

I saw him leave, cursing his inability to move quickly.

As the years passed, other children other generations were enjoying the Rhodes' hospitality. Their special favorite was Keith Barber. One day Mr. Rhodes and Keith were hunting rabbits in a field some little distance from the house. A rabbit, cornered, hid in a stone pile. As Mr. Rhodes laid down his shot gun to pull out stones and dislodge his quarry, the gun exploded, the full charge hitting him in the leg.

"Get help, Keith," he gasped. Keith, only a little boy, ran to the house, but no one was there. Then, panting for breath, he continued the full mile to the village, before he could find a doctor.

When help finally came, Mr. Rhodes was unconscious. The shattered leg had to be amputated. Mr. Rhodes was weakened from loss of blood and lived only a short time.

The children lost a good friend, the town a good citizen. We all grieved--and yet, remembering this heavy-set virile man's impatience and frustration at enforced inactivity with only a sprained ankle--would he have wanted to live, a hopeless cripple? I think not.

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The day grows late, the shadows lengthen. I shiver a little with the early evening chill. I must find the car and continue on my journey. I suddenly realize that I have more friends here than in the little village above. It is a consoling thought that perhaps, some day, I too may lie here in this peaceful spot in the company of old and beloved friends.