

10 CENTS—that means Ice Cream Soda.  
 10 MINUTES—that means an hour (to a woman.)  
 10 PINS—that means a bowling alley.  
 10 DAYS—that means a fine in jail.  
 10 DOLLARS—ah! that means a suit, and it means an awful good one in here just now. Come in.

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THE BOSS CLOTHIERS.

### CHASING AN ANTELOPE

A Pioneer of the Plains Tells of An Exciting but Elusive Chase For "His Ludship"

The spring and summer of 1861, until the middle of July, the writer put in most of his time keeping a ranch for an Omaha man across the Platte river, about four miles from Ft. Kearney, 200 miles west of the fringe of the white settlements lining the Missouri river. A good share of that time the owner of the ranch left me alone to care for a small herd of cattle and his ranch property, while he attended to business in Omaha, and in preparing to move out with his family. The immigration to the gold regions of the Rocky mountain country, which was quite heavy in the spring, slackened up as the summer came on, and I saw little of humanity most of the time. The ranch, so called, consisted of a long sod house of one story, having two windows of a single sash each, a 20-foot square addition, built of logs, chinked and plastered, which was used as a storeroom, and was fitted up with counter and shelves, in which a small stock of groceries, flour and feed were kept for sale to the traveling public. The ranch was situated on a raised plateau or second bottom, a mile and a half north of the river, and besides a well, which supplied an abundance of cold, pure water for all stock which might come, a long lean-to stable, built on the southern slope of the 30 foot ledge which separated the lower from the second bottom, afforded shelter for stock in inclement weather.

This ranch was, at the time, the last habitation of white men on the north side of the Platte river—and might be called the "jumping-off place" of civilization. All travel from Omaha toward the gold regions here turned to the south and crossed the Platte by a ford to the south side, and the only travel continuing west was that of the Mormons, bound for Salt Lake, and government supply trains for Forts Laramie and Bridger.

A broad, almost level prairie spread out before the view to the east, north and west for miles—that northward rising slightly for some five miles, and then receding gently to the Wood river—two miles further, so that the tops of the trees lining the banks of that stream were barely visible from the ranch. A line of precipitous bluffs bounded the horizon to the northwest. The road toward civilization lead northeastward and was bordered on one side by a line of telegraph poles and wire, then extending as far west as Fort Kearney. Seven miles away, near Wood river, on the road to Omaha, was Jim Boyd's ranch, the nearest habitation in that direction. So the reader can well assume that our ranch was not burdened with borrowing neighbors.

Considerable wild game inhabited the prairies, jack rabbits being plenty, while antelope abounded—as well as its worst foe, the grey wolf—big, ferocious fellows that could kill a dozen ordinary hunting dogs—was frequently seen. Prairie dog villages lined the Wood river slope, and beavers abounded along that stream. When the grass came on, in June, great herds of buffalo came down the valley, fattening on nature's rich pasture, and for weeks one could see herds of them roaming the surrounding prairies.

While the ranch owner was away my work consisted in caring for the cattle, watering them, corralling them at night, and waiting upon the pilgrims who passed along the road, so that I

had little time or chance for hunting—even had I been so disposed.

This might be thought a somewhat lengthy introduction for a short story, but I have thus given a picture of the surroundings so that the reader may better understand other chapters of my experiences on the western border that may follow, if opportunity affords me the pleasure to relate them—occurrences that enlivened the humdrum happenings of every-day life.

One morning I discovered that the stock of fire wood was exhausted and it became necessary to get some more. The easiest place to get fuel was along the banks of Wood river. So taking the box from a wagon, fastening an ax to the reach, I yoked a pair of oxen from the herd, hitched them to the wagon and was off. It was still early, and the dew was on the grass. Some four miles of my journey had been covered, without an incident, when I noticed an antelope coming at a flying pace, in long, measured leaps, up the divide, a mile ahead of me, and after watching its movement for a few moments I divined that something unusual had frightened the pretty creature.

—That something was pursuing it—probably one of its arch enemies—a wolf. The agile little animal soon crossed my course, and as nimbly ran on to the west, its short white tail disclosing its whereabouts for miles as it sped away. It would occasionally stop and take a look backward, as if to get sight of its pursuing foe, and then would bound away more energetically than before—determined to put all possible distance between itself and its pursuing foe. It was not long after this when I began to hear the baying of hounds, and by the time my patient team had almost reached the trail of the antelope, a pack of fox hounds came in sight, following its trail, making the air resonant with their yelpings. I could see that the pack was well trained, probably belonging to some man of leisure, who was out on the frontier on a sporting trip, and said to myself, "I wonder if the greeny really thinks his dogs can overtake an antelope?"

As I passed on, the yelpings and antics of the little animals as my team passed through a village of prairie dogs, took my mind away from the thoughts of antelope and hounds, and reaching the river bank I was soon actively pulling out dry ash and elm poles and small trees, that had been cut down by beavers, cutting them into suitable lengths, and in a short hour I was enroute homeward.

It was less than two hours from the time I had passed the divide until I had reached it on the return. Before reaching that point I had observed a number of mounted men coming from the east, riding at a brisk gallop, and as they approached they appeared to be dressed in full hunting costume, with long hose and knee breeches, with shotguns slung at their sides, and revolvers at their belts—all wearing corduroy caps. As they rode up I stopped my team, and took a survey of the party. There were six of them—all well mounted, their horses having short, bushy tails. Their leader, especially was a man of distinguished appearance and dignified bearing—a heavy pair of mutton-chop whiskers adorning his handsome face. As he accosted me, sitting on my load of poles, his first word convinced me that he was an Englishman.

"Have you seen anything of a deer running by 'ere this mornin'?" he inquired.

"No, sir, I did not," I said; "I don't

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think there any deer in these parts."

"Well," said he, "Did you notice my pack of hounds go by 'ere, some time ago?"

"Yes, I saw a pack of fine looking hounds pass here nearly two hours ago on a trail."

"Hand wat sort of a hanimal were they trailin'?"

"They were on the trail of an antelope."

"A hantelope?" he exclaimed, "and wat the 'ell his a hantelope?"

"An antelope, sir, is a brown colored animal with short horns, long ears, is about the fleetest thing afoot, and belongs to the deer family. It has no particular abiding-place or home, and when pursued runs straight-away, not turning on its course for days, perhaps," I said, trying to tell all I knew on the subject.

"Hand 'ow long do you think hit'll take the 'ounds to overtake the hantelope?"

"Well," I drawled out, "If they keep well on the trail for a week, without stopping, or if the antelope should meet with an accident, they possibly might wear him out—if they weren't tired out themselves."

The whole party seemed astonished at this bit of information, and held a conference over what they should do.

The leader asked where I lived, and I pointed out the ranch, far down the slope toward the shining waters of the Platte river. Asked whether I thought it worth while to follow the trail further, I said they had best use their own judgment; I thought it worse than fruitless because the horses would be worn out, themselves tired out, with no probability of success. He explained that his was a party of English gentlemen who had come to the west, enroute to the mountains for a summer outing. The hounds had started the antelope some thirty miles down the valley that morning, and thinking it a deer they had joined in the chase. Their camping outfit, he imagined, would reach my place by night. He and his party would continue on the trail, and see what would come of it.

At that time I was a boy and looked younger than I really was; and this may have influenced the party in taking this course, and as I drove on they galloped off on the clearly visible trail of the hounds, and long before I arrived at the ranch they had gone out of sight up the valley.

As night came on (the camping out-

fit, consisting of two wagons, arrived, and put up their tent for the night. From these servants I learned that the leader of the hunting party was an English lord, giving his name, which I have long since forgotten, and the others were English gentlemen of leisure—friends and guest of his "ludship," who had brought their outfit of horses and dogs across the water.

It was near 11 o'clock that when I was awakened from a sound sleep by the loud notes of a horn, denoting the arrival of the hunters. Hastily dressing, went out to learn of their luck. And a sorry sight they presented. Both men and horses appeared worn to the limit of endurance—hungry and thirsty. They dropped off their worn out steeds, slaked their thirst at the well and went to their tent—too tired to eat—leaving the horses to be cared for by the servants.

Next day I learned that the party had seen neither dogs nor antelope, and after following the trail till night they concluded to return to camp, leaving the dogs to return when they chose. Along toward that evening the hounds came trailing back, fagged worse, if possible, than the horses had been.

It only remains for me to add that when too late the party was ready to admit that foxhounds and horses were no match for the running power and enduring qualities of a Nebraska antelope—and that they would better have taken the advice of

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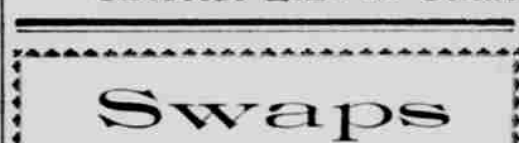
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