

The year that grandmother spent at Grandpappy's was a very interesting one, as the life in the country was new to her, tho her home town was only a couple thousand inhabitants. Grandmammy always talked in German, and tho others talked to her in English, she refused to learn to talk in any other tongue than her own, tho she could understand more or less English. Grandpappy never worked hard on the farm, and most of the work fell to his sons, and hired help. But Grandmammy, who was a little woman, not quite five feet high, was a very busy person at all times. She took great pride in her garden, which was a very good one, and did all kinds of housekeeping well. My own grandmother used to slip off when the work was done, and passing up the old lane, she would climb up into the little white pine forest, and sit there for hours, listening to the whisperings of the thick bushy trees. I have been there many an hour myself, and know what a delightful place it is. The trees never were very tall, but thick and close. The ground is bare of vegetation, and the long dead needles, falling in thick layers, make a brown carpet so soft and deep, that one can walk about without any noise whatever. And the pines always have such a mysterious luring attraction, that is quite delicious, and compelling. The forest breezes always bear a faint fragrance of woods odors, here, and the pines smell so good and clean, and invigorating, and there is a quiet and seclusion about the pine wood, that is altogether lacking in the deciduous forest. One fall I built a small shack up in these woods, and spent many an hour there resting after hunting along the base of the Ridge, and lying on a heap of dry chestnut leaves that I had raked into the shack, dreaming of the old times that grandmother and my own mother spent in those very woods.

Futon County always was a great place for snakes of all kinds, including rattle-snakes, copperheads, blowingvipers, and black snakes. Uncle Melly killed 126 of all kinds one season so it may be seen that they were very plentiful. One Sunday morning, grandfather and grandmother were walking out to the north field to see how the corn was coming up. They had the barren northern field, up along the last "draught" planted that year as an experiment to see if it would yield. On the way over, they scared up a big black-snake which, strange to say, ran up a small sapling, winding around the trunk as it climbed. Grandfather threw a stone and knocked it down to the ground, when Jack, the big farm dog, made quick work of it, whirling it around his head. This frightened grandmother and she wanted to go back at once, but as grandfather said there would likely be only one other around, they kept a sharp lookout and presently saw another. Jack killed this one too. By this time grandmother insisted in going back to the house. On the way they saw another black snake, and grandfather and Jack finished this one. Still they were not through, for a fourth one ran into a bushy tree, and it too was dislodged, and killed. This is a remarkable snake story, perhaps, but its veracity is its only excuse.