

Side 2 Aimwell and Boniface

Aimwell: [Heading to the bar] You're my landlord, I suppose?

Boniface: [Desperately trying to be elegant and impress] Yes, sir, I 'm old Will Boniface, pretty well known upon this road. What will your honour please to drink? [He throws a tea towel over one forearm and bows awkwardly over the bar's offerings.]

Aimwell: I have heard your town of Lichfield much famed for ale; I think I 'll taste that.

Boniface: Sir, I have now in my cellar ten tun of the best ale in Kentucky. I have lived here in Lichfield, man and boy, all my life. I have fed purely upon ale; I have et my ale, drank my ale, and I always sleep upon ale. [Hands Aimwell a glass] Your worship's health.—[They drink.]

Aimwell: [Drinks, coughs] 'Tis confounded strong!

Boniface: Strong! it must be so, or how should we be strong that drink it?

Aimwell: And have you lived so long upon this ale, landlord?

Boniface: Eight-and-fifty years, upon my credit, sir—but it killed my wife, poor woman.

Aimwell: How came that to pass?

Boniface: Why, it was the whiskey that killed her. Mrs. Bountiful said so. But my wife died happy, face down in a vat, so I'm contented.

Aimwell: And who is Mrs. Bountiful?

Boniface: Sir, Mrs. Bountiful is the best of women. Let's drink her health! Her last husband, Charles Bountiful, left her worth a hundred thousand a year; and I believe she lays out half of it in charitable uses for the good of us neighbours. She cures rheumatisms in men; fits of the mother, in women; the cough and chilblains, in children: in short, she has cured more people in and about Lichfield within ten years than the doctors have killed in twenty.

Aimwell: Has the lady any family?

Boniface: Yes, sir; she has a daughter by Charles: Dorinda, the finest woman in all Kentucky, 'cept for her mother, and with the greatest fortune.

Aimwell: A beauty with a great fortune? Surely, this Dorinda must be married?

Boniface: Not yet, sir, but there's many as would like to.

Boniface: Mrs. Bountiful has a son too, by her first husband: Mr. Jeremiah Sullen, who married a fine lady from Manhattan last year; if you please, sir, we'll drink his health.

Aimwell: What sort of a man is he?

Boniface: Why, sir, the man 's decent enough; says little, thinks less, and does—nothing but drink, faith. But he's a man of a great estate, and bothers nobody but his wife.