

MONTANA'S VIGILANTE DAYS

An Old Timer's Recollections of Several Famous Lynching Boes.

ONE MAN STRETCHED BY MISTAKE

Deer Lodge Innocent Murdered "Over the Range" While on a Roasted Greaser-Slade's Career.

Of many men who were hanged in the early days in Montana, it can be said of the most of them that they only deserved their fate. But as it is perfectly natural and to be expected, there were instances where innocent men paid the penalty of a crime they never committed.

In the early days, relates the Anaconda Standard, it was the strong arm of the vigilantes which cleared the territory of desperadoes and few there are who have questioned the justice of their acts. In the history of the great frontier movement which found a wilderness in its path and left behind it a civilization, the movement which redeemed a continent, there has always been two classes of people. One consists of the immigrant, the trail-blazer, who has left his native state for love of adventure and in the hope of finding wealth in a new home. The other class consists of those who are forced by a cruel past to keep on the fringe of civilization. These are the men who, floating into Bannack and Virginia City on the wave of immigration, gave these places as varied and desperate an assortment of unwhipped rascals as the world has ever seen. When their crimes became too notorious the former class arose and organized the vigilantes, who quickly cleared the territory of the desperadoes, who were beginning to have things their own way. How thoroughly they did their work is shown by the fact that one which has been often told.

As the murderers and bandits were cleaned out the old organization of vigilantes fell away from its first high ideal and was worked times as an instrument to satisfy personal spite by unscrupulous men, who once and a while gained control of the organization and several instances are known where men were hanged by a miscarriage of justice.

Dr. Hardenbrook, coroner of Deer Lodge county, who came to Montana in 1863 and was an eye witness of the operations of the vigilantes, is authority in relation to two instances where the death penalty was unjustly inflicted.

The Steer Came Back.

In the winter of 1885 a man by the name of Johnston was hanged in Deer Lodge for stealing a steer. None of the old vigilantes were implicated, however, in this miscarriage of justice, for such it proved to be. A steer had been stolen from Reese Henderson and suspicion finally, after investigation, rested upon this man, Johnston. He bore some too good a reputation in the town and was known as a pious thief and his disposition to take property which did not belong to him was the strongest evidence against him. He was arrested pending further investigation. There was no jail at the time and guards cost \$10 a day. It was too expensive a luxury to keep a prisoner a long time and in spite of Johnston's pious protestations of innocence he was put on trial immediately. The case against him was practically this: The steer had been stolen; he was known to be a thief; consequently he stole it. It was conclusive evidence to the jury and he was promptly found guilty and swung into eternity from the limb of a convenient tree. In the spring the steer came back, but Johnston was held down by several feet of Deer Lodge soil. It was consoling to think that Johnston would probably have met eventually the fate he did, if he had been permitted to pursue his vocation.

Dr. Hardenbrook tells of another hanging which took place in Alder gulch in August, 1884, in which the man who kicked the beam certainly deserved a milder fate than an eternity for which he was not prepared, but the execution of those early days knew few gradations. A man by the name of Brady came out to Alder gulch from Iowa and opened a saloon. He was a young man, genial, open-hearted and generous save when under the influence of his wine was over him. He was the time of the tragedy occurred, was getting to be most of the time. He had around the saloon as an assistant a man by the name of Kelly, who also was under the influence most of the time. A miner by the name of Lynch dropped into the saloon one evening and his wife came with him. Kelly was on shift and what took place in the saloon is not known. Dr. Hardenbrook's office was just across the street and in a few minutes the doctor saw Lynch come out and go down the street. He had gone, but a few steps from the door when Kelly appeared with a six-shooter and began snapping it at Lynch. Fortunately the gun failed to go off. The doctor yelled to Lynch to look out as Kelly was shooting at him. Lynch turned as Kelly snapped the last chamber of the revolver and, picking up a rock, he ran to the saloon and threw it through the window at the would-be murderer. Then he went unharmed down the street.

Later in the evening Lynch went to the saloon to see Brady and explain. Brady was still coming in and talking a ribald story about the back door as Lynch entered. He was drunk at the time, which fact possibly interfered with his marksmanship. He slipped to the front door, drew a bead on the unconscious victim, and fired. Lynch fell to the floor, but the wound was only a flesh wound and with proper care he soon recovered and was as well as ever in a very short time.

Stamped the Vigilante. The vigilantes picked the matter up and Brady was arraigned. There had been a great influx of prisoners and it was decided that an example was necessary. Brady was given the usual trial and ample opportunity to defend himself. The tide of opinion was turning somewhat in his favor there, in reply to a question from the prosecution, he admitted that when he fired he intended to kill Lynch. It was a fatal admission and placed the noose around his neck. He was found guilty and was ordered to be hanged. Preparations were immediately made for the execution, as there was no sentence about new trials, writs of error or executive clemency in those days. An admirable spot was chosen for the scene of the hanging, so arranged that the spectators of whom there were thousands, could view the execution from the sides of the gulch. A beef roof was utilized as a gallery. When the hour arrived the space around the gallows was packed with spectators, many of them fresh from the east. Immediately surrounding the condemned man was a guard of 100 armed vigilantes. When the time came the captain shouted, "About, face!" Some one in the crowd, as a joke, yelled, "Don't shoot! Don't shoot!" That was enough for the men in the crowd and with a shout of fear they began a stampede down the hill and of the thousands who gathered to witness the execution only a few remained to see Brady take his last jump. An unwilling and involuntary spectator, Kelly, under guard, was forced, as a warning, to see his employer swing.

In Vigilante Days.

Dr. Hardenbrook, who was all through the troubled and adventurous days of the vigilantes, has a mass of interesting reminiscences and his praise is unbounded for those stern men who purged the community

of its desperadoes and made life and property safe. They were good citizens and men of worth, many of whom since have occupied some of the highest positions in the gift of the people of the state. They had a rough work out for them and they did it manfully. The doctor tells some interesting stories of those early days and times in which he played his part. Speaking of the time when first the miners to Virginia City and Alder gulch in 1869, he says that as far as law was concerned society was in a state of anarchy of which Montanians of today can have little conception. That which is now the state of Montana was then a part of Idaho, but while congress had already set apart Montana as a territory, yet the organization act had not yet gone into effect. There was practically no law, a fact of which the road agents and desperadoes were not slow to take advantage. The little law that existed was made a farce and it was every man for himself. When the desperadoes organized society was helpless. From organization it was a step only to the election of Plummer as sheriff and with his election came the appointment of a gang of road agents and desperadoes as deputies.

A Gentlemanly Villain. Plummer was a pleasant, quiet, gentlemanly-looking sort of a fellow, but he left a record of crime behind him in Nevada, from which place he came to Montana. His manner was so deceptive that there was practically no opposition to his election as sheriff. Nearly every one voted for him, the doctor included. The event which brought the vigilantes to life was the cold-blooded murder of a man in Bannack who had carelessly dropped some accusations against Plummer and his gang. Two of his deputies, Buck Stinson and Hazel Lyon, came from Virginia City, called him to the door and shot him down. So confident were they of immunity that they stayed around the town and made no attempt to escape. A miners' meeting was called and the deputies, much to their surprise, were arrested. They were given a fair trial and condemned to death. The graves were dug and everything was prepared for a hanging here. Then a woman appeared on the scene and by means of a letter alleged to be from Stinson's mother so aroused the sympathy of the miners that the vote was reconsidered and by one vote the men were set free, but banished from the country.

Stinson, however, returned about three months later and was summarily strung up and filled the grave which had been dug for him.

The warning was unheeded and there was, in consequence, an increase in crime. In the fall of 1883 the matter was brought to head by the result of a deal between a negro and a Dutchman. The negro bought the Dutchman's mining claim for \$15 in dust and gold of mines. The mines were at a ranch owned by George Ives and Crow Tex. Dutchman went to get the mines and that was the last seen of him alive. A few days later his dead body was found in the willows near the ranch.

The fact was reported to Virginia City and a committee of citizens, the original vigilantes, was appointed to deal with the matter and the days of anarchy were numbered. Ives and Crow Tex were brought to Alder gulch. The latter was eventually released, but Ives was given a public trial. Twelve jurors were appointed and he had able attorneys to defend him. The trial lasted two days, and Ives' conviction was barely fought by H. F. W. Smith and Attorney Thurman. Colonel Sanders was the prosecutor. The proceedings of the improvised court took place in the open air upon a platform erected in the street in front of a cabin. During the second day, the doctor was present and observed much part of the defense in a way which could hardly be sanctioned in a modern court. Attorney Thurman was leaning over whispering to his client, Ives, discussing some feature of the testimony, when there was a sudden interruption. A bullet whistled between the heads of the defendant and his attorney. The defense quit right there and Thurman jumped down from the platform. He and Smith were afterwards given forty days to leave the country. Ives was found guilty and hanged.

The next hanging, Dr. Hardenbrook says, was that of two messengers who attempted to carry messages to Plummer from Alder gulch. Their names were Red and Brown. They were on their way to a young man, Laurens on the Stinking Water. It was considered to be too much trouble to bring the desperadoes to town, so they were summarily strung up and left swinging for two days, as their friends were afraid to cut them down.

The next move of the vigilantes, according to the doctor, was to go to Bannack, where the gentlemanly villain, Plummer, and another desperado, Ned Ray, were hanged. Roasted a Greaser. The vigilantes then went after a greaser, one of the gang who had escaped by his cabin some distance from Bannack. Here he fortified himself and prepared to sell his life dearly. The vigilantes besieged the place and volley after volley was fired into it, but without effect. The greaser kept up a steady response and the doctor says, it was reported that several of the vigilantes were wounded and one killed. Finally a small howitzer was procured and the cabin was battered down. When the greaser was pulled out from among the ruins of his fort he was covered with more than forty bullets, but was still alive. A few shots finished him, and not to lose the satisfaction of lynching the cutthroat, a clothesline was cut down and the greaser's dead body, bleeding from his wounds, was strung up.

Half an hour afterward, the doctor's informant had eyes-witness of the light told him, one of the men came to him and asked him if he would not like a greaser stake for breakfast. Astounded at such a cannibalistic invitation, the doctor's informant went out to see the scene of the fight and found that the men had made a log heap of the ruins of the cabin and he told that the greaser was being roasted in the fire. He couldn't believe it at first, but upon going closer to the fire he saw a man with a stick stirring up the charred body of the dead greaser and the steam of hissing flesh confirmed what his eyes had seen.

The desperado now became convinced that a general clean-up of tough characters was the program of the vigilantes and they began to pull their picket pins and make for greener pastures. A gang consisting of Skinner, Alex Carter, Bill Bunton and some others started for Walla Walla, closely followed by a posse of the vigilantes. Bill Bunton was captured at Deer Lodge and without the formality of a trial was given short shrift at the end of a noose last rope. Game to the End. The gang was then followed to Hell Gate, where Skinner, Carter and another desperado were caught and swung to the breeze. Then the vigilantes came back over their gallows-blazed trail and a roundup of undesirable citizens was made in Virginia City. Reel Foot George, Boone Helm, Jack Gallagher and many other desperate characters were caught in the dragnet and condemned to pay the penalty of innumerable crimes. They were swung off the gallows from the cross beam of an unfinished building. Even in death they were true to the wild life they had led. When Reel Footed George jumped off Boone Helm looked down at the writhing body as it dangled below him and, unmoved by his own miserable and shameful end, said with a laugh: "Good-bye, George; I'll be in hell with you in five minutes. Hurray for Jeff Davis!" With that he jumped off and was soon in the agonies of death. The box was knocked from under the other two.

Phil Hunter, a desperate man with a black record of unprovoked murder, got away and hid in a cabin in the Gallatin valley. He was followed by a posse and run to earth. When caught he was found to be badly frozen from exposure. The posse started with him on the way back to Virginia City, but after they had gone some few miles they concluded that it was taking useless and uncalculated for trouble, so they halted at a convenient tree and gave him the benediction. The tree upon which he was hanged is still standing and Dr. Hardenbrook has passed it several times in recent years. The body, when it was cut down, was buried at the foot of the tree.

That, the doctor says, practically wound up the work of the original vigilantes. The country was cleared of its worst characters and became a respectable, law-abiding community, and criminal outbreaks were quickly and sternly dealt with. The Notorious Slade. The next hanging here, according to the doctor's recollection, was that of a member of the vigilantes, the name of Slade, whose crimes were many and were varied with all the gradations of the most fiendish cruelty. At Julesburg, it is said of him, that he tied a victim of his by the name of Jules, with whom he had a quarrel, to the wheel of a wagon and made him get him. Between each shot at the helpless man Slade would go into the saloon and take a drink, taking plenty of time in order to draw out the misery of his helpless victim. Finally, he cut off Jules' ears and carried them around with him in after life as a mascot.

When Slade came to Montana he was well fixed in the way of worldly goods, and took up a ranch on the Madison about seventeen miles from Virginia City. He was fairly well known during the first part of his stay in Montana, but soon contracted the dangerous habit of getting drunk while on his visits to Virginia City and when in that condition he indulged in the playful pastime of "shooting up the town a whole lot." On such occasions he was a dangerous man and practically made a mortgage on the town until he sobered up.

His career was finally brought to an end as a result of a brutal assault which he made without provocation upon a peaceful citizen of Virginia City. The victim of the assault was beaten nearly to death. Slade was arrested and taken before Judge Davis, who fined him \$50. That he should be amenable to any law save that of his own free will was very obnoxious to Slade and he bitterly resented it. He contrived in an insidious way to get the judge out with Judge Davis' blood and announced his intention of increasing the court's avoidance by injecting into its anatomy at various and diverse places several ounces of cold lead. Having in one form or another a notion of war and a formal charge of the case, he camped on Judge Davis' trail, "looting a coffin on his back." He Wanted Blood. Judge Davis offered to remit the fine, but it was no use. Slade had made up his mind to kill Judge Davis as an example on general principles and the terms of the proposed protocol were not satisfactory and Judge Davis was obliged to go into hiding for two days. The vigilantes concluded that the affair had gone far enough and determined to intervene. Action followed quickly. Slade was arrested in a saloon and, although drunk when told to throw up his hands, a glance into the muzzles of several guns sobered him in less than five minutes. He had just half an hour to live. And then the cowardly bully, the doctor says, "begged like a steer" that his miserable life might be spared. His plea for mercy fell on deaf ears, and in half an hour his lifeless body was swinging from a gallows and a coward's soul had gone to its hour.

Jim Klakadon, at the moment the arrest was made, had jumped on a horse and made a phenomenal ride to the Slade ranch to get the condemned man's wife to intercede in the fight as circumstances might determine. But when Mrs. Slade and her companions arrived they were too late. Slade had breathed his last and was ready for the grave. It is supposed that had Mrs. Slade arrived in time she would have secured her husband's friends and made a desperate fight for his life. As it was, all kinds of threats were made, but they resulted in no action.

There has been considerable controversy concerning the incident of the female child to be born in Montana. Dr. Hardenbrook says that many false claims have been made to the honor and that the distinction properly belongs to a girl named McClurg, who was born in Bannack in June, 1883. The child lived but a few days and died several years ago; the father is also dead, but the mother is now alive and is still living at or near Virginia City.

SIBYLLE HAS HER WAY. Love Finds the Path to Happiness. The marriage of the Princess Sibylle of Hesse, youngest daughter of the widowed Landgraef of Hesse, with the Baron von Vinke, which has just taken place in Frankfurt-on-the-Main, has caused no end of gossip in German social circles. The love affair of this prominent couple, related in the New York Herald, dates back three years, having originated in the city in which the nuptials were celebrated.

Baron von Vinke was then, as lieutenant in the Thirteenth Hessian Hussars, stationed in Frankfurt, where the princess was living with her mother. He was introduced to the princess at one of the riding meetings, which take place twice every week during the winter season and to which all officers and society women participate.

It proved a case of love at first sight and the princess managed through her mother to have the baron as her companion at every riding meeting. This was an easy matter to arrange, as her mother's father, who appealed to the emperor to interfere.

On a hint from the emperor, who is said to have planned an alliance between the princess and King Alexander of Serbia, the colonel advised Baron von Vinke not to see the princess or her mother again and he was transferred to the Third dragons, stationed in Bromberg, the German city the farthest away from Frankfurt.

But "love wins the way." After six months' service in his new regiment Baron von Vinke obtained a transfer to the reserve list. This enabled him to join his mother in Wiesbaden, twenty minutes by rail from Frankfurt. Princess Sibylle's mother regarded the baron with favor, but she and the princess were therefore able to meet very frequently.

Despite the opposition of her son and all her royal relatives, the princess' mother finally obtained the emperor's consent to the marriage of her daughter and the baron on condition that the baron and his bride should live abroad for several years.

The wedding occurred on September 15, the only guest present being the princess' mother and a few of the baron's relatives, and the young couple left at once for their trip to foreign countries.

While Baron von Vinke has very moderate means, Princess Sibylle is the heiress of about \$750,000. Her mother is the daughter of the late Prince Charles of Prussia, who was a field marshal in the German army and uncle of the present emperor.

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AROUND THE LONE STAR STATE

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CHARACTERISTICS OF LEADING CITIES

Houston's Tropical Festival with Trimmings of Snow-Scenes in Galveston, San Antonio and Austin.

The December tourist who quit the snows and frosts of the north to bask in the sunshine around the palms and flowers of southern Texas, was scarcely disappointed for the beautiful snow covered the land to the depth of four or five inches almost as far south as Houston and San Antonio and cold dry rain extending to the gulf cities. Houston, the great railroad center of the state and cotton market of the world, was on the high tide of her carnival week and her fruit, flower and vegetable festival when old Boreas appeared so unexpectedly, like the hand writing on the wall, in the sacred story of Belshazzar's feast. The fruit, flower and vegetable festival presented a striking transformation scene to the northern visitor. The great auditorium building was a bower of roses, rare flowers, tropical plants and foliage, beautifully arranged in the most artistic manner. The murmurs of low fountains musical with birds and the sweet strains of the southern orchestra displays of fresh fruit and vegetable just from the garden; strawberries transported and hanging full ripe from the vine; melons, adishaw, tabacco, potatoes, tomatoes, etc., all as fresh and luscious as if just taken, in the early morning, from our own spring gardens. This for a mid-winter scene is certainly rare and interesting. On such occasions he was a dangerous man and practically made a mortgage on the town until he sobered up.

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modern and is the largest of all the state capitols. It is second in size to the capitol at Washington and the seventh largest building in the world. It is 566 feet long and 288 feet wide at its greatest width. It is 311 feet in height. It accommodates the state executive, judicial and legislative departments of the state government, and is fitted with arrangements and apparatus for lighting the building by electricity, and for steam heating and with hydraulic elevators. Great paintings, statues and busts of her heroes adorn the walls and the walls and pedestals, together with pictures and carvings—the Fall of the Alamo, the Battle of San Jacinto, the Capture of Santa Anna and many other scenes and incidents no less renowned in her history.

Texas is a country of great things and magnificent distances. It is not uncommon to hear them talk of their farm ranches by "the thousands of acres" and it is generally a night or day's run between her principal cities. One is struck, too, with the poetic names of her stations and towns, many of them involving a very patent contradiction—such as a dilapidated village surrounded by a vast expanse of prairie called "Sweet Home," and then as the train stops at a lonehose station, headed off by the inquiry of a child looking out of the window, "Mum, what place is this?" The answer: "Mum, darling, this is 'Sublime.'"

R. W. RICHARDSON.

NEW YEAR'S DAY VIGIL.

Large Chunks of Fun in Progressive Resolution Dinners.

A progressive resolution dinner is a jolly way to entertain on New Year's day, reports the Chicago Times-Herald. There are twelve months in the year. There should be twelve courses at the progressive resolution dinner. The people partaking of it should be either twelve or twenty-four in number. For each person, man or woman, should be prepared one or more New Year's resolutions, humorous or serious, as liked, the only caution to be unflinchingly observed being that nothing caustic or unkind should be allowed. These resolutions are written prettily upon small white cards, decorated as fancied, and laid around at the various plates. Similar resolutions should await the guests, masculine and feminine, in the dressing rooms. As more amusement and fun will result from a careful fitting of the resolutions to the people for whom they are intended, some means should be devised by which they should remain in each dressing room to see that they are properly distributed according to the names written upon the backs, and that no person reads the inscription on any card save his or her own.

Before the first course is served the women are instructed to remain seated all through the meal, but the gentlemen observe the "progressive" portion of the function by moving one chair to the left after every course. The resolution cards, which are already on the table, are arranged in the order of the social and capable of a general application, are left by the plates; the cards given out in the dressing rooms, on the contrary, are kept pinned to the coat lapel or front of the gown, half-hidden by the boutonniere bunch of flowers. In the reading over and discussing of the cards on the table food for much humorous and clever talk and repartee will usually be found.

Each guest should be previously instructed that only the subject matter of the table cards should be discussed. In the effort to maintain such a conversational attitude, and in the unconscious and frequent slipping away from it which will occur inevitably and continually, much more fun and enjoyment will be discovered. The forfeit penalty for neglecting to observe the rules is to be selected for wandering into forbidden conversational paths should be the reading aloud, several times over, of the matter written on the card. It is more fun if this matter is shaped into verse or jocular form or is well given.

Before the first course is served the hostess should read the resolution beside her plate aloud for the benefit of her guests. When the time for the next course comes the man making the first move or progression goes likewise with the card found at his plate. Some time during the serving of each course the woman nearest the hostess reads her card; by the time the coffee is on the table all the resolutions have been therefore read. Each masculine guest present is then requested to make an impromptu speech or respond to a toast consisting of the particular resolution with which he started out. Later in the drawing room, or while still at the table if better liked, the women are compelled under pain of forfeit to do likewise. Back in the drawing room the cards given in the dressing room are brought to light, the host or hostess leading off, and "New Year's sermons," impromptu, of course, since no guest knew of the subject on his card until he got to the table, are successively allowed for preparation, are successively delivered. The guest who wishes to give a song, a story or even a dance which bears upon the subject matter of his resolution is at liberty to do so. But the said resolutions should be collected and served in a way with every effort at entertainment.

The subjects for these resolutions are unending and must be chosen, of course, with the tastes, weaknesses, fads and so on of the people who are to profit by them in mind. But a few suggestions as to the manner of selecting and arranging may come amiss. At the dinner of this order which was first planned topics and treatments like the following were the rule: A young collector of stamps who delighted equally in amateur photography and football found this little sentence awaiting him in the dressing room: Resolved, That for this coming year I will do the best I can to get my stamps and my photographs and my football team into the hands of my victimized muscles in my own hands.

A young girl, who was a sweet singer and whose pure soprano flights had brought her much social fame and glory, but who was always in a violent hurry, was offered a resolution to the effect that: Higher and higher my voice shall climb. But in future I'll pay more attention to time. The resolutions found in the dressing rooms were of a more personal character, as well as more carefully framed. They are my friend, O night of sleep; no more will I neglect thee!

This to a young woman famed for her late hours and overtaxed physical strength. The next night she will no more burn. Electric lights will serve my turn. Was given to a young man at whose bachelor party the electric lights had been suddenly turned off at midnight, leaving the circle of friends in the dark. Later in the evening a basket or box of "mist resolutions"—good resolutions abstractly prepared—might be brought in and distributed with telling effect.

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