

## The Found His Bride in the Dells By F. E. Jones

A Romance of the Dells and Adams County, which is "Founded on Fact"

LATE one afternoon in the summer of 1845 a solitary boatman passed through the Dells and on by the sites of where was later to rise the villages of Kilbourn and Newport, on neither of which had yet been heard the sound of the woodman's ax in the virgin forest. The boatman was an athletic, handsome young fellow, dressed in a somewhat picturesque costume of buckskin coat and cap of native fur. As he bent to the oars he accompanied the stroke of the oar with snatches of song in an undertone, as if to break the monotony of the silent world around him and evidencing the exuberance of a care-free, happy young life. The broad chin, brown eyes and glimmer of a smile that ever crossed his handsome face or flashed in his eyes, and the "least bit of a brogue" as he sang as he rowed, bespoke his Celtic origin. The heap of furs in the front of the boat partly covered by a tarpolin,

times swept on at greater speed by the impulse of his strong arms, he rapidly passed by the site of the present Kilbourn and the shores on which was soon to rise the ambitious village of Newport. By this time the sun was sinking behind the forest that stretched away to the western horizon, flooding the tree tops with a radiance of gold and leaving shadows over the on-rushing waters of the Wisconsin. Just as he came near Lone Rock he saw a woman clinging to the side of the rock, her feet resting on a narrow ledge a little way from the water. Drawing his boat up to the rock he had just come near enough to see that she was in a dangerous situation, when her slight hold loosened and she fell back into the swirling, rushing current that sweeps around the rock. With the experience of years on the treacherous currents of the Wisconsin he did not expect her to rise where she sank, so with one



Lone Rock, Where Tom O'Brien Found a Wife

indicated the occupation of a trader with the Indians, in fact, he was on his way from the head of the Dells to the portage at Fort Winnebago, having been in the Indian camps in the upper dells.

Properly his name was Thomas O'Brien, though few of his acquaintances knew him by any other than the sobriquet of "Happy Tom," aptly bestowed because of a never-ceasing flow of happy spirits and habitual good nature. In the silent woods or on the river he was a part of nature, singing with the birds, laughing with the rippling waters. Among his fellows in settlements he was genial, obliging and entertaining, though always a gentleman. He was never found in the carousals and riotous demonstrations common to his surroundings, though universally esteemed by that class.

As his boat floated along with the current, or at

stroke he sent his boat down stream. When she came to the surface she was just beside his boat, and and was with little effort drawn in. For a few seconds she appeared to be unconscious, but just as Tom was becoming alarmed she sat up and to his surprise said in pure English:

"You came along just in time, didn't you?"

The maiden having so agreed, the boat drifted on with the current, while she told her story. As she sat in the stern on a pile of furs, the glint of the sinking sun and the shadows from the rocks and the trees alternating on her face, Tom realized that he had rescued a marvelously beautiful woman. Watching the play of animated expression on her beautiful face, listening to softly modulated voice, Tom was living in a new world, he began to feel a thumping under the left side of his buckskin coat, a new sensation, though a

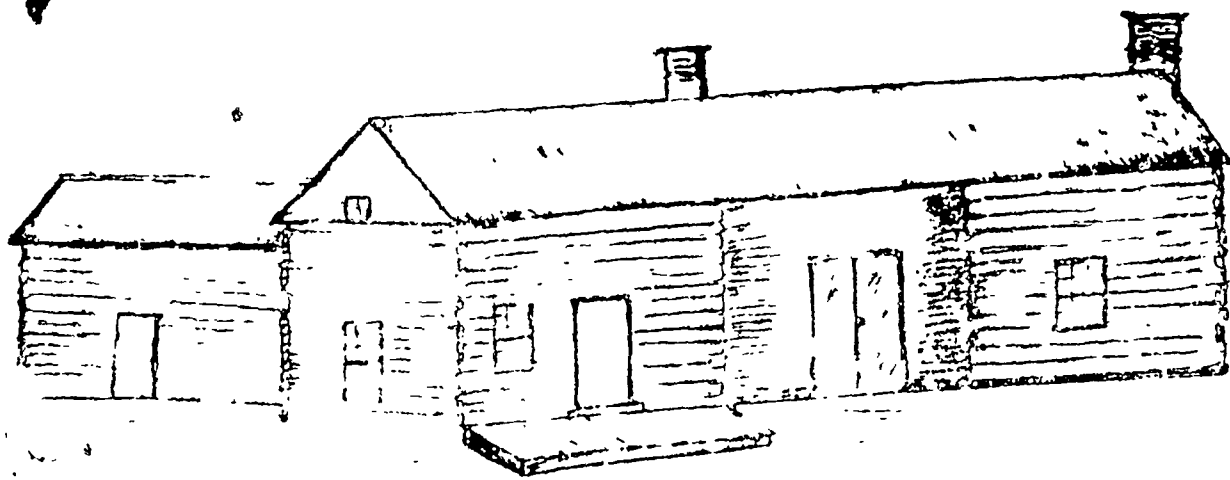
happy one, and as with all first attacks of that nature, did not cause any uneasiness.

She told him the story of her life as they drifted from shades of coming night into the silver glow of the rising moon, on down toward Portage, as she had said was her destination. Her father was a French Canadian, her mother a comely Indian, daughter of a Winnebago chief. Her childhood had been spent around Green Bay, some of the time in a convent school. A few years before her father, Anton Grenier, died, and her mother returned to her people, taking her daughter with her. They had lived in camps, moving about, and for a year had been in a village near Baraboo. In the village to which they belonged was a young Winnebago chief to whom her mother desired to give her daughter for his squaw. The idea was so repulsive to the educated, beautiful half-breed that she would have taken her life rather than have acquiesced. One night she fled from the camp and walked to the Wisconsin river. Up near the spot where the Newport ferry was located she found a skiff, in which she pushed out into the current, to find

live years in an hour. The associations of a few days may bring people nearer together than would a life time of ordinary association. While the few hours of that trip down the Wisconsin to Portage seemed all too short to Tom and Marie, it was one of those auspicious periods when formality is broken down by affinity. When they stepped ashore at the point nearest the fort they could hardly realize that a few hours before they knew not of each other's existence.

Though late at night they had no difficulty in finding the officer's family to whom Marie had come for refuge, and she was most heartily welcomed.

The summer passed all too fast for these two friends whose acquaintance had been formed under unusual conditions that could but lead to more than ordinary friendly relations. Tom had been away on several trading trips but found employment most of the time there to superintend the trade of a local firm. In the mean time "the course of true love run smoothly," and they enjoyed boat trips on the river, horse-back rides in the country and walks in the vicinity of the fort along the Fox.



Jared Walsworth's, First House in Adams County, the Place of the Marriage

later that she had neither oars or paddle. The boat drifted on down until it crashed into the side of Lone Rock where it over turned, and she barely caught to the side of the rock as the boat went from under her.

"And there," she said, you found me just as the power of clinging any longer had left me. Was it fate? Did Providence send you there just at that moment."

"Sure it was a lucky fate or a kind providence, whichever it be," replied Tom, that everlasting thumping under his coat almost rocking the boat.

"But now that I have saved ye, whatever am I going to do wid ye?" asked Tom anxiously.

"I am trying to get down to the fort, where I have a friend in the wife of an officer," she said.

"Then its there I'll take ye this night if we can keep above and on the water," said Tom, relieved and yet sorry to think this glimpse of of heaven might have to end.

There are circumstances under which we seem to

During the summer the fort was abandoned by troops, though the officer with whom Marie was staying remained a few months in charge of stores that had not been moved.

One day they were riding out on the old pinery road that led to Big Spring. The road ran through a great forrest of oaks, void of underbrush, carpeted with a bright greensward, affording on unbroken view through the trees in every direction—the whole country in that section was like a well-kept park. Enjoying the scenery and the charm of each other's company they had ridden further than usual. They were brought back to earth by the appearance of an attendant of the officer's family at the fort, who rode up to them hurriedly and evidently excited. He told them that Marie's mother and some head men of the tribe had come to the fort, got out papers to reclaim her, and were following with a constable.

Marie looked at Tom in consternation, Tom looked at Marie in admiration. While nothing had

been said between them of marrying—both felt that some day that would be the end of this happy summer's association.

"What will we do?" asked the girl, her eyes apprehensively resting on the road over which they had come.

"Sure and we seem to be between the devil and the dape sea," said Tom. "We can go back to the Indians and ye can be a squaw, or ye can go on to Walworth's and be the darling wife of an Irishman." Riding nearer to the now blushing girl Tom said more seriously.

"Marie, darlint, ye know I have loved ye ever since the night we floated down the Wisconsin. If ye love me let's go on to Jared Walworth's who is a justice, and be married before they catch us. All of the Indians in the tribe cannot take ye from me as my wife. Will ye go?"

Turning her horse in that direction, her face yet suffused with blushes, a happy love-light in her eyes, she said.

"Yes, let us go."

Jared Walsworth and several congenial spirits, hardy pioneers of early New Haven, had just finished supper and sat down for an evening pipe when two horses dashed up to the door, and before the family recovered from their surprise the riders had come inside.

"Why Happy Tom," said Walsworth, and seeing his companion, "and where did you get that lovely piece of calico?"

"We have no time for explanations," said Tom. "Jared, we are followed by a party who want to take this girl back to the Indians to mate with an Indian chief. She has a decided preference for this particular Irish chief, and we want ye to marry us immajitly—do ye hear?"

"I am your huckleberry, Tom, stand together there," and in as few words "as the law allows" they

were made man and wife. And none too soon, for congratulations were scarcely spoken before the pursuing party rode up. Walsworth took a candle from the table and standing in the door, awaited the dismounting and coming up of the party. When they came in the Indian mother started toward her daughter, a dangerous, angry light in her eyes.

"Hold on my good madam," said Walsworth stepping before her, these are my guests."

"I have a warrant for this girl," said the constable,

"Your warrent's no good in this court," laconically replied Walsworth.

"But this is the girl's mother and she has an order from the court to take her daughter home."

"There is no court but this, and Judge Walsworth is that court," said the imperturbable Judge. "The supreme court, the United States army nor the devil himself cant separate man and wife when Judge Walsworth ties the knot—that's a tie that binds, my son. I have just married that girl to one of the best Irishmen that ever crossed the portage, You will have a Fourth of July picnic to take his wife away from him,"

"Are you married to that man?" the constable asked of Marie,

"I am and I am twenty-two years old," she said.

"Then we may as well go back" the constable to his companions, and with a revengeful scowl on the face of the Indian mother, they left the house and returned to the portage.

The next day Tom returned to the fort to wind up his business affairs and bring out their personal effects. While there he had the offer of a good position with a lumber company up the river, which he accepted. He returned to Walsworth's where he and his bride spent a brief honeymoon. After a few weeks a party came along going to the pineries and they joined them. Tom prospered, became a rich lumberman and served several terms in congress.

## THE OLD NIAGARA.

PERRY'S FLAGSHIP IN THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE.



A. L. BATES.

**B**ESIDES making an appropriation for the rebuilding of the hulk of the old Constitution, the last congress provided for the preservation of another ship forever associated with the most heroic achievements of American naval fighters. This is the Niagara flag-

ship of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry after he left the Lawrence in the celebrated battle of Lake Erie in the autumn of 1813, just ninety-three years ago. Sentiment in favor of pre-erving relics connected with leading events of the country's history has grown very strong in recent years. There is much romance in the history of Commodore Perry, and it was on the Niagara that he won the victory over the British. For some years succeeding the war of 1812 the Niagara was used as a receiving ship, but, becoming too old and dilapidated for that purpose, was sunk in Lake Erie, off the city of Erie, in what is known as Misery bay. For many years even the resting place of the old hulk was forgotten, but in 1899 Representative S. A. Davenport of the Erie district called public attention to the fact that the Niagara lay substantially intact at the bottom of Misery bay, and his successor in congress, Arthur L. Bates, introduced a bill in 1902 providing for raising

and rehabilitating the ship and placing it in a permanent building of brick and stone on the grounds of the Soldiers and Sailors' home at Erie. This became a law at the last session of congress, \$20,000 being appropriated for the purpose.

The victory of Perry on Lake Erie has been celebrated time and again in song and story, and Irving Bacheller, in "Dr. and I," has given one of the most graphic descriptions written of what took place on that eventful day in 1813. Perry's victory was the more notable on account of the extraordinary obstacles he had to encounter in building his fleet, enlisting and training his men and finally on account of the fact that he was ill of a fever when the battle was fought. At the beginning of the battle on Sept. 10 his flagship was the Lawrence, and his fighting burgee bore the dying words of the brave commander for whom the vessel

(Continued on page 9)