



KEITH OF THE BORDER

A TALE OF THE PLAINS
By RANDALL PARRISH
AUTHOR OF 'MY LADY OF THE SOUTH'
'WHEN WILDERNESS WAS KING', ETC.
ILLUSTRATIONS BY DEARBORN MELVILLE

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

The Duel in the Desert.

Keith rode straight forward into the sandy desolation, spurring his horse into a swift trot. After one glance backward as they clambered up the steep bank, a glance which revealed Hope's slender form in the cabin doorway, his eyes never turned again that way. He had a man's stern work to do out yonder, and his purpose could not be swerved, his firmness of hand and keenness of eye affected, by any thought of her. His lips compressed, his fingers gripping the rein, he drove all regretful memory from his mind, until every nerve within him throbbled in unison with his present purpose. He was right; he knew he was right. It was not hate, not even revenge, which had set him forth, leaving love behind, but honor—the honor of the South, and of the frontier, of his ancestry and his training—honor that drove him now to meet Hawley face to face, man to man, to settle the feud between them for all time. And he rode smiling, gladly, as to a trust, now that he was at last alone, free in the desert.

The hours passed, the sun rising higher in the blazing blue of the sky; the horse, wearied by the constant pull of the sand, had long since slowed down to a walk; the last dim blur of the cottonwoods along the Fork had disappeared; and the rider swayed in the saddle, the dead lifelessness of sky and desert dulling his brain. Yet he had not forgotten his errand—rushing constantly from lethargy to sweep his shaded eyes about the rounded horizon, keenly marking the slightest shadow across the sands, taking advantage of every drift to give him wider viewpoint, rising in his stirrups to scan the leagues of desolation ahead. Twice he drew his revolver from out his sheath, tested it, and slipped in a fresh cartridge, returning the weapon more lightly to its place, the flap of the holster turned back and held open by his leg. The sun beat upon him like a ball of fire, the hot sand flinging the blaze back into his face. He pushed back the upper part of his shirt and drank a swallow of tepid water from a canteen strapped behind the saddle. His eyes ached with the glare, until he saw fantastic red and yellow shapes dancing dizzily before him. The weariness of the long night pressed upon his eye-balls; he felt the strain of the past hours, the lack of food, the need of rest. His head nodded, and he brought himself to life again with a jerk and a muttered word, staring out into the dim, formless distance. Lord, if there was only some thing moving, something he could concentrate his attention upon; something to rest the straining eyes!

But there was nothing, absolutely nothing—just that seemingly endless stretch of sand, circled by the blazing sky, the wind sweeping its surface soundless and hot, as though from the pits of hell; no stir, no motion, no movement of anything animate or inanimate to break the awful monotony. Death! It was death everywhere! his aching eyes rested on nothing but what was typical of death. Even the heat waves seemed fantastic, grotesque, assuming spectral forms, as though ghosts beckoned and danced in the haze, luring him on to become one of themselves. Keith was not a dreamer, nor one to yield easily to such brain fancies, but the mad delirium of loneliness gripped him, and he had to struggle back to sanity, beating his hands upon his breast to stir anew the sluggish circulation of his blood, and talking to the horse in strange feverishness.

With every step of advance the brooding silence seemed more profound, more deathlike. He got to marking the sand ridges, the slight variations giving play to the brain. Way off to the left was the mirage of a lake, apparently so real that he had to battle with himself to keep from turning aside. He dropped forward in the saddle, his head hanging low, so blinded by the incessant sun glare he could no longer hear the glitter of that horrible ocean of sand. It was noon now—noon, and he had been riding steadily seven hours. The thought brought his blurred eyes again to the horizon. Where could he be, the man he sought in the heart of this solitude? Surely he should be here by now, if he had left the water-hole at dawn. Could he have gone the longer route, south to the Fork? The possibility of such a thing seared through him like a hot iron, driving the dullness from his brain, the lethargy from his limbs. God! no! Fate could never play such a scurvy trick as that! The man must have been delayed; had failed to leave camp early—some where ahead, yonder where the blue haze marked the union of land and sky, he was surely coming, riding half dead, and drooping in the saddle.

Again Keith rose in his stirrups, rubbing the mist out of his eyes that he might see clearer, and stared ahead. What was that away out yonder? A shadow? A spot dancing before

his tortured vision? or a moving, living something which he actually saw? He could not tell, he could not be sure, yet he straightened up expectantly, shading his eyes, and never losing sight of the object. It moved, grew larger, darker, more real—yet how it crawled, crawled, crawled toward him. It seemed as if the vague, shapeless thing would never take form, never stand out revealed against the sky so he could determine the truth. He had forgotten all else—the silent desert, the blazing sun, the burning wind—all his soul concentrated on that speck yonder. Suddenly it disappeared—a wale in the sand probably—and, when it rose into view again, he uttered a cry of joy—it was a horse and rider!

Little by little they drew nearer one another, two black specks in that vast ocean of sand, the only moving living things under the brazen circle of the sky. Keith was ready now, his eyes bright, the cocked revolver gripped hard in his hand. The space between them narrowed, and Hawley saw him, caught a glimpse of the face under the broad hat brim, the burning eyes surveying him. With an oath he stopped his horse, dragging at his gun, surprised, dazed, yet instantly understanding. Keith also halted, and across the intervening desert the eyes of the two men met in grim defiance. The latter wet his dry lips, and spoke shortly:

"I reckon you know what this means, Hawley, and why I am here. We're Southerners both of us, and we settle our own personal affairs. You've got to fight me now, man to man."

The gambler glanced about him, and down at his horse. If he thought of flight it was useless. His lip curled with contempt.

"Damn you talking, Keith," he returned savagely. "Let's have it over with," and spurred his horse. The gun of the other came up.

"Wait!" and Hawley paused, dragging at his rein. "One of us most likely is going to die here; perhaps both. But if either survives he'll need a horse to get out of this alive. Dismount; I'll do the same; step away so the horses are out of range, and then we'll fight it out—is that square?"

Without a word, his eyes gleaming with cunning hatred, the gambler swung down from his saddle onto the sand, his horse interposed between him and the other. Keith did the same, his eyes peering across the back of his animal.

"Now," he said steadily, "when I count three drive your horse aside, and let go—are you ready?"

"Damn you—yes!"

"Then look out—one! two! three!"

The plainsman struck his horse with the quirt in his left hand and sprang swiftly aside so as to clear the flank of the animal, his shooting arm flung out. There was a flash of flame across Hawley's saddle, a sharp report, and Keith reeled backward, dropping to his knees, one hand clutching at the sand. Again Hawley fired, but the horse, startled by the double report, leaped aside, and the ball went wild. Keith wheeled about, steadying himself with his outstretched hand, and let drive, pressing the trigger, until, through the haze over his eyes, he saw Hawley go stumbling down, shooting wildly as he fell. The man never moved, and Keith endeavored to get up, his gun still held ready, the smoke circling about them. He had been shot treacherously, as a cowardly cur might shoot, and he could not clear his mind of the thought that this last act hid treachery also. But he could not raise himself, could not stand; red and black shadows danced before his eyes; he believed he saw the arm of the other move. Like a snake he crept forward, holding himself up with one hand, his head dizzily reeling, but his gun held steadily on that black, shapeless object lying on the sand. Then the revolver hand began to quiver, to shake, to make odd circles; he couldn't see; it was all black, all nothingness. Suddenly he went down face first into the sand.

They both lay motionless, the thirsty sand drinking in their life blood, Hawley huddled upon his left side, his hat still shading the glaring eyes, Keith lying flat, his face in the crook of an arm whose hand still gripped a revolver. There was a grim smile on his lips, as if, as he pitched forward, he knew that, after he had been shot to death, he had gotten his man. The riderless horses gazed at the two figures, and drifted away, slowly, fearfully, still held in mute subjection to their dead masters by dangling reins. The sun blazed down from directly overhead, the heat waves rising and falling, the dead, desolate desert stretching to the sky. An hour, two passed. The horses were now a hundred yards away, nose to nose; all else was chanceless. Then into the far northern sky there rose a black speck, growing larger and larger; others came from the east and west, beating the air with widely outspread wings, great banks stretched across

OUT from their nests of foulness in desert ravines were coming.

(To Be Continued.)

THE ITALIAN HAND OF THE NEBRASKA STANDPATTER

Is Displayed in His Effort to Inveigle the Insurgents Into the Taft Camp.

A special from Lincoln, under a recent date, says: The fact that E. M. Pollard, prominently identified with the Taft movement in this state, should come out and issue an invitation to all republicans in the state to attend the Taft mass convention here December 19, has created a ripple of excitement in the progressive camp. But the move by the Nebraska standpatter is being dissected by the insurgents with considerable acumen and there is little probability that the play will result in any particular gain for the reactionaries.

"It is nothing more nor less than a scheme to get some of our number into the convention, as many as they possibly can, and then come out with exhaustive statements as to the number of Taft men that attended the affair and who they were," said a progressive.

"They are a shrewd bunch, we will give them credit for that much, but they cannot by any means get away with such a move as that," he continued. "A plea of that kind is a veritable insult to our sincerity and if every progressive in the state does not resent it by getting out and fighting not only Taft, but the men who are boosting him, then I am badly mistaken as to the caliber of the men who have declared themselves for party political freedom," he declared vehemently.

The man who was speaking thus depreciatingly of the opposing wing of the party is a man who has long been one of the enthusiastic workers of the state and is at the present time enjoying fruits of gubernatorial patronage under the Aldrich administration.

Public Auction

The undersigned will sell at Public Auction at the old Donelan farm, two miles west of Plattsmouth and across the road from the County Farm, on

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, the following property, to-wit:

Horses and Cattle.

Two geldings, 5 and 9 years old, weight 3,200.

One horse, middle aged, weight 1,300.

One mare, 3 years old, weight 1,400.

One yearling colt.

Five yearling heifers.

Three milk cows.

Machinery.

Two lumber wagons.

One seeder.

One plow.

One gang plow.

One cultivator.

One fanning mill.

One hay rake.

Two hay racks.

One disc sharpener.

One combined walking lister.

One double stalk cutter.

One bob-sled.

One set work harness.

And other articles too numerous to mention.

Terms of Sale.

All sums under \$10, cash; over \$10, twelve months' time will be given, purchaser giving good bankable notes bearing 8 per cent interest. No property to be removed until settled for. Sale to begin at 11 o'clock a. m. Free lunch will be served.

AUG. STEPPATT,

Robt. Wilkinson, Auctioneer.

J. P. Falter, Clerk.

Numerous Witnesses.

The following named persons from Louisville are in the city as witnesses in the trial of the State vs. Frank McCann: C. J. Pankonin, Frank Ross, H. A. Gess, Frank Nichols, John Kopp, Harry Thompson, T. C. Amick, George Schultz, Charles Andreas, Andrew Lyden, L. F. Hadden, Jerry McHugh, Claude Kittrell, Mrs. Fred Martens, Mabel Ossenkop, Mrs. Gus Thompson, John Creamer, Jim Schlatter, Charles Hill, Charles Anthony, Grover Otte, Mrs. L. F. McGinnis, A. R. Noble, George Vogle, Mike Tritsch.

Mrs. Henry Spangler and daughter, Miss Elizabeth, were Omaha passengers on the morning train today, where they looked after business matters for a few hours.

MOST DELIGHTFUL SONG RECITAL

By Prof. H. S. Austin's Class in Vocal Music at His Home Last Evening.

From Friday's Daily.

Prof. H. S. Austin gave a delightful song recital at his home last evening, the numbers being furnished by his pupils in vocal music. The program consisted of solos, duets and quartets, the first being sung by Miss Dorothy Britt, a contralto number; the words and music were by H. S. Austin, the song being entitled, "Two Little Gaggies." Mrs. Margaret Falter was accompanist for Miss Britt.

This number was followed by a duet by Misses Gretchen and Marie Donnelly, Miss Gretchen singing soprano and Miss Marie contralto, the number being "Gray Days," by Noel Johnson. The third number was a musical arrangement of five Chinese proverbs, by H. S. Austin, and was entitled, "String of Beads," and was beautifully sung by Mrs. H. S. Austin, Miss Barbara Clement, who possesses a mezzo soprano voice of much power and sweetness, sang fourth on the program, 1. "Pat McGee," by Jesse Gryner; 2. "Caw, Caw, Caw," by J. Nathan.

Glen Scott was then called on for two tenor selections, "Autos and Airships," words by Edward Vance Cook and music by a pupil of Mr. Austin's, and "Chance by Mischance," words by H. S. Austin and music by one of his pupils.

Miss Rachel Livingston, mezzo soprano, sang "A Gypsy Maiden I," by Henry Parker, and "The O'! March Win," by Catherine Stockwell Hazzard. Miss Livingston's numbers were followed by Mrs. H. S. Austin, who sang "Carissima," by Arthur Kern, and the "Moon Drops Low." Miss Gretchen Donnelly then sang, in a beautiful lyric soprano, "The Slave Song," by Terse Draego, and "You and Love," by Guy D'Hardelet.

The Plattsmouth Ladies' Quartet then delighted the audience with two highly appreciated numbers. The members of the quartet are: Miss Gretchen Donnelly, first soprano; Miss Rachel Livingston, second soprano; Miss Marie Donnelly, first contralto, and Mrs. H. S. Austin, second contralto.

A large number of the friends of Mr. and Mrs. Austin were invited to be present at the recital and many compliments have since been expressed of the exceedingly high merit of the singers who participated in the recital. Each performer showed much careful training, and the skill of Prof. Austin as an instructor was very evident from the splendid manner in which his pupils acquitted themselves last evening.

Punch was served by Misses Harriett and Janet Clement.

Wedding Near Union.

From Friday's Daily.

A large number of relatives and friends gathered at the pretty country home of Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Mougey, near Union, last evening and witnessed the marriage of their daughter, Erma Blanche, to Mr. Carl C. Cross, which occurred at 8 o'clock. The bride was attended by Miss Hattie Taylor as bridesmaid, and the groom by Reuben Frans as best man. The bride was born and grew to womanhood in this county, having resided near Union, and is quite well known throughout this vicinity. She attended the High school in this city for a number of years and has a large circle of friends here, whose best wishes will ever attend her. Mr. Cross is a young man of sterling worth and has a host of friends, who will join the Journal in wishing him and his estimable wife a long and happy wedded life. Those from this city in attendance at the wedding were Misses Alberta Thomas, Gertrude Morgan, Elsa Therolf, Willa Moore and Villa Gapen.

Journal Ad Does the Work.

Miss Zena Zucker lost her pet bull pup and placed a lost notice in the Journal, and within an hour after the paper was off the press Tena was overjoyed to have the pup brought to her attached to the end of a string and a small boy at the other end.

Charles Dreamer of Alvo and his daughter, Miss Blanche, drove to C. E. Cook's residence, outside the city limits, last evening and visited the Cook family over night. Mr. Dreamer looked after business matters in Plattsmouth today.

HANDKERCHIEFS!

SALE NOW ON

You will want some of these. They are all of the latest designs. Stock especially selected for the Holiday trade. You will miss it if you fail to see them. We believe we can furnish the best value in Handkerchiefs ever offered in the city.

ZUCKWEILER & LUTZ

ACTUAL STARVATION

Facts About Indigestion and Its Relief That Should Interest You.

Although Indigestion and Dyspepsia are so prevalent, most people do not thoroughly understand their cause and cure. There is no reason why most people should not eat anything they desire—if they will only chew it carefully and thoroughly. Many actually starve themselves into sickness through fear of eating every good-looking, good-smelling, and good-tasting food, because it does not agree with them.

The best thing to do is to fit yourself to digest any good food. We believe we can relieve Dyspepsia. We are so confident of this fact that we guarantee and promise to supply the medicine free of all cost to everyone who will use it, who is not perfectly satisfied with the results which it produces. We exact no promises, and put no one under any obligation whatever. Surely nothing could be fairer. We are located right here and our reputation should be sufficient assurance of the genuineness of our offer.

We want everyone troubled with Indigestion or Dyspepsia in any form to come to our store and buy a box of Rexall Dyspepsia Tablets. Take them home and give them a reasonable trial, according to directions. Then, if not satisfied, come to us and get your money back. They are very pleasant to take; they aid to soothe the irritable stomach, to strengthen and invigorate the digestive organs, and to promote a healthy and natural bowel action, thus leading to perfect and healthy digestion and assimila-

tion. A 25¢ package of Rexall Dyspepsia Tablets furnishes 15 days' treatment. In ordinary cases, this is sufficient to produce a cure. In more chronic cases a longer treatment, of course, is necessary, and depends upon the severity of the trouble. For such cases, we have two larger sizes which sell for 50¢ and \$1.00. Remember, you can obtain Rexall Remedies in this community only at our store—The Rexall Store. F. G. Fricke & Co.

Can't Fill Their Orders.

C. E. Wescott's Sons have had trouble in filling their orders for Men since their ad of the first three days of the week. "Buy a Man," was inserted in the Journal. The ladies have jumped at the chance and have been visiting the store by twos and by threes, and the last day or two coming by dozens and by scores. The new assortment just ordered will come in assorted colors, lints and patterns most popular to meet the demand. The last order is entirely Christmas patterns suitable for the most fastidious taste. The lady that shops early will secure the cream of this lot. These are no putty men, but the pure quill.

Lucky Juryman.

From Saturday's Daily. Fred Stock, one of the prosperous farmers of Elmwood precinct, is in the city on the regular jury panel this week, and has been fortunate in being elected on both cases tried. Mr. Stock is one of the old-timers in his precinct, having resided there twenty-nine years, having come direct from the Fatherland to Cass county. Mr. Stock called yesterday and added his name to the Journal's Murdock list of patrons.

FOR

-CHRISTMAS-

BUYERS

You will save minutes and money by visiting our store.

OUR NEW HOLIDAY STOCK

offers in great variety really desirable and useful presents for people of all ages, and is a most popular stock in every respect, because of its choice selections, trustworthy values and fair prices.

A Few Selections:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Handsome Gold Watches | Diamonds |
| Locketts and Chains | Cut Glass |
| Gold Beads | Hand Painted China |
| Cuff Buttons | Umbrellas |
| Belt Pins | Fountain Pens |
| Bracelets and Rings | Clocks |
| Bar Pins | Toilet Sets |
| Mesh Bags | Manicure Sets |
| Sterling Silver | Military Brushes |

J. W. CRABILL,

FREE ENGRAVING!

Watchmaker and Jeweler