

**MARK TIDD,
MANUFACTURER**

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Mark Tidd, manufacturer by Clarence Budington Kelland

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CLARENCE BUDINGTON KELLAND

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1914



PLATE 117

THE HAND CAME CLOSER AND CLOSER

MARK TIDD MANUFACTURER

BY
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"MARK TIDD" "MARK TIDD IN THE BACKWOODS"
"MARK TIDD'S CITADEL" "MARK TIDD, EDITOR" ETC.

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CHAPTER I

BINNEY JENKS, Tallow Martin, and I were sitting on Mark Tidd's front porch, waiting for him to get through supper. Maybe you've got an idea that didn't take any patience, but you want to change your mind pretty quick. Eating supper wasn't any two-second job with Marcus Aurelius Fortunatus Tidd. You can bet it wasn't. He didn't just grab a bite and run like us fellows do, but he sat down to the table with his stummick about six inches away from the edge of it, and kept on eating till he touched.

He knew we were waiting for him, but that didn't make a bit of difference. If General Grant and the Emperor Napoleon were hanging around waiting for him to come out and play tag with them, he'd have eaten just as much and not a mite faster. When you weigh as much as

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he does I calc'late it takes more to keep you going, just like it takes more wood to run a big stove than it does a little one. It didn't take him much more than an hour to get his stummick filled up this time, and out he waddled, looking kind of pleased and peaceful, with his hand resting gentle on his belt.

"Um! . . ." says he.

"Hope you didn't hustle out before you got plenty," says I.

He looked at me out of his little eyes that had to sort of peer over the tops of his dumpling cheeks. "Plunk," says he, "if you d-d-do everythin' in your l-life as thorough as I eat, folks is goin' to admire you consid'able. I started in with vegetable soup at six o'clock, and I don't recall neglectin' a dish from that to apple pie. Two pieces of apple pie," says he.

"It's lucky," says Binney, "that your pa's rich. If he wasn't he couldn't afford to keep you. A poor fam'ly would have to drown you in a pail of water like folks does kittens they can't figger to take care of."

"Take a kind of big pail of water," said Tallow. "Guess they'd need the village stand-pipe."

"How's your pa and ma?" says I.

"Oh," says Mark, "Ma she's b-b-busy, as usual. Just a-hustlin' from git-up to go-to bed. Claims she's p-plumb tired out, but the