

BOB HAMPTON of PLACER

By RANDALL PARRISH AUTHOR OF "WHEN WILDERNESS WAS KING" "MY LADY OF THE NORTH" "HISTORIC ILLINOIS, ETC."



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SYNOPSIS.

A detachment of the Eighteenth Infantry from Fort Belknap, trapped by Indians in a narrow gorge. Among them is a stranger who introduces himself by the name of Hampton, also Gillis the post trader, and his daughter. Gillis and a majority of the soldiers are killed during a three days' siege. Hampton and the girl only escape from the Indians. They fall exhausted on the plains. Miss Spencer, of the Seventh Cavalry, Lieut. Brant in command, find them. Hampton and the girl stop at the Miners' Home in Glencaid. Mrs. Dyer, the proprietress, Hampton talks the future over with Miss Gillis—the Kid. She shows him her mother's picture and tells him what she can of her parentage and life. They decide she shall live with Mrs. Herndon. Naida the Kid—runs away from Mrs. Herndon and rejoins Hampton. He induces her to go back, and to have nothing more to do with him. Hampton plays his last game of cards. He announces to Red Slavin that he has quit, and then leaves Glencaid. Miss Phoebe Spencer arrives in Glencaid to teach in her first school. Miss Spencer meets Naida. Rev. Wynkoop, etc. She boards at Mrs. Herndon's. Naida and Lieut. Brant again meet without his knowing who she is. He informs him of the coming Bachelor club ball in honor of Miss Spencer. Lieut. Brant meets Silent Murphy, Custer's scout. He reports trouble brewing among the Sioux. Social difficulties arise at the Bachelor club's ball among the admirers of Miss Spencer. Lieut. Brant is not the acquaintance of the day before. She tells him of Naida, and he accidentally meets her again as he is returning to the ballroom with her. Miss Spencer, Brant accompanies Naida to the dance. On the way she informs him of who she is, and that she is to meet Hampton. Brant and Hampton meet. Hampton informs the lieutenant that his attentions to Naida must cease, and proclaims an authority over her that justifies the statement. Brant tells Hampton of the presence of Silent Murphy and of the fact that Red Slavin receives government messages for him. Miss Spencer called on Bob Hampton. Tells him of a red-faced stranger mistaking her for Naida. Brant interviews Red Slavin. Finds that he is an ex-trooper in the Seventh Cavalry. It was Slavin's and Murphy's testimony that more than ten years before had convicted Robert Nolan, then a captain in the Seventh, of the murder of Maj. Brant. Brant attempts to force a confession from Slavin. Slavin insists it is Murphy he wants, and Murphy had left. In a scuffle Slavin is killed by a knife thrust. Hampton surrenders to Buck Mason, marshal. Mob attempts to capture him. Mason and his prisoner escape to a hill and defend themselves. Mob lights fire to burn them out.

CHAPTER XXI.—Continued.

She asked this question with such perfect innocence that Brant believed she failed to comprehend Hampton's claims. "I have been informed that it must," he explained. "I have been told that I was no longer to force my attentions upon Miss Gillis." "By Bob Hampton?" "Yes. Those were, I believe, his exact words. Can you wonder that I hardly know how I stand in your sight?" "I do not at all understand," she faltered. "Truly, Lieut. Brant, I do not. I feel that Mr. Hampton would not say that without a good and sufficient reason. He is not a man to be swayed by prejudice; yet, whatever the reason may be, I know nothing about it." "But you do not answer my last query." "Perhaps I did not hear it." "It was: How do I stand in your sight? That is of far more importance to me now than any unauthorized command from Mr. Hampton." She glanced up into his serious face shyly, with a little dimple of returning laughter. "Indeed, but perhaps he might not care to have me say. However, as I once informed you that you were very far from being my ideal, possibly it may be my duty to qualify that harsh statement somewhat." "By confessing that I am your ideal?" "Oh, indeed, no! We never realize our ideals, you know, or else they would entirely cease to be ideals. My confession is limited to a mere admission that I now consider you a very pleasant young gentleman." "You offer me a stone when I cry unto you for bread," he exclaimed. "The world is filled with pleasant young men. They are a drug on the market. I beg some special distinction, some different classification in your eyes." "You are becoming quite hard to please," her face turned partially away, her look meditative, "and—dictatorial; but I will try. You are intelligent, a splendid dancer, fairly good looking, rather bright at times, and, no doubt, would prove venturesome if not held strictly to your proper place. Take it all in all, you are even interesting, and—I admit—I am inclined to like you." The tantalizing tone and manner nerved him; he grasped the white hand resting invitingly on the grass, and held it firmly within his own. "You only make sport as you did once before. I must have the whole truth." "Oh, no; to make sport at such a time would be sheerest mockery, and I would never dare to be so free. Why, remember we are scarcely more than strangers. How rude you are! only our third time of meeting, and you will not release my hand." "Not unless I must, Naida," and the deep ringing sobriety of his voice startled the girl into suddenly uplifting her eyes to his face. What she read there instantly changed her mood

from playfulness to earnest gravity. "Oh, please do not—do not say what you are tempted to," her voice almost pleading. "I cannot listen; truly I cannot; I must not. It would make us both very unhappy, and you would be sure to regret such hasty words." "Regret!" and he yet clung to the hand which she scarcely endeavored to release, bending forward hoping to read in her hidden eyes the secret her lips guarded. "Am I, then, not old enough to know my own mind?" "Yes—yes; I hope so, yes; but it is not for me; it can never be for me—I am no more than a child, a homeless wail, a nobody. You forget that I do not even know who I am, or the name I ought rightly to bear. I will not have it so." "Naida, sweetheart!" and he burst impetuously through all bonds of restraint, her flushed cheeks the inspiration of his daring. "I will speak, for I care nothing for all this. It is you I love—love forever. Do you understand me, darling? I love you! I love you!" For an instant—one glad, weak, helpless, forgetful instant—she did not see him, did not even know herself; the very world was lost. Then she awoke as if from a dream, his strong arms clasped about her, his lips upon hers. "You must not," she sobbed. "I tell you no! I will not consent; I will not be false to myself. You have no right; I gave you no right." He permitted her to draw away, and they stood facing each other, he eager, mystified, thrilling with pas-



"I Have Been Told That I Was No Longer to Force My Attentions Upon Miss Gillis."

sion almost beyond mastery, she trembling and unstrung, her cheeks crimson, her eyes filled with mute appeal. "I read it in your face," he insisted. "It told of love." "Then my face must have lied," she answered, her soft voice tremulous, "or else you read the message wrongly. It is from my lips you must take the answer." "And they kissed me." "If so, I knew it not. It was by no volition of mine. Lieut. Brant, I have trusted you so completely; that was not right." "My heart exonerates me." "I cannot accept that guidance." "Then you do not love me?" She paused, afraid of the impulse that swept her on. "Perhaps," the low voice scarcely audible, "I may love you too well." "You mean there is something—some person, perhaps—standing between?" She looked frankly at him. "I do mean just that. I am not heartless, and I sincerely wish we had never met; but this must be the end." "The end? And with no explanation?" "There is no other way." He could perceive tears in her eyes, although she spoke bravely. "Nor can I explain, for all is not clear to me. But this I know, there is a barrier between us insurmountable; not even the power of love can overcome it; and I

appeal to you to ask me no more." It was impossible for him to doubt her sober earnestness, or the depth of her feelings; the full truth in her words was pictured upon her face, and in the pathetic appeal of her eye. She extended both hands. "You will forgive me? Truly, this barrier has not been raised by me." He bowed low, until his lips pressed the white fingers, but before he could master himself to utter a word in reply, a distant voice called his name, and both glanced hastily around. "That cry came from the valley," he said. "I left my horse tied there. I will go and learn what it means." She followed him part of the way through the labyrinth of underbrush, hardly knowing why she did so. He stood alone upon the summit of the high bluff whence he could look across the stream. Miss Spencer stood below waving her parasol frantically, and even as he gazed at her, his ears caught the sound of heavy firing down the valley.

CHAPTER XXII.

Plucked from the Burning.

That Miss Spencer was deeply agitated was evident at a glance, while the nervous manner in which she glanced in the direction of those distant gunshots, led Brant to jump to the conclusion that they were in some way connected with her appearance. "Oh, Lieutenant Brant," she cried, excitedly, "they are going to kill him down there, and he never did it at all. I know he didn't, and so does Mr. Wynkoop. Oh, please hurry! Nobody knew where you were, until I saw your horse tied here, and Mr. Wynkoop has been hunting for you everywhere. He is nearly frantic, poor man, and I cannot learn where either Mr. Moffat or Mr. McNeil is, and I just know those dreadful creatures will kill him before we can get help." "Kill whom?" burst in Brant, springing down the bank fully awakened to the realization of some unknown emergency. "My dear Miss Spencer, tell me your story quickly if you wish me to act. Who is in danger, and from what?" The girl burst into tears, but struggled bravely through with her message. "It's those awful men, the roughs and rowdies down in Glencaid. They say he murdered Red Slavin, that big gambler who spoke to me this morning, but he didn't for I saw the man

He crushed back an oath. "Like him or not like him, I will save him if he is in the power of man. Now will you go?" "Yes," she answered, and suddenly extended her arms. "Kiss me first." With the magical pressure of her lips upon his, he swung into the saddle and spurred down the road. It was a principle of his military training never to temporize with a mob—he would strike hard, but he must have sufficient force behind him. He reined up before the seemingly deserted camp, his horse fung back upon its quivering flanks. "Sergeant!" The sharp snap of his voice brought that officer forward on the run. "Where are the men?" "Playin' ball, most of 'em, sir, just beyond the ridge." "Are the horses out in the herd?" "Yes, sir." "Sound the recall; arm and mount every man; bring them into Glencaid on the gallop. Do you know the old Shasta mine?" "No, sir." "Half-way up the hill back of the hotel. You'll find me somewhere in front of it. This is a matter of life or death, so jump lively now!" He drove in his spurs, and was off like the wind. A number of men were in the street, all hurrying forward in the same direction, but he dashed past them. These were miners mostly, eager to have a hand in the man-hunt. Here and there a rider skurried along and joined in the chase. Just beyond the hotel, half-way up the hill, rifles were speaking irregularly, the white puffs of smoke blown quickly away by the stiff breeze. Near the center of this line of skirmishers a denser crowd was beginning to rise in spirals. Brant, perceiving the largest group of men gathered just before him, rode straight toward them. The crowd scattered slightly at his approach, but promptly closed in again as he drew up his horse with taut rein. He looked down into rough, bearded faces. Clearly enough these men were in no fit spirit for peace making. "You damn fool!" roared one, hoarsely, his gun poised as if in threat, "what do you mean by riding us down like that? Do you own this country?" Brant flung himself from the saddle and strode in front of the fellow. "I mean business. You see this uniform? Strike that, my man, and you strike the United States. Who is leading this outfit?" "I don't know as it's your affair," the man returned, sullenly. "We ain't takin' no army orders at present, mister. We're free-born American citizens, an' ye better let us alone." "That is not what I asked you," and Brant squared his shoulders, his hands clenched. "My question was, Who is at the head of this outfit? and I want an answer." The spokesman looked around upon the others near him with a grin of derision. "Oh, ye do, hey? Well, I reckon we are, if you must know. Since Big Jim Larson got it in the shoulder this outfit right yere hes bin doin' most of the brain work. So if ye've got anythin' ter say, mister officer man, I reckon ye better spit it out yere ter me, an' sorter relieve yer mind." "Who are you?" The fellow expectorated vigorously into the leaves under foot, and drawing one hairy hand across his lips, flushed angrily to the unexpected inquiry. "Oh, tell him, Ben. What's the blame odds? He can't do ye no hurt." The man's look became dogged. "I'm Ben Colton, if it'll do ye any good to know." "I thought I had seen you somewhere before," said Brant, contemptuously, and then swept his glance about the circle. "A nice leader of vigilantes you are, a fine representative of law and order, a lovely specimen of the free-born American citizen! Men, do you happen to know what sort of a cur you are following in this affair?" "Oh, Ben's all right." "What ye got against him, young feller?" "Just this," and Brant squarely fronted the man, his voice ringing like steel. "I've seen mobs before to-day, and I've dealt with them. I'm not afraid of you or your whole outfit, and I've got fighting men to back me up. I never yet saw any mob which wasn't led and incited by some cowardly, revengeful rascal. Honest men get mixed up in such affairs, but they are invariably inflamed by some low-down sneak with an ax to grind. I confess I don't know all about this Colton, but I know enough to say he is an army deserter, a liar, a dave-keeper, a gambler, and, to my certain knowledge, the direct cause of the death of three men, one a soldier of my troop. Now isn't he a sweet specimen to lead in the avenging of a supposed crime?" Whatever else Colton might have failed in, he was a man of action. Like a flash his gun flew to the level, but was instantly knocked aside by the grizzled old miner standing next him. "None of that, Ben," he growled, warningly. "I don't never pay to shoot holes in Uncle Sam." Brant smiled. He was not there just then to fight, but to secure delay until his own men could arrive, and to turn aside the fierce mob spirit if such a result was found possible. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

Heroines.

A girl who can smile when obliged, in the middle of the season, to take to her bed with an attack of measles is a veritable heroine. So is the woman who manages to control her expression when a careless passerby spills a cup of tea over her best frock.—Black and White.

NEBRASKA FOR AGRICULTURE.

Review of the Conditions in the Past Year.

Secretary Mellor of the state board of agriculture said in his annual report:

Nebraska, as an agricultural state, is commanding the attention of the markets of the world to a greater degree with each succeeding year. A new state which successfully holds the position in the front rank of the agricultural column is deserving of the constantly increasing favorable consideration by the comparisons with which we are favored. Only two or three states of the union can now show greater quantities of production in any of the leading staple crops grown in this latitude, than can Nebraska.

The year of 1907 however, has not been a banner year in crop production owing to unseasonable rain-fall in the eastern, and lack of rain-fall in the western and central parts of our state, but this condition being general over the entire agricultural portion of the central west, has caused a general crop reduction with resultant high prices.

As usual, corn has been our predominant crop and although the 1907 crop is fully 25 per cent less in number of bushels than that of 1906, still its commercial value is greater. The yield for 1907 as gathered by our state statistician as to our practical crops are:

Corn	169,782,885 bushels
Wheat	46,207,658 bushels
Oats	52,622,262 bushels
Rye	1,497,699 bushels
Barley	2,264,166 bushels
Potatoes	6,262,226 bushels
Hay	4,011,648 tons
Alfalfa	1,450,759 tons

CHECK ON CHANGING DEPOTS.

An Important Order Issued by the State Railway Commission.

The railway commission adopted the following orders of importance to all the state:

"No change of freight or passenger depots or flag stations from their present location, or suspension of the sale of tickets, or the receiving or forwarding of freights from stations now in use for such purpose will be permitted without the consent of this commission.

"Permission for the location of depots and the construction of same must be secured from this commission. Application for such permits must be accompanied by all information necessary for a full and proper understanding of all interests to be affected thereby. The commission reserves the right to pass upon the location of all switches and spurs.

"No switches or spurs in use in this state shall be removed or abandoned without the consent of this commission.

Date for Coast Trip Indefinite.

Governor Sheldon has received a letter from the secretary of the navy in answer to the executive's inquiry if it would be agreeable to the department to present the battleship Nebraska with a silver service at the time the Atlantic fleet is at San Francisco. The secretary wrote that it is impossible at this time to say whether the Nebraska will be at San Francisco at that time, for it may be at Puget Sound for repairs or engaged elsewhere. He suggested that the governor take up the matter later.

Freight Business Improving.

The weekly car report of railroads for the week ending January 22 shows a marked increase in business over the report one month previous. The following is the comparison:

	Jan.	Dec.
Empty stock cars ordered	820	464
Empty stock cars at stations	1,810	1,612
Stock cars loaded	809	326
Empty box cars ordered	1,486	1,452
Empty box cars at stations	2,194	2,115
Grain cars loaded	422	323
Other box cars loaded	988	812

Hughes' Father at Carroll.

Carroll—Few people of Carroll are aware that Mr. John Hughes, present visitor at Joe Jones, is the father of Charles Hughes, governor of New York. He is a jovial old gentleman of 74, hale and hearty, and as spry as a kitten. He can outtalk, outsmoke or outwalk most men of 30 of the present generation.

OMAHA AS A GRAIN MARKET.

A Large Increase in Shipments Over Any Previous Year.

In 1906 there was 40,977,900 bushels of grain shipped out of Omaha, in 1907 43,810,500 bushels. This shows an increase of nearly four million bushels. Most of this grain was handled by the members of the Omaha Grain Exchange. The handling of grain between the farmer and the miller or other consumer is a very necessary occupation. The farmer cannot do it as a rule any more than he could manufacture his own machinery as a rule. The consumer cannot, for he is engaged in other affairs. The work has to be done and the graindealer, with the aid of the transportation company, does it. Whether the work is well or badly done depends upon the ability of the dealer and the facilities he employs in doing it.

Indians Sue for Land.

Lincoln—Seven persons claiming to be descendants of Margaret Murphy, a member of the Sac and Fox Indian tribe, have begun suit in the federal court here to establish their claims to Indian lands located in Richardson county, Nebraska, and Brown county, Kansas. The claimants, in a previous effort, were excluded by an order of the interior department, largely because they were unable to prove their relationship. The plaintiffs allege they are part blood Indians and that their claim is valid.

NEBRASKA IN BRIEF

NEWS NOTES OF INTEREST FROM VARIOUS SECTIONS.

ALL SUBJECTS TOUCHED UPON

Religious, Social, Agricultural, Political and Other Matters Given Due Consideration.

The district court of Sarpy county convenes February 11th. A great deal of sickness prevails in and about Guide Rock.

Pawnee City's public library building is nearly ready for occupancy.

In a fight in a pool hall at Giltner Robert Wolcott killed Frank McNeff.

Will McCubberson, a confessed bigamist with one wife in Kansas and one in Platte Center, this state, was arrested at Norfolk.

Fire starting in the kitchen of Gossie's restaurant at Hardy destroyed several buildings and caused a loss estimated at \$20,000.

Sneak thieves entered the Second Congregational church of Norfolk and stole 136 pennies that had been collected to purchase a picture.

Grace Lambert, daughter of a farmer living south of Eagle, took a large quantity of carbolic acid. Prompt medical attendance saved her life.

The Hooper High school, a two-story brick building, was totally destroyed by fire. A defective flue is supposed to have been the cause of the fire.

During the year of 1907 there was shipped from Herman to Omaha 3,342 cans of cream by express. There was also forwarded 1,500 cases of eggs.

The Scoville meetings being held at the Christian church in Beatrice are drawing large crowds from night to night. Up to date 154 have been converted.

In another column of this paper will be found a list of representative Nebraska business houses. When you write or call on them please mention this paper.

Bert Shoemaker, accused of holding up William Miller of Oakland, in an alley in West Point and robbing him of \$8 was bound over to district court in \$100 bonds.

A call for \$33,000 in general fund warrants has been issued by State Treasurer Brian. This is in addition to the recent call for \$94,000 of warrants from the same fund.

While crossing the railroad tracks in the outskirts of Bancroft Charles Tighe and his son Frank, were struck by the Omaha road through freight No. 20. Neither were badly hurt.

At a shooting match on the farm of B. F. Garrison, east of Cozad, Kent Vasey was shot and almost instantly killed by the premature discharge of a gun in the hands of Harry Hess.

York county farmers will realize from \$18 to \$35 per acre on their tame grasses. The clover, timothy and alfalfa seed crop made a fine field and is commanding remunerative prices.

Frank O. Ellis of Grant township, Gage county, sold his farm of a quarter section to William Sherman for \$12,000. Mr. Ellis bought the same piece of land less than a year ago for \$9,600.

The Hastings company of the National guard will be equipped with the new United States magazine rifle after February 16, according to instructions received from the war department.

I. S. Vose a widower, of Beaver City, was bombarded with eggs of doubtful vintage, thrown at him by three women, on the public streets. Mr. Vose was accused of insulting one of the three.

The republican congressional convention to select delegates to the national convention from the Fourth district has been called for Wilber March 4. The convention will have 167 delegates from eleven counties.

The sum of \$20,000 is awaiting Ernest Kuhlmann if he can be found. Attorney Charles A. Love of Aurora, Ill., has been employed by the relatives to locate the missing man, and has been in Lincoln to look him up. Frank Gotava was almost instantly killed and W. I. Jones, L. Keller and J. B. Hornburger hurt by the bursting of a circular saw near Octavia. The men were at work sawing up cottonwood logs when the accident occurred. Patronize a Nebraska Life Insurance Company. You can get as good old line life insurance and at as low a cost in the Midwest Life as you can anywhere in the United States. Write to the home office, 1007 "O" Street, Lincoln, for particulars as to the new low cost policies which the Midwest Life is now issuing.

I. W. Thomas, a homesteader living eleven miles southwest of North Platte, lost his life while trying to tap pipes in a well. A scar was found on his head. Just how he met death is not known. It is surmised he climbed down into the well, lighted some rags and then some board from a windmill struck him and rendered him unconscious.

Charged with fraudulently obtaining \$115 on a sight draft at the Union State bank of Beatrice, drawn on Riggs Bros. of Minature, Neb., L. L. Tressler, agent for the North Platte Land company, was lodged in jail at Beatrice.

McCook's splendid new high school building had a narrow escape from destruction by fire recently. The painters were finishing the interior work and spontaneous combustion in some oil rags used by the workmen came near being the undoing of a building costing \$40,000.