



KEITH OF THE BORDER

A TALE OF THE PLAINS BY RANDALL PARRISH

Illustrations by DEARBORN HEVILL

CHAPTER VII.

In the Sand Desert.

Suddenly Keith halted, bringing his pony's head sharply about, so that the two faced one another.

"There's no need of keeping up a water trail any longer," he said quietly. "By all the signs we're in for a sand storm by daylight, and that will cover our tracks so the devil himself couldn't follow them."

"I reckon dis am one, sah," Keith felt of the object Neb held forth.

"Ter, and a big one, too; fill it and strap it on tight; we've got a long, dry ride ahead."

"Whar' yo' propose goin', Massa Jack?"

"To the 'Bar X' on the Canadian. I've worked with that outfit. They'll give us whatever we need, and ask no questions; I don't know of anything in between. It's going to be a hard ride, boy, and mighty little to eat except what I saved from supper."

"How far am I to dis yere 'Bar X'?" "A hundred and fifty miles as the crow flies, and sand all the way, except for the valley of Salt Fork. Come on now, and keep close, for it's easy to get lost in these sand hills."

Keith had ridden that hundred and fifty miles of sandy desolation before, but had never been called upon to make such a journey as this proved to be. He knew there was little to fear from human enemies, for they were riding far enough east of the Santa Fe trail to be out of the path of raiding parties, while this desert country was shunned by Indian hunters. It consisted of sand hills after sand hills, a drear waterless waste, where nothing grew and mid the dread sameness of which a traveler could only find passage by the guidance of stars at night or the blazing sun by day.

To the eye mile after mile appeared exactly alike, with nothing whatever to distinguish either distance or direction—the same drifting ridges of sand stretching forth in every direction, no summit higher than another, no semblance of green shrubbery, or silver sheen of running water anywhere to break the dull monotony—a vast sandy plain, devoid of life, extending to the horizon, overhung by a barren sky.

They had covered ten miles of it by daybreak, their ponies traveling heavily, fetlock deep, but could advance no further. With the first tint of rose in the east the brooding storm burst upon them in wild desert fury, the fierce wind buffeting them back, lashing their faces with sharp grit until they were unable to bear the pain. The flying sand smote them in clouds, driven with the speed of bullets. In vain they lay flat, urging their ponies forward; the beasts, maddened and blinded by the merciless lashing of the sand, refused to face the storm. Keith, all sense of direction long since lost, rolled wearily from the saddle, burrowed under the partial shelter of a sand dune, and called upon Neb to follow him. With their hands and feet they made a slight wind-break, dragging the struggling ponies into its protection, and burrowed themselves there, the clouds of sand skurrying over them so thick as to obscure the sky, and rapidly burying them altogether as though in a grave. Within an hour they were compelled to dig themselves out, yet it proved partial escape from the pitiless lashing. The wind howled like unloosed demons, and the air grew cold, adding to the sting of the grit, when some sudden eddy hurled it into their hiding place. To endeavor further travel would mean certain death, for no one could have guided a course for a hundred feet through the tempest, which seemed to suck the very breath away. To the fugitives came this comfort—if they could not advance, then no one else could follow, and the storm was completely blotting out their trail.

It was three o'clock before it died sufficiently down for them to venture out. Even then the air remained full of sand, while constantly shifting ridges made travel difficult. Only grim necessity—the suffering of the ponies for water, and their own need for soon reaching the habitation of man and acquiring food—drove them to the early venture. They must attain the valley of the Salt Fork that night, or else perish in the desert—there remained no other choice. Tying neckerchiefs over their horses' eyes, and lying flat themselves, they succeeded in pressing slowly forward, winding in and out among the shifting dunes, with only the wind to guide them. It was an awful trail, the hoofs sinking deep in drifting sand, the struggling ponies becoming so exhausted that their riders finally dismounted, and staggered forward on foot, leading them stumbling blindly after. Once the negro's horse dropped, and had to be lashed to its feet again; once Keith's pony stumbled and fell on him, hurling him face down into the sand, and he would have died there, lacking sufficient strength to lift the dead weight, but for Neb's assistance. As it was he went staggering blindly forward, bruised, and faint from hunger and fatigue. Neither man spoke; they had no breath nor energy left to waste; every ounce of strength needed to be conserved for the battle against nature. They were fighting for life, fighting grimly, almost hopelessly, and alone.

About them night finally closed in, black and starless, yet fortunately with a gradual dying away of the storm. For an hour past they had been struggling on, doubting their direction, wondering dully if they were not lost and merely drifting about in a circle. They had debated this fiercely once, the ponies standing dejectedly, tails to the storm, Neb arguing that the wind still blew from the south, and Keith contending it had shifted into the westward. The white man won his way, and they staggered on uncertain, the negro grasping the first pony's tail to keep from being separated from his companion. Some instinct of the plains must have guided them, for at last they dragged themselves out from the desert, the crunching sand under foot changing into rock, and then to short brittle grass, at which the ponies nibbled eagerly. The slope led gradually downward, the animals scenting water, and in their saddles, the riders let them go, and they never stopped until they were deep in the stream, their noses buried. The men shivered in their saddles, until, at last satisfied, the ponies consented to be forced back up the bank, where they nibbled at the short tufts of herbage, but in a manner expressive of weariness. Keith flung himself on the ground, every muscle of his body aching, his exposed flesh still smarting from the hail of sand through which they had passed.

He had not the slightest conception as to where they were, except he knew this must be the Salt Fork. Utterly confused by the maze of shifting dunes, through whose intricacies they had somehow found passage, the blackness of the night yielded no clue as to their point of emergence. The volume of water in the stream alone suggested that in their wanderings they must have drifted to the eastward, and come out much lower down than had been originally intended. If so, then they might be almost directly south of Carson City, and in a section with which he was totally unacquainted. One thing was, however, certain—they would be compelled to wait for daylight to ascertain the truth, and decide upon their future movements. There was another barren, sandy stretch of desolation lying between this isolated valley and that of the Canadian, and their horses would never stand to be pushed forward without both rest and food. As to themselves—they had eaten their last crumb long since, but this was not the first time both had known starvation.

Keith arose reluctantly, and removed the saddles from the animals, hobbling them so they could graze at will. Neb was propped up beneath an out-cropping of the bank, which partly protected him from the wind, a mere hulk of a shadow. Keith could not tell whether he slept or not, but made no effort to disturb him. A moment he stared vacantly about into the black silence, and then lay down, pillowing his head upon a saddle. He found it impossible to sleep, the chill of the wind causing him to turn and twist, in vain search after comfort, while unappeased hunger gnawed incessantly. His eyes ranged about over the dull gloom of the skies until they fell again to the earth level, and then he suddenly sat up, half believing himself in a dream—down the stream, how far away he could not judge, there gleamed a steady, yellowish light. It was no flicker of a camp fire, yet remained stationary. Surely no star could be so low and large; nor did he recall any with that peculiarity of color. If such a miracle was possible in the heart of that sandy desert he would have sworn it was a lamp shining through a window. But he had never heard of any settler on the Salt Fork, and almost laughed at the thought, believing for the instant his brain played him some selfish trick. Yet that light was no illusion; he rubbed his eyes, only to see it more clearly, convinced now of its reality. He strode hastily across, and shook Neb into semi-consciousness, dragging him bodily up the bank and pointing down the stream.

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"Do you see that?" he inquired anxiously. "There, straight ahead of you?" The negro stared, shaking with cold, and scarcely able to stand alone. "Maybe it am de moon, Massa Jack," he muttered, thickly, "or a goblin's lantern. Lawd, I don't jest like de looks ob dat ting." "Well, I do," and Keith laughed unashamedly at the negro's fears. "All I wanted to know was if you saw what I saw. That's a lamp shining through

a window, Neb. What in heaven's name it can be doing here I am unable to guess, but I'm going to find out. It means shelter and food, boy, even if we have to fight for it. (Come on, the horses are safe, and we'll discover what is behind that light yonder.)

(To Be Continued.)

School Days Again.

The restless and happy days of vacation are about over. Soon the irresponsible gangs of tousled children playing about the back yards will be succeeded by the long lines of starched and brushed youngsters scarcely recognizable with their hair smacked down and vacation dirt removed from tanned faces. The "What shall I do now, Mother?" type of youngster is so general now, that school days are a relief to many a burdened family. The farm child will always find amusement enough, while the barn with its dark haymows and lawless freedom stimulate the spirit of romance and play, while the brooks breed tadpoles and the old swimming hole offers its cool welcome. But the boy was considered a negligible factor when the modern town was laid out. Advanced municipalities are providing their playgrounds, it is true. Every town needs them, but the average city and large village offers the American youth no more constructive occupation than plundering such fruit trees as may exist under urban conditions, and swapping curbstone gossip and cigarettes.

SHOES IN JAPAN.

A Man Will Wear Out From Eight to Ten Pairs a Year.

The shops and booths of Japan are of unending interest. Here the greengrocer and fruit seller has arranged his wares till it seems as though one looked upon a great bouquet. There the flower shop blazes in brilliance and the lantern maker squats at his multi-colored task. At the next entrance we perhaps saw a man severing chicken meat from the bone, and he performs the operation as skillfully as the surgeon with his dissecting knife. Beef and chicken are commonly sold in this fashion.

Two or three paces farther on one is confronted with a typical Japanese shoe store. All the footwear of the little brown man is here on view. The gets (wooden clogs) and straw sandals are indeed a fanciful exhibition. They line the benches, the floors, the shelves. They hang from above and seemingly are everywhere, allowing the seller just about enough room to squat on his mat. The newcomer is at once startled at the immense quantity of this simple footwear and the many places where it is sold, but he soon finds a solution to his query when he hears that a Japanese man annually makes away with from eight to ten pairs.—Christian Herald.

SIZE OF WHALES.

Length of the Biggest Ones and the Height They Can Spout. A government official who has made a special study of whales states that the average length of a full grown sulphur bottom whale is just under eighty feet. This estimate disregards the exaggerated reports sometimes spread by sailors and is based on actual measurements of many individual specimens. There seem to be credible accounts of whales reaching a length of from eighty-five to ninety-five feet, but the authority quoted has never seen any of that size. Whales appear to grow with great rapidity, the length of yearlings being estimated at from thirty to thirty-five feet.

How high can whales spout? Photographs taken by the scientist referred to give a means of measuring with some accuracy the height to which the water is thrown. This appears to be much less than it has often been supposed to be. It is claimed that even the great sulphur bottom whale on the average spouts to a height of only fourteen feet, although occasionally the height may be as much as twenty feet.—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

Ancient Architecture.

Herr Knauth, the architect in charge of the Cathedral of Strassburg, has shown that the principles of construction followed by the great cathedrals; builders of former times are identical with those used by the builders of the Egyptian pyramids and are based on triangulation. The same simple geometrical figure underlies all these constructions. More than this, Herr Knauth traces the architectural principle in the formation of crystals and lays down this formula: "The laws of proportion in medieval architecture are the geometrical laws of crystallization."

LEGAL NOTICE.

State of Nebraska, Cass County, ss. William W. Coates and Frank C. Benfer will take notice that on the 7th day of August, 1911, M. Archer, a Justice of the Peace of the City of Plattsmouth, Cass County, Nebraska, issued an order of attachment for the sum of \$98.68, in an action pending before him wherein George Polsall is plaintiff and William W. Coates and Frank C. Benfer are the defendants, consisting of a debt owing by Weyrich & Hadraha to the said William W. Coates, has been attached under said order. Said cause was continued to the 20th day of September, 1911, at 9 o'clock, a. m. Dated at Plattsmouth, Nebraska, this 10th day of August, 1911. George Polsall, Plaintiff.

TWO KILLED IN AUTO UPSET

Car Carrying Three Persons Skids Off Bridge Near Johnson.

VICTIMS LIVED NEAR JULIAN.

Had Been Attending Dance and Were Going Home—Third Member of Party Jumps and Escapes With Slight Injuries—Car Skids Off Bridge.

Johnson, Neb., Sept. 1.—Two persons were killed and one injured in an automobile accident three miles northwest of here at midnight.

The dead are: William Bourlier, Mrs. Lillian Riordan.

The injured man is Rene de Pierie. All three members of the party lived near Julian. They had been attending a dance here and had started for home. About three miles northeast of here there is a sharp turn in the road, and just beyond it is a bridge over a small stream. The car skidded just as it struck the bridge and went through the rail and landed upside down on the ground below. De Pierie, who was driving, jumped out and escaped with a few bruises. Bourlier and Mrs. Riordan were caught under the car and crushed to death.

William Bourlier is the son of Fred Bourlier, a prominent farmer. Mrs. Riordan, who was a widow, is the daughter of A. McManus.

INDIAN PLAY NEARLY FATAL. Boy at Nebraska City Tied to Stake by Playmates Rescued by Father. Nebraska City, Neb., Sept. 1.—There came near being a case of being burned to death at the stake in this city. Some small boys were playing Indian and they induced the seven-year-old son of Robert Hansen to play the leading role, and ropes were placed about his breast and he was hung several times and seemed to enjoy the sport. Then it was suggested that he be tied to a stake and burned by the young Indians. A great mass of kindling and rubbish was collected and the boy was chained to the stake and a torch applied. When the flames began to lick up about him and the smoke choked him he set up a yell, while the young Indians danced about him in seeming glee. The father chanced to be at home and heard the cries of the child. Grabbing him, stake and all he carried him to a place of safety, while the Indians disappeared. The boy was considerably scorched.

STATES AGREE ON DEFENSE

Engineer Hurd Pleaded at Result of National Conference.

Lincoln, Sept. 1.—Engineer Hurd of the physical valuation department of the Nebraska state railway commission is well pleased with the results of the recent national conference of engineers and commissioners and declares that much good will result from the gathering.

"The principal object of the meeting was to get the different states which are interested in rate regulation to agree on a common defense. The railroad men who are attacking state regulation have agreed on their theories and line of evidence. They tell the same story in every court or attempt to, while the state departments in every instance have had different lines of defense. We desire to agree on a line of defense and present it to the court with a solid front. It developed during the recent meeting that the states intend to do this very thing," said Mr. Hurd.

School in Egg Candling.

Lincoln, Sept. 1.—State Chemist Redford, who is acting state food commissioner during the illness of Commissioner W. R. Jackson, will conduct a little school in egg candling at the poultry building on the state fair grounds during the fair. He intends to demonstrate to farmers the ease with which they can make a homemade candling box and how they can increase the keeping qualities of their eggs by dispensing with roosters after the hatching season is over.

Uses Hatpin as Weapon.

Lincoln, Sept. 1.—Mrs. Mabel Burch, a St. Louis woman who was taken in a demented condition from a Burlington train, and who has been held in the county jail here since Tuesday, tried to stab herself with a hatpin. She inflicted several wounds upon her body, but none will prove fatal. The police authorities of St. Louis have been communicated with in the hope that relatives of the woman may be located.

Farmers' Institute at Sargent.

Sargent, Neb., Sept. 1.—At a special meeting of the Farmers' Institute, M. E. Vandenberg, president of the institute, J. Gibson and J. E. Grint were elected delegates to attend the Nebraska Farmers' Congress and Rural Life Commission, which is to be held in York next month. The institute is making preparations for an instructive session and an exhibit in January.

Boy Dragged Under Hayrake.

Ragan, Neb., Sept. 1.—Dick Richards, son of Edward Richards, was painfully injured when the team he was driving to a hayrake ran away. His nose was broken and he was badly bruised and cut.

SURGEON GENERAL TORNEY. On Whose Advice Army Gets Orders to Take Typhoid Vaccination.



ARMY FIGHTING TYPHOID

Officers and Men Ordered Vaccinated Against Scourge.

Washington, Sept. 1.—Vaccination against typhoid fever has been made compulsory for every officer and enlisted man in the United States army under forty-five years old.

The only exceptions permitted are those who have had the disease or who already have been vaccinated.

This action was taken by the secretary of war on recommendation of Surgeon General George H. Torney.

FLOATER IN MISSOURI PROVED TO BE PARSLAW

Missouri Valley Murderer Identified By His Clothes.

Logan, Ia., Sept. 1.—The body found in the Missouri river near Modale, Ia., has been identified by Officers Williams and Rock as that of Charles Parslow, one of the slayers of Marshal George Butcher of Missouri Valley. The body of Parslow's brother, also wanted for murder, was found in the river near Omaha a few days ago. Both are believed to have lost their lives while trying to escape from a posse. Identification was established by the large prominent teeth. Cartridges in the pockets were the same kind as used by the desperados. The watch and chain found were of the exact description of those worn by Charles Parslow when he left home, as described by his stepmother. She told of his having a bottle of medicine and one was found in the pockets, known to be his. The body was buried where found.

FRENCH CABINET MEETS

Approves Instructions to Be Given Ambassador at Berlin.

Rambouillet, France, Sept. 1.—Premier Caillaux and his colleagues in the French cabinet met at the chateau of President Fallieres here and listened to the narrative of Justin de Selvos, the foreign minister, concerning the latest developments of the negotiations with Germany on the Moroccan question. The cabinet approved in their final form the instructions to be given to Jules Cambon, the French ambassador at Berlin.

Jules Pams, the minister of agriculture, was instructed to investigate the underlying cause of the high price of food, which has resulted in considerable rioting in the northern part of France.

The instructions endeavor to phrase the French conception of Germany's position in Morocco, and they authorize the French ambassador to offer specific portions of French Congo in exchange for the absolute recognition by Germany of France's rights in Morocco.

Miner Dies Within Few Feet of Safety.

Ely, Nev., Sept. 1.—When the shaft of the Giroux Consolidated mine, which was closed to extinguish the fire which caused the death of seven men, was unsealed the body of Daniel Drea, secretary of the local miners' union, was found on top of the ladder platform, within fifteen feet of the surface. He almost had reached safety.

Dead Man's Head in Court.

Marionette, Wis., Sept. 1.—The decapitated head of the husband of Mary Weertelewski of Pound, Wis., was exhibited in court at Mr. Weertelewski's preliminary examination on the charge of murdering her husband. He was found dead in their home with a fractured skull several weeks ago.

DEXTER GAS PLANT WRECKED

Explosion Causes Destruction of Property and One Fatally.

MANAGER WILL PROBABLY DIE.

Foreman Meyers, Though Terribly Scalded, Succeeds in Pulling Unconscious Form of Charles Hanson From the Burning Building.

Des Moines, Sept. 1.—Special dispatches from Dexter, Ia., just west of Des Moines, tell of an explosion of gas there that totally wrecked the new \$12,000 plant of the Dexter Gas company, and the probable fatal burning of Charles Hanson, manager of the plant. A. B. Meyers, foreman, was frightfully scalded, but succeeded in dragging the unconscious form of Hanson from the burning building. The cause of the fire is unknown.

Iowa's pioneers were guests of the state fair management. All the residents living in Iowa before the territory became a state were admitted free to the grounds. Harroun's automobile race against Parmalee, the Wright aviator, will be the feature of today, the final fair date.

Held for Blackmail.

Hugh Fry, a railroad fireman, was arrested by Constable Temple on charges of having attempted to blackmail Edward Thompson, druggist. He is alleged to have threatened to kill Thompson last Saturday. The druggist claims that Fry forced him to sign an affidavit at the point of a gun and threatened to send him to jail for improper relations with Mrs. Fry if he did not give the fireman \$500.

Reception for President Taft.

Preparations are being made to welcome President Taft when he comes to Des Moines Sept. 29. At a meeting of the Greater Des Moines committee a committee composed of Lafayette Young, Jr., Edward Meredith and Harvey Ingham was appointed to make the necessary plans for the reception of the president. The president will probably deliver an address at the Coliseum here.

Gas Experts Cost High.

Gas experts whom the city of Des Moines recently employed to assist it in its fight for 90-cent gas come high. Just as if the city council didn't appreciate the big bill, W. D. Marks presented a request for \$2,012.75. The bill included \$1,150 salary and the remainder was for expenses.

MORMONS DRIVEN OUT

Two Elders Ejected From Kamrar After Noisy Demonstration.

Kamrar, Ia., Sept. 1.—Two elders of the Mormon church left this city afoot with the din of many dishes echoing in their ears.

The elders were making proselyting speeches when a crowd of women, beating vigorously on kitchen tinware, created such a pandemonium that the speakers could not be heard. Mormon sympathizers sought to repel the assault by throwing water on the women, but at this point husbands and brothers took a hand and after lively scuffles the meeting was broken up. A few members of the dishpan brigade were out again beating quickstep time to the departure of the missionaries.

DEAD BABE IN MOTHER'S ARMS

Polish Woman Reaches Davenport Clapping Body of Child in Her Arms.

Davenport, Ia., Sept. 1.—A young Polish woman, with a dead baby tightly clasped in her arms, got off a Rock Island train from Sioux City. Police investigation indicated that the baby had been dead many hours. The woman gave the name of Zabooski, and says the child died on the train. Little more could be gleaned from her.

Greek Killed Near Dunlap.

Missouri Valley, Ia., Sept. 1.—The body of John Tappas, a Greek killed by a Northwestern train at Dunlap, was brought to this city and placed in the hands of the coroner. He stepped from one track on account of an approaching train from the east and was hit by a westbound train on the other track.

Thomas McCaw's Body Identified.

Iowa City, Ia., Sept. 1.—Thomas McCaw's brothers from Poweshiek county identified their drowned brother's body here and took it to Montezuma for burial.

Fatal Fire at Topeka.

Topeka, Sept. 1.—One man was burned to death, another was seriously injured and property loss exceeding \$100,000 resulted from an early morning fire in the business district of Topeka. The J. C. Gressner Furniture company and the Gibbs Clothing company are the heaviest losers. W. V. Evans, photographer, who lived in his studio, lost his life. The door leading to an adjoining office, through which he might have escaped, was locked and he was unable to break it down.

Alleged Watermelon Thief Killed.

Webb City, Mo., Sept. 1.—Harvard Gibbons, a farmer who lives near this city, was shot and killed by his neighbor, John Waller, who accused him of stealing watermelons. Waller surrendered to the authorities.