

Carrie

The Telegraph Girl

A ROMANCE OF THE CHEROKEE STRIP.

By Captain Jack Crawford

THE POET SCOUT.

(Continued.)

She was going away, that was a blessed consolation; going to a busy office where she would have no time to wire chats. I could endure her for a few hours; and although I would have resented from any one the imputation that I was a liar, I assured her I would be delighted to have her come, and would endeavor to make her brief visit a pleasant one.

When the freight from the south whistled that afternoon, I had nerve myself for a few hours of torture. The caboose stopped away down in the yard, and as I stood on the platform reflecting on what a martyr I was going to make of myself, I saw the conductor assist my visitor to the ground, and start with her along the side of the train towards the depot. A call from the instrument drew me inside, and when I came out again they were near the platform. I stood and stared in blank amazement. A neat, stylish little figure clad in grey, a jaunty hat, from beneath which the prettiest imaginable brown curls fell in clustering beauty above the prettiest face I thought I had ever seen. She was laughing merrily at some remark from her escort, and the air seemed filled with rippling music. As he ascended the platform steps to where I stood transfixed and dumb with amazement, she gave me but one glance of her merry blue eyes, and was about to pass on into the office when the conductor said:

"A moment, Miss Rankin. Let me introduce Mr. Saunders, the agent here. Fred, this is Miss Carrie Rankin, late of Edmond."

She started at me with a look of unutterable surprise, and had a mirror beam thrust in front of me, I would no doubt have seen reflected an expression of equal amazement. For a moment she stood gazing first at myself and then at the conductor, and then a peal of merry laughter rang out from her pouting lips, and extending her hand she said:

"Oh, that monstrous fibber, Tom Armstrong! If I ever get within reach of him again I'll pull every hair out of his head! Why, he told me you were an old man, Mr. Saunders, and—and that you were humpbacked, and had lost one of your limbs in a railway accident some years ago. He pictured you such a fright that I hesitated long before deciding to come here. I was actually afraid of you!"

"I'll kill him on sight!" I cried, retaining the pretty hand which rested in mine. "He led me to believe you an aged widow with two children, and a face that would set my teeth on edge when you should present it before me, and that you had a temper which a buzz saw could not scratch. However, in the glad awakening from that ghastly dream I almost feel that I can forgive him, and as the frightful old widow no longer confronts me, permit me to bid you a hearty welcome to your old home. I trust you may enjoy the few hours you are to remain here. You have the freedom of the office; and of the great city."

"Thank you. It is very good of you, and since my humpbacked ogre has limped away on his one leg, I will enter his den with no fear. How drearily natural the old place looks" (taking off her hat and throwing it on the table). "How many lonely days and nights I spent here, fearing each rattle of the window by the wind might be a tramp or a prowling Indian, and every sound from the outside at night might come from the dreaded Dalton gang, lying in wait to rob a train. May I look in my old room?"

"Certainly."

"Same cheerless place. Yes, more cheerless, for really, Mr. Saunders, you do not keep it so neat as I did. When did you sweep it last?"

She glanced into my face with an arch look and smilingly awaited my reply.

"I think it was one day last week, or was it week before? It was the day the superintendent came over the road on a special. The sprucing up of depots by agents—male agents, that is—is always regulated by official visits, you know."

We passed on into the freight-room, such only in name, for no goods save section men's supplies had ever been stored therein. From the freight-room a ladder led up to the loft between the ceilings of the office and sleeping room and the roof, and, pointing up at the dust-covered rafters, my fair visitor said:

"I had a dreadful time up there one day. The insulated copper wires from the instruments run up through the office ceiling, you know, and connect with the line out under the eaves of the depot. I cut out my instruments for a heavy thunderstorm, and when I cut it again after the storm had passed, I found the wire open on both sides of me. Fearing the trouble was in my office I began a close search for it, and finding the wires below all right, I climbed up the ladder to the loft. Up in that dark, black, dusty, sooty place I found both wires burned off by lightning, and what a time I had repairing them! It was very hot and close up there, and I had left my handkerchief on the telegraph table, and frequently

wiped my perspiring face with my smutty hands. When I climbed down again you should have seen me! I had that morning put on a white summer dress mamma had just sent down to me, and it was ruined, and my face was as black as any Topsy you ever saw. What made it more horrible was that the passenger going south whistled just as I descended from the loft, and not knowing my face was in such a horrid condition, I gathered up my train mail and went out on the platform, and such a gazing as the train men gave me! There was a grinning face at every car window as the train pulled by. Oh, dear! what a fright I found myself when I looked in my mirror!"

As we sat in the office during the evening chatting she grew more and more vivacious and jolly, and our merry laughter rang out in marked contrast to the usual stillness which prevailed about the dreary station. We went to supper at the section house, and on returning she went at once to the key and asked the dispatcher if the train then nearly due was on time.

"No. 4 delayed by wash-out below Guthrie," came the reply. "Can't say how soon track will be repaired."

"Oh, dear! My usual luck!" she said. "I seldom find a train on time when I want to go anywhere!"

"Are you then so anxious to terminate what has been to me a most delightful visit?" I asked.

"Oh, no. I assure you I have enjoyed it fully as much as yourself, but I fear I will become tiresome to you with my senseless chatter."

I felt like assuring her that a lifetime spent in her society would not weary me. The time sped swiftly until the grey shades of evening began to gather, and I lighted the office lamp. No. 4 was reported safely over the track, and would reach Red Rock about 9 o'clock.

Excusing herself a moment to go to the cooler in the freight-room for a drink of ice water, Miss Rankin passed from the room, and had scarcely disappeared ere I heard heavy footsteps on the platform, and a moment later the front door was thrown open and four masked men entered and covered me with murderous-looking revolvers.

"Get away from that table, young feller, an' don't you make a move 'ords that tellygraph till the train comes, or I'll find a piece o' baggage 'yar it ain't lookin' fur. How soon is she due?"

I am not naturally a coward, but this harsh transformation from a blissful dream of love to the very precincts of death unnerved me, and confess I was thoroughly frightened. Then came the thought that Miss Rankin would return in a moment, and what indignities might not be offered her by these members of the notorious Dalton gang (for such I knew them to be); cruel, reckless men who had less regard for women than for dumb brutes which carried them to places of safety after their lawless raids.

"The train is past due now, but has been delayed by a washout below Guthrie, and may not be here for several hours yet," I replied. "I'll ask about her."

I made a move toward the telegraph table, hoping by a word to warn the dispatcher, but halted at the ominous clicking of a pistol.

"No, you don't," the leader said. "If you want that pale hide o' your'n tattooed with cold lead, you jest make another break like that! Yer lyin' about that train, an' we're agin' to camp right 'yar with you till it comes, fur we have business with it. Sit down on that bench."

I could not obey. The mental torture I endured was terrible, not only through fear of Miss Rankin's return to the office, but through the knowledge that an attempt was to be made to rob the train, and the lives of good men might be sacrificed defending the property entrusted to their care. How could the robbers be frustrated? If I could but reach the key and flash the words, "Train robbers," and sign my office call, the dispatcher would hear and understand; for in those troublous days the keen-eyed night guardians of the company's interests were ever on the alert for such intelligence. For half an hour I weighed the matter of a desperate attempt in my mind. I had lost fear of my charming visitor's safety, feeling satisfied by her absence that she had heard the robbers and was concealed in the freight room, or had escaped by the back door and gone to the section house for aid. But what assistance could come from there?

I knew there was not a firearm in the section house, and the section men would seek safety in flight at the first intimation that I was in the hands of the Daltons.

It at last determined to make one desperate attempt to warn the train-dispatcher, and thus save the train from robbery. I did not believe the villains would shoot, and felt that although they might use me roughly for my attempt, my duty to the company demanded that I should make it and meet the consequences.

Waiting until I heard the dispatcher respond to a report of the belated train from Mulhall, but two stations below, and knowing that he was at his table, I rose and bounded toward my instrument.

"Trai—" I got no further. There was a loud report, I felt a heavy blow accompanied by a stinging sensation on my right thigh, and sank to the floor.

"You cussed fool, that's yer game, is it? Lucky fur you my gun went off afore I got it raised, or that shod'd a tuk you whar' it'd a done more good!"

They picked me up and threw me roughly on the bench, cursing me in a fearful manner for my attempt to thwart them in their plans. I knew I had been shot through the thigh, but

from the absence of severe pain felt sure the bone had not been broken.

The train must be nearing Wharton, the next station south, and after passing there no earthly power could prevent it from falling into the hands of the scowling villains who sat near me. The instrument had been quiet for a long time, and I laid trembling with anxiety expecting every moment to hear Wharton report the passing of No. 4.

"Click! Click! B-r-r-r-click!"

What caused the instrument to act so queerly? Then, in clear clickings I heard the dispatcher's call. Wharton was about to report the train—but, no! My own office signal was signed to the call. What did it mean? The dispatcher responded, and my heart gave a great throb of delight as I heard these words flashed over the wire:

"This is Cr at Red Rock. Sd held by train robbers in office. I have wire tapped in loft. Stop No. 4, Wharton, quick!"

"I heard that, will hold 4 here all right," Wharton broke in and said.

An order was sent him to hold the train for further orders, and an explanatory message sent to the conductor.

Thank God, the train was safe! I understood it all now. The brave little girl had heard the robbers when they entered, and recalling her former experience, and the dirty loft, had climbed up there in the darkness, broken one of the wires and, striking the ends together, had been able to communicate with the dispatcher. In the stillness of the night I knew she could hear every click of the instrument below, and work as effectively as if sitting at the telegraph table.

"God bless you, little girl, you have done great work this night. Special train with sheriff's posse will leave in five minutes, and make run to Red Rock in forty-five minutes. Remain where you will be safe in case of a fight with robbers."

"Oh! I am so fearful Sd has been killed," I heard her say. "I heard them threaten to kill him and heard a shot, followed by a shuffling of feet."

In a tone of voice so loud I knew she could hear it, I said:

"Men, I have been shot in the thigh and am in pain. This bench is a hard bed for a wounded man. Won't you carry me in and lay me on my bed in the next room?"

"What do we keer how you suffer after that bad break o' yours? Lay still, or you'll get more of it!"

I heard the little heroine report the words to the dispatcher, and felt that my object had been accomplished and her anxiety relieved. In a moment came a message intended for my ears: "Brace up, Fred, for help is coming. We've got the best of this game, but I am distressed at your condition, old fellow. Grin and bear it. I will be with you the minute the train gets here.—Cr."

(To be continued.)

ORCHIDS THAT RIVAL THE UPAS

Brazilian Forest That Is Guarded by a Veil of Chloroform.

From Collier's Weekly: Serge Balaguine, a Russian explorer of Brazil, states in an interview recently published in the Gaulois of Paris, that a few degrees below the equator he discovered a forest of flowers that prevented him from approaching them. With every deference to Mr. Balaguine, that forest seems to have been discovered before. Two years ago there appeared in a San Francisco paper an account provided by a bulb hunter returning from the same region, who declared that after noticing in a forest an odor, vague and sweet at first, but which increased as he advanced, ultimately he reached a clearing, and there, straight ahead, was a wilderness of orchids. Trees were loaded with them, underbrush was covered with them, they trailed on the ground, mounted in beconing contortions, dangled from bunches, fell in sheets and elongated and expanded as far as the eye could reach. A breeze passed and they swayed with it, moving with a life of their own, dancing in the glare of the quatorial sun, and as they danced exhaling an odor that protected them more sheerly than a wall. In vain did that hunter endeavor to approach. There was a veil of perfumed chloroform through which he could see, but through which, try as he might, he could not pass. It held him back more effectually than bayonets, and it was torture to him to see those flowers and to feel that before he could reach them he must die, suffocated by the very splendors of which he was in search, poisoned by floral jewels such as no one perhaps had seen before. At the time the place was known as the village of demon flowers.

Point for Inventors.

It has long been recognized by expert telegraph operators that urgent necessity exists for improving the present sending apparatus. This point was forcibly illustrated at a late telegraph tournament in New York. At the first tick of the signal to start in a sending contest a reader started to indicate to the typewriter. In four minutes and 30 seconds he had written the entire article, which contained 412 words. In five minutes, the time appointed for the test, the telegrapher who took the prize only transmitted 254 words, and that this was considered the more remarkable performance is a concession of the imperfect nature of telegraph sending methods. The telegraph sender of to-day is confined to the use of one hand, and has to make many strokes to form one complete letter, while the typewriter has the free use of eight fingers, each one of which with a single stroke makes a complete character or letter.

NEWS OF NEBRASKA.

SUCCINCT SUMMARY OF A WEEK'S EVENTS

Most Important Happenings of the Past Seven Days Briefly Mentioned—All Portions of the State Covered—A Thorough Resume of Nebraska News.

Tuesday, July 26.

Pat McCafferty, a U. P. brakeman running between Columbus and Grand Island, had a foot crushed by the cars and may have to have it amputated.

Anton Pfeiffer, a German, aged about 50 years, was instantly killed by being run over by a B. & M. passenger train while attempting to cross the track about two miles east of Columbus. His two escaped, but the engine caught the hay rack on which he was riding.

Clyde Davis, an eighteen-year-old boy, who, with his brother, Frank, was engaged in carrying the mail in Beatrice, was drowned about 5 o'clock last evening in the river. He met his death about fifty feet from the pontoon bridge, two miles north of the city, while in swimming.

Street car bandits held up Conductor Hutton and Motorman McClurg of the Walnut Hill line in Omaha at midnight last night and succeeded in securing \$6.60 in small change. When the order came to hold hands up, Conductor Hutton held aloft nine dollars which the robbers didn't get. Detectives are trying to capture the highwaymen.

Inquiries have been made about the brigade and the number of the army corps to which the First Nebraska regiment belongs. According to letters received from volunteers the regiment has not been assigned. Its position in the army was to have been made known upon the arrival of the regiment at Manila.

In relation to the report of the government that Nebraska had not furnished her quota of troops under the two calls, Governor Holcomb entered a protest to the adjutant-general at Washington, and received a reply explaining the mistake. The false report caused a rush of offers from persons of other states to fill the quota. The governor was very much worried over the affair as Nebraska had furnished 501 more men than the quota.

The Nebraska Epworth assembly, Lincoln park, August 3 to 10, gives promise of being the largest gathering on the campground ever held in the west. Season tickets admitting to over forty high grade lectures, concerts, addresses, etc., cost but \$1.00. All railroads sell tickets at one fare for the round trip. Write Elmer E. Lesh, 104 North 10th street, Lincoln, for prospectus program or any special information desired.

The home of Mr. and Mrs. Ehme Wollman, prosperous German farmers living about ten miles northeast of Beatrice, is in ashes, two children are burned to death and two will probably die of burns received. The fire occurred Sunday afternoon. The parents had driven over to a neighbors two miles distant to make a visit, and soon after arriving there noticed a fire in the direction of their home. Returning home they found the house almost burned, and their children afire. The baby was burned to a crisp. One little four-year-old had gone to her uncle's, half-a-mile distant, her clothes afire, but her uncle had gone to the blazing house by another route and the little one perished. The property loss is about \$2,000.

Wednesday, July 27.

Havelock has voted to grant the Lincoln Traction company a franchise, and just as soon as the track can be extended from University Place, Havelock will have street car connection with Lincoln.

E. B. Griggs of Saffordville, Kan., was found wandering around Nebraska City. He could not tell his name or where he was from. His name and address were learned from a receipt issued by the M. W. A. lodge to which he belonged.

Wm. Ebricht, ex-superintendent of the state school for the blind at Nebraska City, is defendant in a suit brought by Attorney-General Smyth in Otoe county to recover \$1,087.15. John C. Watson, J. M. Wardlaw and G. H. Albright are also made defendants, as they were Mr. Ebricht's bondsmen.

Judge Cornish yesterday filed his final orders in the contempt case brought by the Nebraska Telephone company to punish the secretaries of the state board of transportation and Attorney-General Smyth. The judge held that the board did not act in contempt, but under belief that they were right. He enjoined the board from taking further hearings in the Yeiser complaint.

Frank Wolf, a farmer living near Norfolk, while fixing a binder was thrown under the machine by the horses starting up. He was doubled up, one leg broken, an ankle and shoulder dislocated and his spine was injured to such an extent as to paralyze him from his shoulders down. An operation will be necessary to save his life.

W. Van Boening, a farmer living near Glenville, in the southeastern part of Adams county, while returning home was accidentally thrown from his buggy seat, his foot catching in such a way as to drag his head and shoulders on the ground, being unable to loosen himself or stop the team. He was dragged along for nearly a mile until the team stopped at the barn, when he was discovered by his son. He was in an unconscious condition, his skull being fractured and the skin being torn from his back and head. He never recovered consciousness.

Wm. Balcom, a painter at Grand Island, shot himself through the head because his wife, whom he had just recently married, had deserted him. He was aged 21.

Friday, July 29.

Cervera and forty officers are now comfortably established at Annapolis.

General Manager Clarkson of the exposition announces Friday, September 2, as peach day, and Friday, September 16, as grape day. On these days the fruit will be given away to all on the grounds.

Henry Wollman, one of the victims of the fire near Beatrice last Sunday, died yesterday. The mother is crazed with grief and friends fear she may go insane. Henry is the third one to die. John, the fourth, is not expected to live long.

In the Burlington up town ticket office at Omaha are displayed a lot of mementoes of the Infanta Maria Teresa, one of the Spanish vessels destroyed at Santiago. They were sent by Guy H. Cramer, ensign on the Newark, formerly a clerk in the Burlington passenger department. There is a gun and cartridges, some spoons, knives and a cup, all much the worse for wear.

Saturday, July 30.

Speaker Gaffin of Colon was injured the other day in a runaway accident and in the shake up a blood vessel was ruptured, necessitating an operation at the Lincoln sanitarium. No serious consequences are likely to ensue.

During a heavy rain storm at 1 o'clock Friday morning, two box cars were blown from the siding and out on the main track. At 2 when the M. P. passenger came up the engineer discovered them, reversed his engine and jumped. He struck on a pile of ties and was killed.

While on her way home from Burwell, Mrs. H. C. Orvis got out of the buggy to tie up a hitch rein. In getting back into the buggy she somehow caught her foot in the gearing. The team walked along home, a distance of three miles, dragging Mrs. Orvis, who is 55 years old, the entire distance on her back. She escaped fatal injury but was somewhat bruised.

Sunday, August 1.

Snow fell at Kimball yesterday morning for seven minutes. This is the first time snow ever fell there in July.

Two fellows named Hitchcock and Hayward were captured yesterday by the Lincoln police in the act of robbing the house of James Robertson at 24th and Holdridge streets at about 6 o'clock p. m. Hayward is an ex-convict.

The index finger of the right hand of Jacob Hunteker, the old gentleman who was severely injured in a runaway accident at Table Rock, July 9, has had to be amputated. The bone had become diseased from the terrible wound and amputation had to be resorted to.

A bunch of cattle belonging to John McKeegan of Bancroft, that were in a pasture bordering on the banks of the Missouri river, were attacked by a swarm of bees. Thirty head were driven over a fifty-foot abrupt bank and twelve head were drowned. The eight head that were saved were aided by a ferry boat that happened to be near.

State Superintendent Jackson has been besieged with questions from teachers and school boards relating to the new revenue law. There is an urgent demand to know whether teachers' certificates, teachers' contracts and reports of directors are subject to the stamp tax. Superintendent Jackson has forwarded a list of questions to the commissioner of internal revenue at Washington and when the answers are received he will make them public for the information of interested persons.

Sunday, July 31.

John Swart, a well-to-do bachelor farmer living eight miles south of Trenton, was found dead in his bed at noon yesterday.

Dr. Stutzman of Geneva filed complaint last night with Sheriff Ogg against a stranger who had broken into his house during the absence of the family and taken a watch. The sheriff found the man in bed at the Stowell house and took him to jail. The watch was found on the person of the prisoner.

The Lincoln police received word yesterday that the man killed by the cars last week was Joseph Krasniaky, and that he had a brother in South Omaha. The brother arrived in Lincoln last evening and identified the man. The brother said that he was unable to pay funeral expenses, so the county will bury the man.

Last Friday while workmen on the ruins of the Clarke Drug company's building, Lincoln, were taking down an arch at the rear of the building, it fell and struck Jay Cather, a stone mason, on the right arm. He was terribly bruised when picked up and his right fore-arm was torn to tatters. The flesh was pounded into strips and was torn from the bones.

Citizens of Lincoln have been discussing the advisability of following certain Chicago citizens in the matter of the revenue stamps in relation to express companies. A man in that city took a package to a company in that city desiring it to be expressed. It was unstamped and the company refused to take it. He got out an injunction requiring them to do so; the matter was taken into the courts, which backed up all that the man had done, thus deciding that the company should pay the revenue.

TRANS-MISSISSIPPI EXPOSITION, OMAHA.

Some Coming Special Days.

- 10. Red Mens' day.
11. Tennessee Red Mens' day.
13. St. Joseph day.
15. Business and Fraternal Associations day.
18. Texas day.
19. Colored Americans' day.
23. Des Moines day.
25. Sioux City day.
27. Bohemian day.
30. Missouri day.
31. Greek Letter Societies day.

- Sept. 1. Kansas day.
2. Peach day.
3. Editors' day.
5. Labor day.
7. Port Arthur day.
8. Fraternal Union of America day.
9. Woodmen of the World day.
Lumbermen's day.
Colorado day.
Rocky Ford Melon day.
10. New Mexico day.
12. Montana day.
13. Wisconsin day.
14. National Shriners' day.
Utah day.

- 15. New England day.
16. Oklahoma day.
17. Grape day.
18. Railroad day.
19 and 20. Modern Woodmen days.
21 and 22. Iowa days.
24. Commercial Travelers' day.

- Oct. 1. Chicago day.
6. P. E. O. Society day.
New York day.
7. Knox College day.
8. Twin City day (St. Paul and Minneapolis.)
13. Knights of Pythias day
17. I. O. O. F. day.
18. Tennessee day.
20. Denver day.

Other special days to be announced later. Gorgeous electrical illumination of the grand court. Unrivaled show features on the midway. Reduced rates on all railroads.

Colored citizens of the republic will be given the freedom of the grounds on August 19, and as the Congress of White and Colored Americans and the National Personal Liberty League will be in session in Omaha, August 17 to 19, a large attendance of prominent colored people from all parts of the country is looked for. Excursions are being arranged from Kansas City and other southern points.

Texas Day at the Trans-Mississippi Exposition has been fixed for Thursday, August 18. Governor Culbertson will head a party of distinguished Texans to Omaha on this occasion, and it is expected that a large number of citizens from the Lone Star State will take advantage of the low railroad rates which have been put into effect from all Texas points to Omaha and return to visit the Exposition. The rates for Texas Day are exceptionally low, and there will probably be no better opportunity for Texas people to visit the great Western show.

Three days before Texas Day at the Exposition is to be Wheelmen's Day. Officers of the L. A. W. are interesting themselves in this occasion, and wheelmen from all parts of the country are expected to be present on August 15, August 19, the day following Texas Day, will be Colored Americans' Day, and a celebration will be arranged which will make the day a memorable one. The Indian congress will be in full swing during August, and this feature alone will make the Exposition worthy of a visit. Almost all the remaining Indian tribes will be represented, and there will be a presentation of their native life such as has never been attempted before and can probably never be accomplished again.

Tombstone Orthography.

The summit of bad spelling in epitaph seems to have been reached by the following inscription in English, found on a gravestone in the Caroline Islands put up to the memory of two brave sailors:

Sacred to Wilm. Collis Boat Steerer of the SHIP SAINT george of New BED ford who By the Will of Almitry god was avirillly injured by a BULL WHALE off this land on 18 March 1860 also to Pedro Sabbanas of Guam 4th MaTE drowned on the SAME Date his Back broken by WHALE above

Mentioned Gen. Woodford's O.M.C.

The Syracuse Courier can take for granted and as a fact the statement that Stewart L. Woodford is not a candidate for governor, and will not allow his name to be mentioned as such in the republican convention or in any other convention. He still is—not merely was—minister to Spain; he is that yet, and will be that till peace is declared between Spain and the United States, with himself as the first of the three negotiators on behalf of this country.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Clock for Theatrical Use.

To judicate the different numbers of a program a newly designed clock has a rotatable dial plate, which can be perforated at the proper places to engage hooked rods which fall into the holes in the dial, and are pulled a short distance to make electrical connections with bells or indicators located in convenient places.

Seen There Before.

Claude (earnestly)—"Am I the first man you ever loved?" Maud—"Why, certainly! How strange men are. They all ask me that question."—Tid-Bits.