

One Favourite Story about Pátrick Henry

from Able's "Life of John Tyler."

It is said that as Pátrick Henry, Benjamin Harrison, Judge Tyler, and Colonel Christian were hurrying along, they saw a little hut in the forest. An old woman was chopping wood by the door. The men were hungry, and stopped to ask her for food.

"Who are you?" she asked.

"We are members of the legislature," said Pátrick Henry; "we have just been compelled to leave Charlottesville on account of the British."

"Ride on, then, ye cowardly knaves!" she said in wrath. "Here are my husband and sons just gone to Charlottesville to fight for ye, and you running away with all your might. Clear out! Ye shall have nothing here."

"But," replied Mr. Henry, "we were obliged to flee. It would not do for the legislature to be broken up by the enemy. Here is Mr. Benjamin Harrison; you don't think he would have fled had it not been necessary?"

"I always thought a great deal of Mr. Harrison till now," answered the old woman, "but he'd no business to run from the enemy." And she started to shut the door in their faces.

"Wait a moment, my good woman," cried Mr. Henry; "would you believe that Judge Tyler or Colonel Christian would take to flight if there were not good cause for so doing?"

"No, indeed I wouldn't."

"But," he said, "Judge Tyler and Colonel Christian are here."

"They are? Well, I would never have thought it. I didn't suppose they would ever run from the British; but since they have, they shall have nothing to eat in my house. You may ride along."

Things were getting desperate. Then Judge Tyler stepped forward: "What would you say, my good woman, if I were to tell you that Pátrick Henry fled with the rest of us?"

"Pátrick Henry!" she answered angrily, "I should tell you there wasn't a word of truth in it! Pátrick Henry would never do such a cowardly thing."

"But this is Pátrick Henry," said Judge Tyler. The old woman was astonished; but she stammered and pulled at her apron string, and said: "Well, if that's Pátrick Henry, it must be all right. Come in, and ye shall have the best I have in the house."
