
CADDIE WOODLAWN

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1 Three Adventurers

In 1864 Caddie Woodlawn was eleven, and as wild a little tomboy as ever ran the woods of western despair of her mother and of her elder sister, Clara. But her father watched her with a little shine of joy. Her brothers accepted her as one of themselves without a question. Indeed, Tom, who was two years old two years younger than Caddie, needed Caddie to link them together into an inseparable trio. Together they had more scrapes and adventures than any one of them could have imagined alone. And in those pioneer days there were plenty of opportunities for adventure to three wide-eyed, red-headed youngsters.

On a bright Saturday afternoon in the early fall, Tom and Caddie and Warren Woodlawn sat on a bank of the Red River, or Red Cedar as they call it now, taking off their clothes. Their red heads shone in the sunlight. Tom's was the darkest, Caddie's the nearest golden, and nine-year-old Warren's was plain carrot color. Not one of them was to swim, but they were going across the river nevertheless. A thin thread of smoke beyond the bend on the river told them that the Indians were at work on a birch-bark canoe.

"Do you think the Indians around here would ever get mad and massacre folks like they did up north?" asked Tom, tying his shirt up in a little bundle.

"No, sir," said Tom, "not these Indians!"

"Not Indian John, anyhow," said Caddie. She had just unfastened the many troublesome little buttons of her waisted dress, and, before taking it off, she paused a moment to see if she could balance a fresh-water shoe on her toe. She found that she could.

"No, not Indian John!" she repeated decidedly, having got the matter of the clam shell off her mind. "scalp belt," she added. The thought of the scalp belt always made her hair prickle delightfully up w

"Naw," said Tom, "the fellows who spread those massacree stories are just big-mouthed scared-cats Indians, I guess.

"Big-mouthed scared cats," repeated Warren, admiring Tom's command of language.

"Big-mouthed scared-cats," echoed a piping voice from the bank above. Seven-year-old Hetty, who on the outer edge of their adventures, filed away Tom's remark in her active brain. It would be useful to tell her when Mother was complaining about Tom's language. The three below her paid no attention to Hetty's words, their heads, shining in the sunlight, did not even turn in her direction. Hetty's hair was red, too, like Father's. Of her hair, she belonged on the dark-haired side of the family where Mother and Clara and all the sisters. She poised irresolutely on the bank above the three adventurous ones. If they had only turned around to look at her, they were enough in themselves. She could not make up her mind what to do. She wanted to go with them, but she wanted just as much to run home and tell Mother and Clara what they were about to do. Hetty was the eldest daughter, the bearer of the family. Wild horses could not prevent her from being the first to tell, whatever it was that

Tom and Caddie and Warren finished undressing, tied their clothes into tight bundles, and stepped on to the water. The water was low after a long, hot summer, but still it looked cold and deep. Hetty shuddered. She had been afraid to go, but now she quickly tied it up again. She had made up her mind. She turned around and flew across

Tom knew from experience that he could just keep his chin above water and touch bottom with his toes. He was in the middle of the river. It would have been over Caddie's and Warren's heads, but, if they held onto Tom and kept their feet on his shoulders, they could just keep their heads above water. They had done it before. Tom went first with his bundle of clothes on his head. Caddie came next, clutching Tom's shoulder with one hand and holding her bundle of clothes with the other. Warren clung to Caddie's shoulder in the same manner, balancing his own clothes with his feet. They moved slowly and carefully. If Tom lost his footing or fell, they would all go down together and be carried toward the village below. But the other two had every confidence in Tom, and Tom had not the slightest doubt of himself. They looked like three beavers, moving silently across the current --three heads with three long tails and three sets of ripples trailing out behind them. Last of all came Nero, the farm dog, paddling faithfully behind them, already out of sight.

Presently there was solid riverbed beneath their feet again. The three children scrambled out on the bank themselves as Nero did, and pulled on their dry, wrinkled clothing.

"Hurry up, Caddie," called Tom. "You're always the last to dress."

"So would you be, too, Tom, if you had so many buttons!" protested Caddie. She came out of the bushes from the back of her blue denim dress. Relenting, Tom turned his superior intelligence to the mean task of buttoning her.

"I wish Mother'd let me wear boys' clothes," she complained.

"Huh!" said Warren. "She thinks you're tomboy enough already."

"But they're so much quicker," said Caddie regretfully.

Now that they were dressed, they sped along the river bank in the direction of the smoke. Several Indians were up on shore in the shelter of a little cove and beyond them in a clearing the Indians moved to and fro. A canoe of two logs was the crude framework of a canoe which was already partly covered with birch bark. The air was thick and hot pitch filled the air. Caddie lifted her head and sniffed. It was perfume to her, as sweet as the flowers in the fields. Nero sniffed, too, and growled low in his throat.

The three children stopped at the edge of the clearing and watched. Even friendly Indians commanded respect those days. A lean dog, with a wolfish look, came forward barking.

He and Nero circled about each other, little ridges of bristling hair along their spines, their tails wagging. Suddenly the Indian dog left Nero and came toward Caddie.

"Look!" said Caddie. "It's Indian John's dog." The dog's tail began to wag in a friendlier manner, and he came and patted his head.

By this time the Indians had noticed the children. They spoke among themselves and pointed. Some came forward and came forward.

In all the seven years since the Woodlawns had come from Boston to live in the big house on the prairie, the Indians never got used to seeing them. White men and their children had seen often enough, but never such

their pale faces, hair the color of flame and sunset. During the first year the children spent in Wisconsin from all the country around to look at them. They had come in groups, crowding into Mrs. Woodlawn's moccasins, touching the children's hair and staring. Poor Mrs. Woodlawn, frightened nearly out of her wits, gave them bread or beans or whatever she had on hand, and they had gone away satisfied.

"Johnny, my dear," Mrs. Woodlawn had complained to her husband, "those frightful savages will eat us up at home."

"Patience, Harriet," said her husband, "we have enough and to spare."

"But, Johnny, the way they look at the children's hair frightens me. They might want a red scalp to be made of."

Caddie remembered very vividly the day, three years before, when she had gone unsuspecting into town. As she went in the door, a big Indian had seized her and held her up in the air while he took a leisurely look at her. She had been so frightened that she had not even cried out, but hung there, wriggling in the Indian's firm grasp, until he had run about the store for help.

The storekeeper had laughed at her, saying in a reassuring voice: "You needn't be afraid, Caddie. He's only Indian John."

That was the strange beginning of a friendship, for a kind of friendship it was, that had grown up between Caddie and Indian John. The boys liked Indian John, too, but it was at Caddie and her red-gold curls that the big Indian had taken his greatest interest. He had come to the farm, and it was for Caddie that he left bits of oddly carved wood and once a doll--such a funny thing, made of a pebble covered with calico, black horsehair braids, calico arms and legs, and a buckskin cover. Indian John had master's friends. Caddie had been kind to him and he accepted her as a friend.

He rubbed his head against her now as she patted his rough hair. Indian John left his work on the canoe.

"You like him dog?" he said, grinning. He was flattered when anyone patted his dog.

"Yes," said Caddie, "he's a good dog."

"Will you let us see how you put the canoe together?" asked Tom eagerly.

"You come look," said the Indian.

They followed him to the half-finished canoe. Grunting and grinning, the Indians took up their work, putting pliable sheaths of birch bark into place on the light framework, first sewing them together with buckram and cementing them with the hot pitch. The children were fascinated. Their own canoe on the lake was a simple log. They had seen the birch-bark canoes on the river, but had never seen the making of one. They were so intent on every detail that time slipped by unheeded. Even the squaw who had taken them to examine their hair, did not take their attention from the building of the canoe. Caddie shook her head, flicking her curls out of their curious fingers, and went on watching.

But after a while Warren said: "Golly! I'm hungry." Perhaps it was the odor of jerked venison, simmering over the fire, that had begun to mingle with the odors of birch and pitch, that made Warren remember he was hungry.

"You're always hungry," said Tom, the lofty one, in a tone of disgust.

"Well, I am, too," said Caddie positively, and that settled it. The sun was beginning to swing low in the sky. As they had made up their minds, they were off at once. As quickly as they had come, they returned along the same path to the crossing place. The Indians stared after them. They did not understand these curious red and white faces, nor how they went and came.

Soon three bundles, three dirty faces, and three fiery heads, shining in the red autumn sun, crossed the river. The ripples of ripples behind them. Safe on the other bank, the three hastily pulled on their clothes and started to walk into the woods, Nero trotting at their heels.

"Hetty probably told Mother, and Mother may be mad at us for going across the river without asking her," said Warren, beginning to turn his thoughts toward home.

"She never said we couldn't," protested Warren.

"Well, maybe she hadn't thought of such a good way of getting across," said Tom, doubtfully.

"Look!" said Caddie. She had stopped beside some hazel brush and was gazing at it with clasped hands. "I want to pick."

"They're green," said Warren.

"No, they're just right to pick now, if we spread them on the woodshed roof to dry," said Tom judiciously. "He began to fill his pockets. The others followed his example--only Caddie, who had no pockets, took the nuts from the edges of her skirt and made a bag of that. The boys' pockets were soon filled.

"Come on," said Tom, "we've got enough." But Caddie's skirt was not half filled, and she didn't want to stop. She was thinking of supper and Tom was remembering that he was the eldest of the three, and that the longer he waited, the more time his mother would have in which to get angry.

"All right for you," he said, "I'm going home and you'd better come, too." Crackling and rustling through the underbrush, the boys went home. Tom whistled to Nero, but Nero pretended not to hear, for Caddie

Caddie picked furiously, filling her skirt. It was not often that she got more nuts than Tom. Today she had more than anybody. An evening stillness crept through the golden woods. Suddenly Caddie knew that she had to get home. To be late for a meal was one of the unpardonable sins in the Woodlawn family. Clutching her skirt, she began to run. A thorn reached out and tore her sleeve, twigs caught in her tangled hair, her face was streaked with perspiration, but she didn't stop running until she reached the farmhouse. In fact, she could see the deserted look of the yard told her that they were all at supper. She rushed on, red and disheveled, to the dining-room door.

There she stopped for the first time, frozen with astonishment and dismay. It wasn't an ordinary supper! Everybody was calm and clean and sedate, and at one end of the table sat the circuit rider! For a moment Caddie's fingers let go her skirt, and a flood of green hazelnuts rolled all over the floor. In a terrible confusion they could be heard bumping and rattling to the farthest corners of the room.

2 The Circuit Rider

"How do you do, Caroline Augusta?" said the circuit rider in his deep voice--that voice which filled Caddie with the fervor of his praying. The circuit rider was the only person who bothered to remember that Caddie was Caroline Augusta and that Hetty was Henrietta. He turned his dark, deep-set eyes on Mrs. Woodlawn, who sat at the long table.

"When are you going to begin making a young lady out of this wild Indian, Mrs. Woodlawn?" he in-

The cameo brooch, which she wore only on Sundays or special occasions, rose and fell on Mrs. Woodlawn's neck. Her cameo earrings trembled in her ears, but she answered in as calm a voice as she could muster.

"You must ask my husband that question, Mr. Tanner.

"Caddie!" said Mr. Woodlawn abruptly. "Don't stand there staring, my child. Get washed and to table in an instant. But, as she went, she heard her father saying: "Yes, Mr. Tanner, it is my fault that Caddie is so wild with the boys. Don't keep her in the house learning to be a lady. I would rather see her learn to make of making samplers and dipping candles. I will tell you why.

Caddie heard no more, but she knew what Father had to say. She loved to hear him say it in his deep, low voice, as if he were telling how frail she and little Mary had been when they came to Wisconsin from Boston, and how, after she had died, he had begged his wife to let him try an experiment with Caddie. "Harriet," he had said, "I was so wild with the boys. Don't keep her in the house learning to be a lady. I would rather see her learn to make of making samplers and dipping candles. I will tell you why. Bring the other girls up as you like,

So, for seven years, Caddie had run the woods with Tom and Warren. She was no longer pale or delicate, but strong, and, if Tom climbed a tree, Caddie climbed a taller one. If Warren caught a snake, Caddie would catch a larger one. Her mother and sisters looked at her and sighed, but Father smiled and knew that he had been a good doctor.

As these things went through her mind, Caddie ran a comb through her tangled curls and splashed water on her face. A few moments later, when she slipped silently into her place between Tom and Warren, the girls were talking of something else and no one paid any attention to her.

Tom and Warren, still a little untidy and flushed from the afternoon's escapade, glanced at her mischievously through the barn and seen the circuit rider's horse munching oats in the extra stall. Hastily they had changed their clothes, pumped and got to the supper table in the very nick of time. Across the table Clara, Hetty, and little Mary, with their neat braids, sat up straight and clean with their eyes fixed piously on the circuit rider's face. Even baby, who was trying his new tooth on a silver spoon, was in spotless white. Mrs. Conroy, the hired girl, moved about with her supplies of food. Her eyes rested on Caddie in silent amusement. Caddie was her favorite among the children, largely because of the amusing scrapes the child got herself into. Mr. Woodlawn sent a heaping plate of bread down to his second daughter, and Caddie ate obediently. But she was smarting with disgrace.

could still feel some of her hazelnuts rolling about under her feet. And the circuit rider had asked Mr. Tanner for help in making a young lady out of her! A young lady, indeed! Who wanted to be a young lady? Certainly not Caddie! There were times when it was uncomfortable not to be one, even with Father's loyal support.

They were talking about the Indian massacres now, and, forgetting herself, Caddie began to listen. Mr. Tanner spoke of the Civil War, which seemed far away from Wisconsin, and of the Indian massacres which seemed so recent.

"It's those Southerners who come North and incite the Indians to rebellion, just to make more trouble for us," said Mrs. Woodlawn decidedly.

"Yes," said Mr. Tanner, "I fear that we cannot trust the Indians, even when they seem to be friendly."

"I don't believe we'll have massacres here, Mr. Tanner," said Father. "I do trust these Indians."

"It's true enough that they ought to be loyal to us," cried Mrs. Woodlawn, smiling at her husband. "Give them enough victuals, and, of course, you know how my husband has treated them?"

"Someone told me that you had remodeled the guns of the whole tribe, Woodlawn. Is that possible?"

Mr. Woodlawn laughed. "Well," he said, "that's about the size of it, although that wasn't my intention. It was a compliment to the chief of the tribe, when I came here to install the mill, I replaced the old flintlock with a percussion lock. The old fellow was delighted. I thought that that was the end of the affair, but the next day when I went out, the chief was waiting for me with his whole tribe. And every man of them had brought his flintlock and had the percussion lock put on it. It kept me busy for a week, but the mill company was glad to pay for the locks to insure the mill. We've never regretted it, and I don't think we shall have cause to later."

The children loved this familiar story and were sorry when the conversation drifted on to other things. When Mr. Tanner began to recount his travels and adventures since the last night he had spent under their roof, they were all ears.

In those days the circuit riders, or traveling ministers, served large territories, riding from place to place in cabins or schoolhouses. Mr. Tanner was one of these. Weathered by sun and rain and snow, he rode over the whole parish which covered most of western Wisconsin. Weddings and christenings were put off until his arrival. He found new-made graves awaiting his benediction. The settlers always opened their homes to him, and he was always welcome when they could entertain the circuit rider. Everyone stood in awe of him. He was not only a man of

in spiritual battle with angels and spirits of evil, but it was said that there was not a man on his circuit whose strength of muscle equal to his. When, in his deep voice, he spoke of punishment for sinners, the little hall was filled with the crackling roar of the fires of hell.

But, when he sat with the Woodlawns at their table, all his sternness fell away. It was perhaps the only place where he felt entirely at home. Their home, the largest in the neighborhood, was the one expected to be the most comfortable. But there was another reason why he always stayed there. Mr. Tanner was from Boston, too. He loved the bread on Saturday night and the familiar talk of home. For him, as for Mrs. Woodlawn, the real beauty of life was centered in the churches, the bookshops, the lecture rooms of Boston. They shared their bits of news of old scenes and events as homesick people love to do. Mr. Woodlawn heard them with quiet amusement. He was happy on the outskirts of civilization. Here he could breathe freely as he had never done in the narrow confines of his own home had been in England, but he did not speak of the past. The children, all except Clara, who had been born in Boston, listened with wide eyes of astonishment. For how could anyone prefer Boston to this enchanted landscape of lake and river, prairie and forest?

When the meal was finished, the circuit rider rose and went to his saddlebags which he had left on the table. He took them carelessly and opened one. He took out first his well-worn Bible for the family prayers which he had read when Mr. Tanner spent the night. Then he took out something else which suddenly made Caddie's eyes light up. She forgot her embarrassment and came to stand beside him. It was a small clock.

"Woodlawn," said the minister, "I've brought you something to repair for me. There is not a soul on this circuit who knows how to tinker a clock as you do."

Mr. Woodlawn smiled. His workshop was already full of clocks which people had brought to him from all over the country. There was time from his farm and his duties as master mechanic at the mill, he took the neighbors' clocks to be mended, or refitted parts to them. He was the only man in that part of the country who could do it, and he did it so well, work well enough, it was sometimes irksome to have so much of it to do. But Caddie never tired of watching him. She liked to see them wag their pendulums and hear their busy ticking. Her eager fingers itched to touch them apart and set them in motion once again.

"What's wrong with it?" she asked.

The circuit rider hesitated. He knew all about horses and ways of predicting the weather; he could q

passage in the Bible and make clear the book of Revelations. But anything with wheels or cogs or spindles was an unfathomable mystery to him.

"Well," he said, "I don't rightly know. I was winding it up one night, when suddenly it gave a little gasp like a soul departing from the body; and it wouldn't go after that. Sometimes, from force of habit, I take it up and wind it. Then I miss its genial tick, and I feel as if I am looking at the face of a dead friend."

A dead friend! The phrase sank into Caddie's mind. Perhaps that was why she always hated to see an old man idle.

Mrs. Woodlawn had come to join the group. "Jacob Alien, Tremont St., Boston," she read from the list. "Dear! Dear! How of that! How many times I have been in and out of Jacob Alien's shop! Dear! Dear!"

"Yes," said Mr. Tanner, "it is a friend from home."

"I'll mend it for you tonight," said Mr. Woodlawn.

"No! No!" cried Mr. Tanner hastily. "Saturday's sun has gone down. I like to think that the Sabbath is over. I'd rather talk with you tonight, my friend. I'll leave my clock until I come back again. It may be two or three weeks. I'm going back into the interior to a new settlement where no one has yet brought the word of God."

Caddie slipped away to join Tom and Warren on the back step. They sat together, and Nero lay close by. Behind the barn, Robert Ireton was strumming his banjo and singing softly. Of the three hired men, he was the best. It was Robert Ireton who had taught them most of the songs they knew. They knew the song he sang, but it tickled their ears but did not lure them farther than the step. Behind the barn there were northern lights shooting tip in the blackness of the sky, and the three adventurers were overcome by that delicious view which overtakes one at the end of an outdoor day.

"Golly! Tomorrow--no, Monday," said Tom. "I'm going to make a canoe like that one the Indians make with birch bark and pitch." But Caddie and Warren did not bother to answer.

Presently their mother came to the door and called them in to family prayers. They were a little stiff in their knees, for they were used to saying their prayers in bed. Everyone was there. Even Robert Ireton was uneasy and strange with neither a pitchfork nor a banjo in his hands. The yellow lamplight slanted a

Only half listening to the words, Caddie felt herself being lifted and borne along by the circuit rider's music--different from the twanging of the banjo or the birds at dawn, more like the falling of water or the chanting of the Indians. It aroused and stirred her. There was a silence after the deep "Amen." And the silence was broken by a gentle snore. Warren had gone to sleep with his head bent devoutly on the back of a chair. Caddie rose hastily and the children trooped up to bed.

Caddie, Hetty, and little Minnie shared the same room. Caddie helped the younger ones with their dresses and tumbled them into their beds. Then she sat a long time, drawing off her own clothes slowly and strainingly. A conversation which went on below. Her father and Mr. Tanner were talking about the war, with an occasional reference to Mother. The Civil War seemed remote to the children of western Wisconsin; and yet Father had paid a high price for his place, and Tom Hill, one of the hired men, had gone away to fight in it, and, when visitors came to town, they always sat late into the night discussing it. Once Caddie had seen President Lincoln he was Mr. Lincoln to her, quite a little girl and they had taken her to St. Louis for a visit. There had been a torchlight procession and she had crept up to watch it from a window. And Mr. Lincoln had been in the procession. She had never forgotten the great man. Caddie slipped on her nightgown and crept to the open window where she could hear more clearly.

"If it weren't for my wife and children," her father was saying, "Englishman and peace lover though I am, I would be there fighting for abolition."

"That's not the usual English sentiment, Woodlawn," said Mr. Tanner. "The English aristocrats see no fault in it."

When he answered, her father's gentle voice was suddenly bitter. "Ah, the English aristocrats!" he cried. "I do not see things from the aristocratic point of view."

"Johnny!" cried her mother reproachfully, almost warningly, it seemed. His voice fell to a lower key and he spoke with emotion.

"God created all men free and equal," he said, "and men themselves must come to understand that truth."

Shivering in the chill night air of autumn, Caddie went to bed. She crept in with Hetty, who had made her bed and was peacefully asleep. Sometimes Caddie envied Mother and Clara, who were so dark and calm and seemed to find it so easy to be clean and good. But tonight her father's words echoed in her ears. She

them, nor know why Father was so bitter when he spoke of England. She only knew that what- ever that she loved him better than anybody else on earth. She was glad that her hair was rough and red like

3 Pigeons in the Sky

The next day was Sunday, and, of course, the school- house was opened and everyone went to church. Mother brought a bunch of her autumn flowers to decorate the desk. She had driven over early with her husband to open and air the school- house which had been closed since summer. The children followed on foot, across a field and along a dusty road. They rubbed their feet through the tall grass by the schoolhouse on their Sunday shoes. People from all the surrounding farms and homesteads had come to hear the circuit rider. Sam Hankinson was there, sitting in a back seat with his three little half- breed children about his knees. He stayed outside. Caddie peeped at them curiously through her fingers when Mr. Tanner's prayer grew loud. "How can it be to have an Indian for a mother, she wondered? Then she looked at Mrs. Woodlawn, so fine in her dress, her cameo brooch and earrings and the small black hat, and she was glad that this was Mother. And yet, she did not be ashamed of an Indian mother, as Sam Hankinson seemed to be ashamed of his Indian wife.

The next day the circuit rider rode away on his horse. Father set his clock upon the shelf to be mended again as usual. But now the children began to talk about when Uncle Edmund would come, for Uncle Edmund came with the pigeons in the fall. He made his annual visit when the shooting was at its best, for he was a very skillful sportsman.

Mrs. Woodlawn sighed. "No one can say that I am not a devoted sister," she said, "but the prospect of Uncle Edmund always fills me with alarm. My house is turned upside down, my children behave like wild things, there is always a confusion and confusion."

"But Ma-" cried Tom.

"Don't Ma me, my child," said Mrs. Woodlawn calmly.

"But, Mother," persisted Tom, defending his hero. "Uncle Edmund knows the most tricks----"

"And jokes!" cried Caddie.

"Remember when he put the hairbrush in Caddie's bed?" shouted Warren.

"And the time he put a frog in a covered dish on the supper table, and when Mrs. Conroy lifted the cover

"That is enough, Tom," said his mother. "We remember Uncle Edmund's tricks very well, and I've more of them."

But she looked forward to her younger brother's coming just the same, and when the pigeons came a-Edmund everyone felt surprised and concerned.

One night when they went to bed the sky was clear and the woods were still. But when they awoke in the morning the air was full of the noise of wings, and flocks of birds flew like clouds across the sun. They were on their way south. They filled the trees in the woods. They came down in the fields and gardens for seeds and grains they could find. The last birds kept flying over those which were feeding in front, in the ground so that the flock seemed to roll along like a great moving cloud.

"The pigeons have come!" shouted the little Woodlawns. "The pigeons have come!" Even baby Joe shouted.

Tom and Warren armed themselves with sticks and went out with the hired men. But for once Caddis liked hunting as well as the boys. But this was too easy. This was not hunting--it was a kind of wholeness that the Indians and the white men, too, caught the birds in nets and sent them by thousands to the market. Wherever the beautiful gray birds went, they were harassed and driven away or killed. Something of the heart, as if she knew that they were a doomed race. The pigeons, like the Indians, were fighting a losing man.

But John Woodlawn was not a glutton as some of his neighbors were. He said to Tom and the hired men, "Drive the grain left in the fields now. Drive the birds off and keep them from doing harm as well as you can, but don't eat. There is moderation in all things."

And so that night there was pigeon pie for supper. But on the Woodlawn farm no more birds were killed. After supper Robert Ireton, strumming his banjo out by the barn, sang the song that everybody had heard in the year :

"When I can shoot my rifle clear

At pigeons in the sky,
I'll bid farewell to pork and beans
And live on pigeon pie.

The three children, huddled around him on the chilly ground, hummed or sang with him, and all about was the rustle and stir of wings.

A few days later the passenger pigeons had disappeared as suddenly as they had come. The journey toward the South. It was as if the woods were stripped of their dried berries, and some folks still had cold pigeon pie in their kitchens or dead birds on their trucks,

Then, after the pigeons were all gone, came a letter from Uncle Edmund announcing his arrival on the "Little Steamer," as everyone called it, came up the Menominee River as far as the event, for all the letters from the East, all the news from the great world, most of the visitors up the river on the Little Steamer.

The Woodlawn children begged to be allowed to go and meet Uncle Edmund.

"Certainly we can't take all of you!" said Mrs. Woodlawn calmly.

Tom looked at Caddie and Warren with a superior smile. "Too bad you little children have to stay at home. We can't take all of you."

"All right for you, Tom," said Caddie, "talking like that!"

She and Warren withdrew. They crossed the barnyard and climbed to the haymow. Nero went with them on a ladder. He was quick to sense trouble of any sort and his tail wagged in sympathy. Caddie and Warren hid themselves in the hay and talked things over. When Father or Mother made a decision, the Woodlawn decision was final. There was very little teasing for favors in a large pioneer family. But not to

"It's just because they haven't room for us in the wagon," said Caddie at last, "but if we walked "

"Sure," said Warren, his face brightening, "and let's not tell them we're walking either. Let's save it for later."

"Or maybe we could take one of the horses," suggested Caddie.

"Pete's the fastest," said Warren.

"Better take Betsy. Pete always runs for the louver shed behind the barn and scrapes us off."

"Sure," said Warren, "we'll take Betsy!"

When the time came to meet the steamer, Clara and Tom, in their Sunday clothes, climbed into the wagon with Mrs. Woodlawn. Tom was a little sorry for Caddie and Warren, but he couldn't resist a smirk of satisfaction. Enough, Caddie and Warren did not seem as depressed over being left behind as they should have been. They sat in the wagon, grinning like two Cheshire cats. Hetty and little Minnie stood with them, looking properly worried. As the wagon started Caddie and Warren made a beeline for the barn to get old Betsy and ride across the fields into the woods.

Hetty saw them go, and instant realization of what they were going to do flashed across her mind. How important to tell. "Father! Mother!" she shouted, running down the lane behind the wagon. "Stop! Stop!" Her voice was lost in the rattle of wheels, and in a cloud of dust the wagon disappeared. Across the field flew Betsy, the black mare, with only a rope and halter, and Caddie and Warren clinging like monkeys. Dunnaville consisted of the schoolhouse which the children attended in winter and summer, a few log cabins, and taverns, one on either side of the river where the Little Steamer docked and turned around. As the Little Steamer came in sight, Mr. and Mrs. Woodlawn, Clara and Tom were standing on the dock ready with handkerchiefs. Edmund was there. Yes, Uncle Edmund was there. His round face was creased with smiles. His round eyes, beaming, twinkled with delight.

As soon as his voice could be heard over the sound of churning water, he shouted: "Hello there! Hello there! Hello, Tom and Clara! Hey, there, Caddie and Warren! Why don't you come on down?"

Caddie and Warren! The Woodlawns on the dock turned sharply around. There they were, Caddie and Warren on the bank above, their bare legs dangling, their red heads shining. They grinned sheepishly.

"Well, of all things!" cried Mrs. Woodlawn, her clear brow darkening ominously. She was going to

suddenly the Little Steamer docked with a bump and she was obliged to catch her husband's arm to keep them steady. They were all in Uncle Edmund's large, enthusiastic embrace-- even Caddie and Warren. Uncle Edmund was so glad they had all come to meet him that nobody could bear to tell him it had not been planned that way.

As they were walking up the path from the dock, Uncle Edmund began to fumble in his pocket. "What present here for Caddie."

Caddie stopped in her tracks, speechless with joy. The others crowded around them. Out of his pocket Uncle Edmund pulled a fat little book. Caddie had never felt much need of books, but any sort of present was a rare delight. She took it from Uncle Edmund's hand and opened the cover. Whiz! Something long and green flew out at her. Uncle Edmund shouted with laughter, and Caddie laughed, too, a little ruefully. She picked up the book and ran in the path.

"That's no snake, she said. "It's got a clock spring inside it.

"Say, Uncle Edmund," tried Tom, "you'd ought to know you can't fool Caddie on snakes or clock springs."

4 A Silver Dollar

The next morning Uncle Edmund got out his gun and oiled and polished it. Then he polished his spectacles. Uncle Edmund was near-sighted.

"Now," he said, "I've missed the pigeons, and that's a great pity, for a near-sighted man can always hit pigeons. But I must do the best I can. 'Who will go with me to help me sight my game?'"

Tom and Warren and Caddie stood beside him in breathless anticipation of this question. Uncle Edmund always chose one of the three to go with him. More than one of them he would never take, for they would be frightened the game away.

The three children spoke up with one voice: "I'll go, Uncle Edmund!"

Uncle Edmund looked them over critically. "Tom, you went last time I was here. You're pretty good, but the squirrel get away. You remember?"

"Yah," said Tom, "but if I'd had the gull he wouldn't have got away."

"That's the trouble, said Uncle Edmund regretfully. "And Warren, here, talks too much. I might as well talk to the corporals."

"I wouldn't say a word," shouted Warren. "I wouldn't talk a bit. Just listen how quiet I could be."

"No," said Uncle Edmund, "I always have to fall back on Caddie in the end. I might as well start with her. I might as well start with her pointer for showing me the game, and she never tells me how to shoot it nor reproaches me when I miss. I might as well start with Caddie."

Caddie opened her mouth to speak. She was going to say: "it's too bad you little children have to stay here. We can't take all of you." But she closed it again without saying anything. After all, she did hate to see the boys so disappointed, and also she didn't want to find a frog in her bed or a pail of water arranged over her door when she came back to give her a drenching when she came back.

As she trotted along beside Uncle Edmund, she was absolutely happy. It was perfect Indian-summer weather. The trees were all a-tremble with thinning gold. The oaks and sugar maples were putting on their vivid red and orange, and the lake, and sky were all sublimely blue.

Uncle Edmund and Caddie struck across fields and through the woods to the lake. Nero went with them. Nero had not been trained as a hunter, he loved to go hunting, and he had a strong affection for Uncle Edmund. On the shore of the lake were the Woodlawn children's two prized possessions--a homemade raft, of small logs lashed together with wooden pins, and the Indian canoe hollowed from a single log. The little Woodlawn children had any craft in any kind of weather, but, although they spent half of their time on either lake or river, they never swam.

Caddie ran ahead, her golden-red curls flying in the breeze. She threw her weight against the canoe and it went overboard. Then, her eyes shining with mischief, she jumped in and caught up the paddle.

"Beat you to the end of the lake, Uncle Edmund," she called. Uncle Edmund could swim, but he was not a swimmer. He managed to get the raft afloat, and he and Nero scrambled aboard. Then he began to pole it down the lake. He tried to side and seemed to defy all of his attempts at steering.

"Hey you little whippersnapper, you!" he shouted at Caddie, shaking his fist good-naturedly.

Caddie came back laughing and circled around the raft in her canoe. "Oh, I'm sorry, Uncle Edmund. I can't help laughing. You look so funny. You can take the canoe coming back, and I'll take the raft, and you can take the canoe going back, too. See if I don't! "

"Oh, you'll beat me that way, too, will you?" said Uncle Edmund, a fine edge sounding in his voice. "You bet?"

"Oh, I haven't any money and Mother doesn't like us to bet, but I'll beat you just the same."

"All right," said Uncle Edmund. "You won't bet, but I'll tell you what I'll do. If you can beat me coming back, I'll give you a silver dollar, that's what I'll do. Mind-you take the raft and I take the canoe."

"Bully for you!" cried Caddie, echoing Tom's favorite expression. She was confident of winning. At Woodlawn children never had much money to spend, and, in those days of war-time green-backs, a silver dollar was nearly three times the value of the paper dollar. Caddie was so delighted by Uncle Edmund's generosity that she rowed the raft to shore. But Uncle Edmund declined her offer and finally got himself awkwardly to the shore. They beached their craft and started through the woods. But Uncle Edmund had forgotten something.

"Wait here a moment, Caddie. I left my game bag back on the raft."

"I'll get it, Uncle; Edmund."

"No, wait here. I'll go myself."

Uncle Edmund was gone quite a long time, but at last he returned with the bag.

Now they went slowly and quietly, Uncle Edmund peering through his thick glasses at the nearby trees, searching the more distant places. Nero walked beside them, deeply excited. His business was sheep hunting, as Edmund often said, a little training would have made him an admirable hunter. Suddenly Caddie stiffened, she put a tense hand on Uncle Edmund's arm.

"There!" she whispered, pointing to the branch of a tree some yards ahead. A squirrel sat there motionless.

a part of the tree. Uncle Edmund followed the direction of her finger with his near-sighted eyes. He shouldered. Bang! The report reverberated through the woods, shattering the silence into a hundred echoes. Uncle Edmund exultantly. "By golly, Caddie, I got him!" Caddie was as delighted as Uncle Edmund to retrieve the squirrel for Uncle Edmund's game bag.

It was well along in the afternoon when they started back toward the lake. Uncle Edmund was treading three squirrels and a brace of partridges, and, for a near-sighted man, that was a good bag. Caddie's silver dollar she was going to win.

"Remember, I'm going to beat you across the lake, Uncle Edmund," she chirped.

"So you said. So you said," agreed Uncle Edmund jovially, chuckling to himself. He sprang into the canoe. Caddie thrust the raft into the water and jumped on. Nero sprang on behind her, and Caddie began to pole. Tom had handled the raft so often that she knew just how to manage it to the best advantage. A few minutes alongside Uncle Edmund, who was hopelessly inefficient, even with such a delicate craft as a canoe, was beginning to happen to the raft. One by one the small logs of which it was built were beginning to slip. Caddie could not believe her eyes. She poled for dear life, but the faster she poled, the more quickly the logs slipped. The space on which she stood grew smaller and smaller. Someone had loosened all the pins which held the logs together, and by bit it was coming apart.

"Uncle Edmund!" shouted Caddie, red with surprise and rage. Uncle Edmund lay back in the canoe. Caddie knew why Uncle Edmund had taken so long to fetch his game bag. The logs on which Nero and the old sheepdog plunged into the water and began to swim for shore. There were only three or four logs left. It took only an instant for them to drift apart. Caddie went down with a great splash, and her shining hair floated on the water like a quenched flame. Presently she came up again, sputtering and blowing, and caught a log. When she felt its rough surface under her fingers, she stopped struggling and clasped her arms around it. The feel of water up to her neck, if only she had something to hold onto. But she was angry. It took a long time to get Caddie from her good nature, but every red-head's temper has its limitations, and Caddie's had been one.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" she sputtered, too angry to find any words.

Now that Uncle Edmund had had his little joke, he began to be worried. He brought the canoe around to the shore. "Say, Caddie," he said, "I never thought that raft would come apart so quickly. Honestly, I just w

You don't mind getting a little wet, do you? Just for fun?"

Caddie sat in the bottom of the canoe straight and stiff. Streams of water ran down all over her and more. Her face was pale and her hazel eyes flashed cold fire, but still she couldn't find a word to say to relieve her indignation.

"Oh, say, Caddie, don't take it so hard," coaxed Uncle Edmund. "It was just a joke. Listen now, I'll give you a gift, I promised; but say, don't tell your mother, Caddie."

At last Caddie exploded.

"Are you trying to bribe a Woodlawn, Uncle Edmund?" she shouted.

After everything else, to attempt to bribe a Woodlawn was heaping infamy upon infamy.

"Oh, no! no!" protested Uncle Edmund anxiously. "It's just a gift, Caddie."

"I wouldn't take it," cried Caddie. "I wouldn't take it if it was the last silver dollar in the world! I won't!"

"Now, now, Caddie," urged Uncle Edmund. "Here we are almost to shore. Now, listen, you just take a walk in the sun, and I'll go back and collect the pieces of the raft. That's a good, sensible little girl."

Caddie stepped out of the canoe with the haughty air of a scornful but dripping princess.

"You do as I say, Caddie," urged Uncle Edmund anxiously, "and I'll be back in half an hour with the raft. You'll dry yourself like a wet dog. Angry as she was, she realized that it was better to dry herself in the sheltered beach than to walk home through fields and woods in her dripping clothes. She wrung out her dress and wrung them on the bushes. Then she lay down in the warm sand. Presently Nero, who had made his way along the shore, sat beside her, drying his own coat in the sun.

Uncle Edmund was gone a long, long time. When he returned at last, Caddie was sitting in the sun in a wrinkled but dry. She had had time to think over her adventure, and her usual good humor had got to her. She burst out laughing when she saw Uncle Edmund's red, perspiring face. Poor Uncle Edmund had paid

"By golly, Caddie, that was a hard job. I've had my comeuppance-with, for once, my dear. But they' one." Behind the canoe he was towing the pieces of the raft, bound together with a rope which the c bottom of the canoe. Caddie helped him pull the poles in to shore. lie had managed to salvage most two of them put the raft together once again.

"Well, I guess we're even, Uncle Edmund," said Caddie, gravely smiling. She held out her small, bro

Uncle Edmund shook it heartily, but he said: "No, Caddie, we're not even yet. I promised you a silver

"You said if I beat you to the end of the lake on the raft, or if I wouldn't tell Mother. But I didn't bea tell Mother."

"Yes, yes, of course," said Uncle Edmund hastily, "but this dollar is just burning a hole in my pocke It belongs to you."

Suddenly Caddie felt the weight of a silver dollar in the pocket of her dress. She put her hand in her dollar felt warm and round to her fingers.

"Thank you, Uncle Edmund," she said.

They gathered up the game bag and the gun, and started for home. Their three figures were silhouett Caddie, Nero, and Uncle Edmund, and their three shadows trailed far out behind them. Uncle Edmu conscience, was whistling. But Caddie's mind was busy with the manyll mall!· walls in which one o dollar-.

5 Nero, Farewell !

"Say, I'd take a ducking every day in the week and twice on Sunday, for a silver dollar," remarked T

"Caddie, they've got bully tops in the store at Dunnville," added Warren hopefully.

Everybody had thought of a splendid way for Caddie to spend her dollar.

"You ought to buy yourself some gloves, Sister, said Clara. "You've never had proper ones and you

Indian's.

"Oh, Caddie, get a doll, please do," begged Hetty one of those china-headed ones with pink cheeks and china boots with high heels.

Little Minnie thought that the whole dollar should be spent on striped stick candy, and the boys were

"Better keep it until Christmas, my child," advised Mrs. Woodlawn.

But Mr. Woodlawn said: "Leave the child alone. She has a wise head on her shoulders. She will know money wisely when the time comes."

Caddie said nothing. But she put her dollar away in the little wooden trinket box which Father had made. It was full of plans--so many that she could not yet choose among them.

It was the evening before Uncle Edmund's departure. A sharp wind blew about the house, to remind them that summer must come to an end at last. Warm and cozy indoors, the Woodlawn family sat about the dining table. The supper cloth had been removed with the dishes, and a homespun cloth of red and white had taken its place in the middle. The lamp was still rather wonderful to the little Woodlawns. They remembered when Father had brought it to replace the candles, and how they had all stood around to see it lighted and hear Father explain its uses. While Mrs. Woodlawn and Clara were darning, Mr. Woodlawn was mending a clock, and Uncle Edmund was cleaning his gun. The younger children sat about his feet near the fire, twisting bits of paper into the lighters whenever possible instead of the precious sulphur matches.

Nero lay between Caddie and Uncle Edmund, his head pressed against Caddie's knee, his eyes open and his gaze in sleepy adoration at Uncle Edmund. He was completely happy here by the fire, between the two. When he heard his name spoken, he raised his head and looked about. Uncle Edmund was saying: "I want to ask you, Harriet. It's about Nero. Be a good sister, and let me take him back to St. Louis with me. I'll be straight to listen. They stopped twisting lighters but they said nothing. They knew very well that when Mother asked a question, it was not their business to answer it, no matter how much they were interested.

"Why, Edmund," said Mother calmly, "whatever would you do with a sheepdog in St. Louis?"

"The point is, Nero's too good a dog for sheep. A little training and he'd be a fine bird dog. I know a

business of training dogs. Nero would make me a splendid hunter, and you could easily get a new sh

"A good sheepdog requires as much training as a bird dog, Edmund," said Mr. Woodlawn, "and to m
worthier purpose."

"You have the mind of a farmer rather than a gentleman, John," said Uncle Edmund.

"Thank you, Edmund," replied Mr. Woodlawn gravely. "I appreciate that compliment more than yo

"Come! come!" said Mother. "But surely, Edmund, you are not serious about taking Nero?"

"My heart is set on it, Harriet. You can see, yourself, how fond he is of me. I'll bring him back next

"Oh, Uncle Edmund," Caddie couldn't help saying, you wouldn't take him?"

"It would be for his own good, Caddie," said Uncle Edmund pompously. "He's a noble animal."

Caddie's fingers tightened in the thick wool on Nero's back. How many times she had felt its comfor
had gone wrong and she had needed comforting.

"No, Edmund, I am very much opposed to your taking him," said Mrs. Woodlawn.

"Now, Harriet, please," wheedled Uncle Edmund.

"You're so careless, Edmund. You nearly drowned my child last week. You'd be sure to let somethin

"Now, listen, my dear." Uncle Edmund left his gun and came to hang over the back of his sister's ch
good care of him. I'll bring him back with me next fall. You know, Harriet, you never could refuse y
anything he wanted."

"Dear! dear!" said Mrs. Woodlawn, settling her white collar and smoothing her hair. "Do let me be.
mosquito, Edmund. John, what shall I say to him?"

"It is for you and Edmund to decide, Harriet," said Mr. Woodlawn.

"Well, then, take him," said Mrs. Woodlawn in an irritated voice, "and take good care of him. I high always have your way, Brother, sooner or later."

"My dear, good sister!" cried Uncle Edmund. He kissed Mrs. Woodlawn on the tip of her nose, and sailor's hornpipe. Nero sprang up barking, and the children were so enchanted by this unaccustomed up, too, laughing and quite forgetting the reason why they were so gay.

They understood better the next day, when Uncle Edmund went on board the Little Steamer. with Nero Nero jumped and barked, not knowing what they meant to do with him. Caddie knelt down beside Nero against his rough coat, she clung to him a moment before Uncle Edmund led him away.

"Come back again, some day, Nero," she whispered. "Come back! come back!"

The Little Steamer chugged away downstream and a cold wind blew up the river in their faces. Uncle Edmund had a long journey ahead of them. Down the Menomonie River to the Chippewa, down the Chippewa to the Mississippi to St. Louis, where Uncle Edmund lived.

Tom and Caddie and Warren turned away from the dock and trudged back home to the farm. Some of the grapes had not been as satisfactory this year as they had expected. When they reached home, there was no one to greet them.

But it was too busy a time now to nurse regrets. There were the last wild grapes to pick, and butter- gather. Tom, Caddie, and children were the fieldworkers of the family. They swung off across the fields and woods with buckets and baskets on their arms--three jolly comrades in search of adventure, in sunshine. Except for a few nutting expeditions, Clara and Hetty preferred to stay at home and help Mother with the jelly-making. the autumn advanced the cranberries began to ripen in the marshes. Sometimes with a foot, the three children pushed into the marshes to fill their buckets. It was dangerous going, for some quicksand or quagmire in the marshes, and one must be quick and light of foot to leap from hummock to hummock the ground which would bear weight. Loons called and laughed their mirthless laughter over the marshes. of wild geese flew honking high overhead in the cold, blue sky.

"I'm getting dents in my thumb and finger, picking so many cranberries," complained Warren.

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