his time thinking up ways to wirry her and finly she got slim wirrying about not having money to by the course in Reducing.

Monday—Fannie Eck was here at are house this evening and told ma and Ant Emmy she wood love to get a divorce if it was possible and ma sed. Why Fannie I didnt no you had a husband even. and Fanny replied and sed. Yes that was a nuther thing that wirryed her to.

Tuesday—I wood went to the party tonite over to Eliss house oney she told me I wood "haif to set on James ris hand and I backed out becuz I new them doing chais" was discomband enuff with out that.

Wednesday—Ant Emmy says its kind a nice that Gentlemen Prefer Blondes oney it wood be better if they dident go and marry Brunetts ist.

Thursday—Eke Hib had his pocket picked of 3 \$ and seventy cents as they cum out of the movie theater last nite. He sed he felt the hand in his pocket but he just tho that it was his wife witch was to emphashunt to wait till she got home.

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### BIGGER AND BETTER

"Oh, yes, we have a wonderful climate," said the man from southern Texas. "Why, only last season we raised a pumpkin so large that, after sawing it in two, my wife used the halves as cradles in which to rock the babies."

"Yes," replied the man from New York; "but in my State it is a common thing to find three full-grown police asleep on one beat."

be with us "always," or "all the days." Not a day without Him. Jesus, all the way! In the Old Testament it is Jehovah who is ever with His people (Is. 41: 10, 13, 14); in the New Testament it is Jesus; that is, Jesus occupies in New Testament thought that which Jehovah does in Old Testament thought. He is divine. All believing Christians should lay hold on this precious truth and keep it well and ever in mind. Christ is with us "always." He was declared to be "Emmanuel"—"God with us"—when He first came into the world; He declared Himself to be "Emmanuel" when He came to the end of His earthly ministry, and was about to leave the world; He is STILL "Emmanuel"—with us daily—to pardon and forgive, to sanctify and strengthen, to defend and keep to lead and guide. He is with us in sorrow, He is with us in joy; He is with us in sickness, He is with us in health. He is with us in life, He is with us in death.

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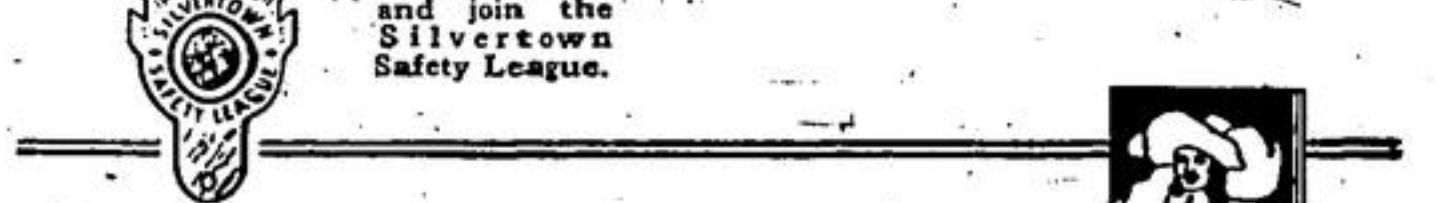
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