

**MAD ANTHONY'S  
SCOUTS  
OR  
THE RANGERS OF  
KENTUCKY**

BY EMERSON RODMAN

## **CHAPTER I.**

### **COMRADES OF THE FOREST.**

"Haow dew yeou dew, cap.?"

"Fine, yer honor; and how is yerself?"

A tall, spare specimen of the backwoodsman, who was sitting by a smouldering camp-fire, had arisen and grasped the hand of a genial-faced Irishman, who was also clad in the habiliments of the forest.

"My name is Smith, Hezekiah Smith," said the former, "What is yours?"

"Pat Mulroony, lately from Tipperary, Ireland, may it plase yer honor."

"Haow did you—how was it you came to find me, if I may be allowed to inquire?" asked Smith, peering round in his face.

"I was jist thraveling through the forest, when I spied the shmoke of fire, and says I to meself, says I, 'There's ayther some graan youngster, or a band of haythen, as doesn't care who saas their camp-fire,' and with that, I pokes around in the wood till I spies you cookin' your legs over the blaze, when I knows by the swate expression of yer countenance, that ye was a gintleman, and, bedad, I finds I was right."

"What might you be doing? What's your business?" pursued Smith, laboring under a great curiosity.

"Faith, I'm an *adventoorer*, as the convict said. I've been wanderin' in these parts for several wakes, without catchin' glimpse of a white skin, till I came upon you."

"That ain't what I mean. What brought you out here in the first place?"

"Me legs," replied the Irishman, decidedly.

"Just so, just so; if you've no objection, I'd like to know your *motive*, not meaning any offence at all."

"Begorrah, but ye're axin' too much," replied Pat, with a shake of his head. "Niver ye mind the *indoocement* that I has for taking to the woods. If I may be so bold, what was the same motive that brought yerself here?"

"Nothing in particular—nothing in particular," replied Smith, as if the subject was distasteful to him.

It was plain that both of these characters had a secret history—a history which each was determined should remain a secret with himself. The short conversation recorded above had been sufficient for this fact to become evident to both, and as if by mutual consent, neither made any further reference to it. It sufficed that they were white, civilized beings, wanderers in a dangerous territory, where neither, for an hour, could be assured of his own safety, and where both lacked the great safeguard of experience. This was enough to make them firm and fast friends at once.

"Are you baound up or down the river," queried Hezekiah Smith, refering to the Ohio, which was but a few hundred yards distant.

"Faith, it's little difference where I'm bound, as the man said when then the haythen Injuns bound him to the stake. How is it wid yerself?"

"I'm goin' daown."

"So is meself, if ye's willin' to accept of me company."

"I'm right glad to have you, for I care mighty little abaout goin' much further in this all-fired country, without some one to keep me company. It's the *ornere*st piece of country I ever seed in all my born days."

"As we agraas so well on the principles, be the same token, we'll agraa on the partic'lars. I'm thinkin' I've seen more of this country pra'ps, than ye has yerself, but it's a mighty little I've seen, after all. But, be the howly powers, it's meself knows enough not to kindle a fire in broad daylight, in these parts."

"But, Pat, s'pose you fall in the creek, and get wet, as I did—how in the name of human nature are you to dry yourself?"

"Dry yourself, is it?" repeated the Irishman, surveying his friend from head to foot; "and what is it ye wishes to dry yerself fur? Bedad, you'll find, if you're long in these parts, you'll have to go wet and hungry more than once."

"About what time do you suppose it might be?" asked Hezekiah Smith, after a moment's pause.

Pat Mulroony squinted one eye up to the sky, as if he was looking at the face of a clock, and answered:

"It lacks an hour or so yet of noon. Are ye cravin' something to ate?"

"O ginger, no! S'pose we set out upon our journey, as I don't exactly see how we're goin' to gain anything by standing here."

"Who laids the way?"

"I'll follow you, as you know more of the woods than I do."

Pat Mulroony struck out toward the Ohio River, closely followed by Hezekiah Smith. Each took long, regular strides, frequently snapping the twigs beneath their feet in spite of the care and caution exercised by each. They were two noticeable personages as they thus pressed forward, each with a long, beautiful rifle slung over his shoulder, and each attired in a demi-savage dress. The New Englander being some five or six inches the taller, was constantly peering over the shoulders of his leader, his curiosity being almost sufficient several times to make him take the lead himself.

They had walked some distance, when Hezekiah caught the shimmer of water through the trees, and knew they were approaching the Ohio. Moving several yards further, they were almost upon the bank, when Pat Mulroony fell flat upon his face as suddenly as if his feet had been tripped from beneath, and Smith, perfectly dum-founded at this curious movement, gazed bewildered at him for a second. Then thinking he had fallen and injured himself, he stooped to assist him to his feet. Motioning him off, Pat spoke rapidly in a ghostly whisper:

"Drop down on yer face! hide quick! down wid ye! quick! quick! the devil himself is coming down the river."

This overwhelming intelligence caused Hezekiah also to "come down," as suddenly as the Irishman, and for a moment nothing but the deep breathing of each could have been heard. But at the end of that time, the curiosity of Smith began to show itself.

"What does he look like, Pat?"

"Did you ever set eyes on a tappin-snarkle?"

"Yes; one of them once bit half of my big toe off, when I was wadin' in a mill-pond."

"Well, bedad, when I cotched the glimpse of him, he looked like a tappin-snarkle, as big as a house."

The curiosity of Hezekiah Smith was roused to its highest pitch. Such a dreadful monster as had been seen by the Irishman, if coming down the river, must soon pass before his view also; and he accordingly lifted his head slowly, until he had raised it and his shoulders perhaps a couple of feet, when he suddenly dropped it again, as if a thousand pound weight had fallen upon his head.

"Did ye see it?" inquired Pat, not daring to lift his own head.

"No; but I was afraid it might see me," replied Hezekiah, slowly raising his head again.

Taking courage from his immunity, Pat Mulroony gradually straightened his arm until he had brought his head nearly on a level with his companion's, when they both looked long and

searchingly through the trees, but without discovering the Satanic personage that had been announced.

While gazing thus, a sudden rushing sound was heard, and the heads of our two friends dropped so suddenly that Hezekiah bit his tongue sorely, and the chin of the Irishman dented far into the earth.

"Jerusalem! he hadn't wings, had he?" asked Hezekiah, turning his face around so as to speak to the Irishman.

"He was paddlin' when I saw him, and was too big to flit among the trees here—howly mother! there he comes agin!"

As he spoke, several quails sped overhead with that whirring noise peculiar to the bird. This explained the cause of their fright.

Familiarity with danger breeds contempt, and our two friends, gathering courage every moment, again raised their heads, and looked steadily and unflinchingly out among the trees upon the river. And while thus engaged, they saw what at first appeared to be a small house floating down the river. As it drifted slowly past, the two rose to their feet, and ventured nearer the shore.

"O thunder!" exclaimed Hezekiah Smith, with a sigh of relief, "that's what they call a flat-boat."

"How do you know?" asked Pat; "ye says ye have never been in these parts, and how do you know what one is?"

"When I was at Pittsburgh, I seen two set out down the river, and they looked just like that."

"Be jabbers! if it's a flat-boat there must be some one aboard of it," added Pat, his countenance lighting up; "and if there's some one aboard of it, be the same token, there's a chance of our getting down the river."

Hopeful and joyous, both scrambled headlong down the bank with the brilliant idea in their heads. The flat-boat was in the centre of the current, and, had the appearance of a square box; or, perhaps, a better idea of it could be given by comparing it to a cabin resting upon a scow, whose gunwales run higher than usual on every side. A long, sweeping oar was hung at either end, for the purpose of keeping the vessel in the channel, and guiding it through eddies and dangerous passages in the river. Not a living soul upon it was visible.

"Drat the luck!" exclaimed Hezekiah Smith, after stumbling along the shore for several minutes.

"Be the powers, but we'll *boord* the craft, and take possession!"

Hezekiah caught at the idea, and had already stepped into the water to carry it into execution, when Pat, with an exclamation of astonishment and alarm, caught him by the shoulder and drew him back.



## CHAPTER II. BOARDING THE FLAT-BOAT.

The cause of Pat's alarm was immediately manifest to Hezekiah. The head and shoulders of a man were visible on the flat-boat, as was also the muzzle of a rifle he held in his hand. Thinking he was about to speak or fire, our two friends drew back and waited for his words. To their surprise, however, his head almost immediately disappeared, and their most urgent calls and entreaties could not induce him to show himself again.

By this time, the flat-boat had drifted some distance below them, and they ran down the bank so as to recover their lost ground.

"We've got to *boord* it," said Pat, as they took their station.

"How is it to be done?"

"Why, you jist wade out and climb up the side."

"And what are you going to do?"

"I'll stay on the bank to cover your retrate if you gits licked."

"Cover my retreat," repeated Hezekiah, as if he found it difficult to understand the exact meaning of his friend.

"Suppose that man fires at me and kills me?"

"Be that token, Pat Mulroony will consider that it's dangerous for him to follow yees, and will retrate, like a wise gineral, into the woods."

Hezekiah still debated whether it was his duty to run such a risk for the benefit of his companion or not, but finally compromised the matter by offering to carry him upon his back.

"The water ain't very deep," said he, "and as my legs are a yard or two the longest, I'll keep you dry, and you'll run the same chance of being struck that I will."

"It's a bargain," said Pat, immediately mounting the back of Hezekiah.

For the convenience of the latter, the Irishman took the guns of both, and with his heavy load upon his back, Hezekiah Smith stepped cautiously into the river. He had entered it some distance below the flat-boat, so that he would have no trouble in intercepting it, and he now strided as rapidly as possible through the water.

He had gone, perhaps, two-thirds of the distance, and the water reached almost to his waist, when the head of the man on the flat-boat again appeared, and pointing his rifle over it, he called out:

"You infernal decoys, what do you mean by coming out here? I'll give you just two seconds to reach the shore again, and if you come a foot nearer, I'll blow daylight through you."

Instead of turning round and retreating, Hezekiah ducked his head at this sudden command, so as to bring the Irishman as a sort of shield before him. Throwing him too far forward, the consequence was, that Pat went completely over his head into the water. At sight of this discomfiture of both, the man in the

flat-boat evidently concluded their presence could be of little danger to him, and accordingly called out.

"Come out to the boat, and I'll help you on board."

"Murther! Can't ye pick us up?" cried Pat, floundering through the water. It being very manifest that such a feat, under the circumstances, was impossible, our two friends made the best of their way forward, and upon reaching the side of the boat were assisted on board by the man who, a few minutes before, had ordered them away so peremptorily.

"Who are you?" he demanded, as soon as they had recovered breath.

"Patrick Mulroony, from Tipperary, Ireland, at your service, sir."

"Hezekiah Smith, also."

"Isn't there any one else ashore?"

"Not that we knows of. Are you the only one on these premises?"

"No, sir, you will see my companions shortly."

The speaker was a young man of rather prepossessing address, one who, to judge from appearances, was as much a stranger in these wilds, as our two friends, who have been already introduced to the reader.

He was attired in a plain, homespun dress, such as, at the period of which we write, were more often seen in civilized communities, than as far west as this portion of the Ohio. He

had a keen, black eye, dark, flowing hair, a pleasant face, considerably embrowned, and bearing the unmistakable impress of a firm will, and iron determination. He scanned his visitors as they came aboard, and seemed to gather from a glance their character.

"If you've no objection, what might be your name?" asked Hezekiah, in his gentle, insinuating voice.

"Luther Waring."

"Eh, yes, just so; glad to hear. Ain't married, now, I dare say?"

"No, sir."

"Might be engaged, perhaps?"

"Yes; to tell the truth, I am," replied Waring, "and, if I ever get safely through this infernal Indian country, down to the settlements, I'll be married."

"Where might the—where might the lady be now?" pursued Hezekiah, evidently determined to get all he could out of Waring.

"She and her father are in the cabin, and, I suppose, will soon show themselves."

"What might be her name, now—that is, if you have no objection to telling me."

"Certainly not," laughed Waring. "She is from the same village that I have left; and her name is Virginia: daughter of Mr. George Lander. Anything else that I can impart?"

"You are bound to the settlement, down the river, I suppose?"

"I have hinted as much; yes, that is our destination."

Hezekiah paused at this point, as he seemed to have run out of questions, seeing which, Pat Mulroony whispered—

"Begorra, ye isn't going to sthop in this place, be yees?"

The querulous New Englander placed the stock of his rifle a few inches from his feet, and holding his arms over the muzzle, seemed to be engaged in a deep study for a few moments. Suddenly, slinging his right leg around the other, so that it rested upon the tip of the foot, he turned his beaming face toward Waring, and continued—

"Is the gal good-looking, now?"

Waring laughed outright.

"You shall be the judge, if you only wait a few minutes."

"Of course—of course—I only asked to—that is, I just asked—  
—"

"To find out," put in Pat, with a comical expression, as he looked down and surveyed his clinging garments.

"Do you wish to change your clothes?" asked Waring, who had noticed the furtive glance of the Irishman.

"There bein' ladies in the neighborhood, p'rhaps they might 'bjact, as, be the token that we have no clouthes to put on, our costume would be rather picturesque, as the man said when he

came out from the river, and found a cow had ate up his garments."

"We can furnish you with something I think."

"It's entirely unnecessary, entirely unnecessary," said Hezekiah, with a graceful wave of his hand. "The water is not cold at all, and the bathing was quite pleasant. But, I was going to ask whether the Indians had troubled you yet?"

"If you had examined the side of the boat as you came up, you would have seen several bullets imbedded in it. They were fired by Indians."

"Deu tell!" gasped Hezekiah.

"We paid no heed to them at first, in the hopes that they would leave us, when they found we were aware of their motives; but, as they kept following us, Mr. Lander and myself sent several shots among them, that made them howl, and send volley after volley after us in return."

"They didn't kill yer?"

"They did no damage, as our boats were constructed with a knowledge of all the exigencies that might arise. How is it with yourselves?"

"I haven't seen an Indian in a long time," replied Hezekiah; "but I have smelt their camp-fires several times."

"I've saan plenty of the haythen," added Pat, "but have given them a wide barth, and so I'm plased to state, I've suffered no harm up to this point in the prosadings."

"I have never been in this part of the country before," said Waring, speaking in a more serious tone than he had used thus far; "but I am aware of the perils and dangers that encompass us. Our immunity from danger thus far, leads me to hope for the best, as, from the knowledge that I gained before starting, the settlement, which is our destination, cannot be more than twenty miles distant, near enough for us to reach it to-morrow, if nothing unexpected occurs. I must say, however, I am filled with considerable misgivings. We are in the most dangerous point of the river; and I cannot help thinking that the crisis will come to-night. I am indeed glad that you two have come on board."

"Thunder! so am I," said Hezekiah, "for I was lost in the woods, and was beginning to get scart. We are bound with you for the settlement. Hello!"

At this juncture the cabin-door opened, and a man, some sixty years of age, made his appearance. He was very grey, with a feeble, attenuated frame, and the air of one who, for years, had not seen a day of perfect health.

Waring immediately introduced him to the Irishman and New Englander, the former grasping him heartily by the hands, and the latter scraping his feet very elaborately, as he returned his pressure.

The face of the elderly personage was careworn, and he spoke but a few words, merely expressing his pleasure at meeting his two friends, when he returned to the cabin.

Hezekiah Smith was just on the point of asking a question concerning him, when the cabin-door again opened, and Virginia Lander made her appearance. She had the same black eyes and hair as her lover—a bright, hopeful expression of countenance, singularly in contrast with that of her parent, and a nervous restlessness of manner, such as is often seen in the mere child. She was not beautiful, but she was handsome, and inspired every one in her favor. Waring immediately introduced her, as he had her father. Hezekiah retreated a step or two, lifted his hat from his head, and was just in the act of making another sweeping scrape with his foot, when she brought these preparations to an end by taking his hand, speaking her pleasure, and turning to the Irishman, and doing the same.

"Extremely happy to meet you," said Hezekiah. "If you've no objection, I would like to know——"

"Be the powers! but look yonder jist!" interrupted Pat, pointing down the river. "What does that mane?"

Waring had already caught sight of the suspicious object, and turned to Hezekiah.

"What do you make of it?"

"A lot of Indians, as sure as thunder."



### CHAPTER III. THE SHADOW OF DANGER.

"It's a canoe—one of them infernal Indian ones," added Hezekiah. "I know enough of 'em to be sure of it."

The object in question was close under the Ohio shore, and at the distance when first seen, might have been mistaken for a common log; but Waring, who had learned to regard every such manifestation with suspicion in the Indian country, was convinced that it was something more the instant he caught a glimpse of it. Besides, Hezekiah was positive, and if any individual was competent to judge in regard to the identity of such a vessel, his experience, as related at the commencement of this tale, should certainly have pointed him out as that man.

If there were any lingering doubts in the minds of the whites, they were instantly set at rest by seeing the canoe put out from the shore, and head across toward the Kentucky bank. The tufted heads of three Indians were visible, and their paddles flashed brightly in the sunlight, as the frail vessel shot swiftly over the surface of the water.

"I didn't mane to alarm yees, but maning no offince to the iligant lady present, might I vinture to suggest in the mildest terms possible, there'd bist be none but *men* on deck jist now."

"He is right," said Waring, in a lower tone to our heroine, "it is best that you go below."

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