

**THE WARWICK  
WOODLANDS; OR  
THINGS AS THEY WERE  
TWENTY YEARS AGO**

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The Warwick woodlands; or Things as they were twenty years ago by Frank Forester

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**FRANK FORESTER**

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THE  
WARWICK WOODLANDS;

OR,

Things as they were there

TWENTY YEARS AGO.

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BY FRANK FORESTER, *second*

*Henry W. Herbert*

NEW EDITION, REVISED AND CORRECTED

WITH

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1851

# THE WARWICK WOODLANDS.

## MY FIRST VISIT.

### DAY THE FIRST.

It was a fine October evening when I was sitting on the back stoop of his cheerful little bachelor's establishment in Mercer street, with my old friend and comrade, Henry Archer. Many a frown of fortune had we two weathered out together; in many of her brightest smiles had we two revelled—never was there a stauncher friend, a merrier companion, a keener sportsman, or a better fellow, than this said Harry; and here had we two met, three thousand miles from home, after almost ten years of separation, just the same careless, happy, dare-all do-no-goods that we were when we parted in St. James's street,—he for the West, I for the Eastern World—he to fell trees, and build log huts in the back-woods of Canada,—I to shoot tigers and drink arrack punch in the Carnatic. The world had wagged with us as with most others: now up, now down, and laid us to, at last, far enough from the goal for which we started—so that, as I have said already, on landing in New York, having heard nothing of him for ten years, whom the deuce should I tumble on but that same worthy, snugly housed, with a neat bachelor's ménage, and every thing ship-shape about him?—So, in the natural course of things, we were at once inseparables.

Well—as I said before, it was a bright October evening, with the clear sky, rich sunshine, and brisk breezy freshness, which indicate that loveliest of the American months,—dinner was over, and with a pitcher of the liquid ruby of Latour, a brace of half-pint beakers, and a score—my contribution—of those most exquisite of smokables, the true old Manilla cheroots, we were consoling the inward man in a way that would have opened the eyes, with abhorrent admiration, of any advocate

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of that coldest of comforts—cold water—who should have got a chance peep at our snuggery.

Suddenly, after a long pause, during which he had been stimulating his ideas by assiduous fumigation, blowing off his steam in a long vapory cloud that curled a minute afterward about his temples,—“What say you, Frank, to a start to-morrow?” exclaimed Harry,—“and a week’s right good shooting?”

“Why, as for that,” said I, “I wish for nothing better—but where the deuce would you go to get shooting?”

“Never fash your beard, man,” he replied, “I’ll find the ground and the game too, so you’ll find share of the shooting!—Holloa! there—Tim, Tim Matlock.”

And in brief space that worthy minister of mine host’s pleasures made his appearance, smoothing down his short black hair, clipped in the orthodox bowl fashion, over his bluff good-natured visage with one hand, while he employed its fellow in hitching up a pair of most voluminous unmentionables, of thick Yorkshire cord.

A character was Tim—and now I think of it, worthy of brief description. Born, I believe—bred, certainly, in a hunting stable, far more of his life passed in the saddle than elsewhere, it was not a little characteristic of my friend Harry to have selected this piece of Yorkshire oddity as his especial body servant; but if the choice were queer, it was at least successful, for an honest, more faithful, hard-working, and withal better hearted, and more humorous varlet never drew curry-comb over horse-hide, or clothes-brush over broad-cloth.

His visage was, as I have said already, bluff and good-natured, with a pair of hazel eyes, of the smallest—but, at the same time, of the very merriest—twinkling from under the thick black eye-brows, which were the only hairs suffered to grace his clean-shaved countenance. An indescribable pug nose, and a good clean cut mouth, with a continual dimple at the left corner, made up his phiz. For the rest, four feet ten inches did Tim stand in his stockings, about two-ten of which were monopolized by his back, the shoulders of which would have done honor to a six foot pugilist,—his legs, though short and bowed a little outward, by continual horse exercise, were right tough serviceable members, and I have seen them bearing their owner on through mud and mire, when straighter, longer, and more fair proportioned limbs were at an awful discount.

Depositing his hat then on the floor, smoothing his hair, and hitching up his smalls, and striving most laboriously not to grin till he should have cause, stood Tim, like "Giafar awaiting his master's award!"

"Tim!" said Harry Archer—

"Sur!" said Tim.

"Tim! Mr. Forester and I are talking of going up to-morrow—what do you say to it?"

"Oop yonner!" queried Tim, in the most extraordinary West-Riding Yorkshire, indicating the direction, by pointing his right thumb over his left shoulder—"Weel, Ay'se nought to say about it—not Ay!"

"Soh! the cattle are all right, and the wagon in good trim, and the dogs in exercise, are they?"

"Ay'se warrant um!"

"Well, then, have all ready for a start at six to-morrow,—put Mr. Forester's Manton alongside my Joe Spurling in the top tray of the case, my single gun and my double rifle in the lower, and see the magazine well filled—the Diamond gun-powder, you know, from Mr. Brough's. You'll put up what Mr. Forester will want, for a week, you know—he does not know the country yet, Tim;—and, hark you, what wine have I at Tom Draw's?"

"No but a case of claret."

"I thought so, then away with you! down to the Baron's and get two baskets of the Star, and stop at Fulton Market, and get the best half hundred round of spiced beef you can find—and then go up to Starke's at the Octagon, and get a gallon of his old Perintosh—that's all, Tim—off with you!—No! stop a minute!" and he filled up a beaker and handed it to the original, who, shutting both his eyes, suffered the fragrant claret to roll down his gullet in the most scientific fashion, and then, with what he called a bow, turned right about, and exit.

The sun rose bright on the next morning, and half an hour before the appointed time, Tim entered my bed-chamber, with a cup of mocha, and the intelligence that "Measter had been oop this hour and better, and did na like to be kept waiting!"—so up I jumped, and scarcely had got through the business of rigging myself, before the rattle of wheels announced the arrival of the wagon.

And a model was that shooting wagon—a long, light-bodied box, with a low rail—a high seat and dash in front, and a low



servant's seat behind, with lots of room for four men and as many dogs, with guns and luggage, and all appliances to boot, enough to last a month, stowed away out of sight, and out of reach of weather. The nags, both nearly thorough-bred, fifteen two inches high, stout, clean-limbed, active animals—the off-side horse a gray, almost snow-white—the near, a dark chestnut, nearly black—with square docks setting admirably off their beautiful round quarters, high crests, small blood-like heads, and long thin manes—spoke volumes for Tim's stable science; for though their ribs were slightly visible, their muscles were well filled, and hard as granite. Their coats glanced in the sunshine—the white's like statuary marble; the chestnut's like high polished copper—in short the whole turn-out was perfect.

The neat black harness, relieved merely by a crest, with every strap that could be needed, in its place, and not one buckle or one thong superfluous; the bright steel curbs, with the chains jingling as the horses tossed and pawed impatient for a start; the tapering holly whip; the bear-skins covering the seats; the top-coats spread above them—every thing, in a word, without bordering on the slang, was perfectly correct and gnostic.

Four dogs—a brace of setters of the light active breed, one of which will out-work a brace of the large, lumpy, heavy-headed dogs,—one red, the other white and liver, both with black noses, their legs and sterns beautifully feathered, and their hair, glossy and smooth as silk, showing their excellent condition—and a brace of short-legged, bony, liver-colored spaniels—with their heads thrust one above the other, over or through the railings, and their tails waving with impatient joy—occupied the after portion of the wagon.

Tim, rigged in plain gray frock, with leathers and white tops, stood, in true tiger fashion, at the horses' heads, with the fore-finger of his right hand resting upon the curb of the gray horse, as with his left he rubbed the nose of the chestnut; while Harry, cigar in mouth, was standing at the wheel, reviewing with a steady and experienced eye the gear, which seemed to give him perfect satisfaction. The moment I appeared on the steps,

"In with you, Frank—in with you," he exclaimed, disengaging the hand-reins from the terrets into which they had been thrust, "I have been waiting here these five minutes. Jump up, Tim!"

And, gathering the reins up firmly, he mounted by the wheel,

tucked the top-coat about his legs, shook out the long lash of his tandem whip, and lapped it up in good style.

"I always drive with one of these"—he said, half apologetically, as I thought—"they are so handy on the road for the cur dogs, when you have setters with you—they plague your life out else. Have you the pistol-case in, Tim, for I don't see it?"

"All raight, sur," answered he, not over well pleased, as it seemed, that it should even be suspected that he could have forgotten any thing—"All raight!"

"Go along, then," cried Harry, and at the word the high bred nags went off; and though my friend was too good and too old a hand to worry his cattle at the beginning of a long day's journey—many minutes had not passed before we found ourselves on board the ferry-boat, steaming it merrily towards the Jersey shore.

"A quarter past six to the minute," said Harry, as we landed at Hoboken.

"Let *Shot* and *Chase* run, Tim, but keep the spaniels in till we pass Hackensack."

"Awa wi yo, ya rascals," exclaimed Tim, and out went the high blooded dogs upon the instant, yelling and jumping in delight about the horses—and off we went, through the long sandy street of Hoboken, leaving the private race-course of that staunch sportsman, Mr. Stevens, on the left, with several powerful horses taking their walking exercise in their neat body clothes.

"That puts me in mind, Frank," said Harry, as he called my attention to the thorough-breds, "we must be back next Tuesday for the Beacon Races—the new course up there on the hill; you can see the steps that lead to it—and now is not this lovely?" he continued, as we mounted the first ridge of Weehawken, and looked back over the beautiful broad Hudson, gemmed with a thousand snowy sails of craft or shipping—"Is not this lovely, Frank? and, by the by, you will say, when we get to our journey's end, you never drove through prettier scenery in your life. Get away, Bob, you villain—nibbling, nibbling at your curb! get away, lads!"

And away we went at a right rattling pace over the hills, and through the cedar swamp; and, passing through a toll-gate, stopped with a sudden jerk at a long low tavern on the left-hand side.

"We must stop here, Frank. My old friend, Ingliss, a brother trigger, too, would think the world was coming to an end if I drove by—twenty-nine minutes these six miles," he added, looking at his watch, "that will do! Now, Tim, look sharp—just a sup of water! Good day—good day to you, Mr. Ingliss; now for a glass of your milk punch"—and mine host disappeared, and in a moment came forth with two rummers of the delicious compound, a big bright lump of ice bobbing about in each among the nutmeg.

"What, off again for Orange county, Mr. Archer? I was telling the old woman yesterday that we should have you by before long; well, you'll find cock pretty plenty, I expect; there was a chap by here from Ulster—let me see, what day was it—Friday, I guess—with produce, and he was telling, they have had no cold snap yet up there! Thank you, sir, good luck to you!"

And off we went again, along a level road, crossing the broad, slow river from whence it takes its name, into the town of Hackensack.

"We breakfast here, Frank"—as he pulled up beneath the low Dutch shed projecting over half the road in front of the neat tavern—"How are you, Mr. Vanderbeck—we want a beef-steak, and a cup of tea, as quick as you can give it us; we'll make the tea ourselves; bring in the black tea, Tim—the nags as usual."

"Aye! aye! sur"—"tak them out—leave t' harness on, all but their bridles"—to an old gray-headed hostler. "Whisp off their legs a bit; Ay will be oot enoo!"

After as good a breakfast as fresh eggs, good country bread—worth ten times the poor trash of city bakers—prime butter, cream, and a fat steak could furnish, at a cheap rate, and with a civil and obliging landlord, away we went again over the red-hills—an infernal ugly road, sandy, and rough, and stony—for ten miles farther to New Prospect.

"Now you shall see some scenery worth looking at," said Harry, as we started again, after watering the horses, and taking in a bag with a peck of oats—"to feed at three o'clock, Frank, when we stop to grub, which must do *al fresco*—" my friend explained—"for the landlord, who kept the only tavern on the road, went West this summer, bit by the land mania, and there is now no stopping place 'twixt this and Warwick," naming the village for which we were bound. "You got that beef boiled, Tim?"