

was being scoured for the missing Merritt child, Jake's left knee was especially troublesome, so that in spite of painkiller, and rum, it had kept him awake a good part of the night, and toward morning was especially troublesome. At five, therefore, in the morning, Jake sat up in his bed, surrounded by his dogs and expressed himself in language that was profane and impure. Having relieved himself after this fashion, and still rubbing the throbbing knee, Jake addressed himself to his "family."

"Fellows," said Jake, "it's getting ready to pour down cats and dogs, and it looks to me as if we'd better be gittin' busy and pull in some wood and eats before we get swamped in."

His family replied with various thumpings of tails upon the floor, with leaping up to lick his face and to paw the soldier generally.

"That'll do! That'll do," he admonished. "Git down, Ypres! Here you, Nervy Shapelle!" All of Jake's dogs were named after some war famous part of France. "Git on down, I say! We gotta git on out and git some of them mallard duck thats thick as thieves on the top of the slough. They're waitin' for us! Come along and we'll have a hell-fine breakfast."

He yawned and stretched himself, gave a final squeeze to his knee, put on his trousers -- the only garment he discarded upon retiring -- took down his rifle, and with his dogs at his heels, Jake opened his door. Instantly a united menacing growl burst from the throats of his dogs, as with a concerted motion they leaped forward on the run, and then held back, growling and barking.

On a mound that rose directly in front of the veteran's