

# 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 Beane 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. A company of the Seventh cavalry, Lieut. Brant in command, find them. Hampton and the girl stop at the Miners' Home in Glencaid. Mrs. Duffy, proprietress, Hampton tells 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 the adoptive Naida the Kid—runs away from Mrs. Herndon's 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 Flobbe Spencer arrives in Glencaid to teach in the school. Miss Spencer meets Naida, Rev. Wynkoop, etc. She boards at Mrs. Herndon's. Naida and Lieut. Brant again meet with-out his knowing who she is. She 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 meets Miss Spencer but she is not his acquaintance of the day before. She tells him of Naida, and he accidentally meets her again as he is returning to the ballroom with a fan for Miss Spencer. Brant accompanies Naida home from the dance. On the way she informs him as to 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 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. Hampton 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. Brant tells Naida that he loves her. She tells him there is an insurmountable barrier between them, but that she does not fully understand it. Brant and his troop rescues Hampton and Mason from the fires set by the mob. Brant carries the unconscious gambler through the lines of fire. Hampton is taken to the hotel and Naida comes to nurse him. Miss Spencer accepts the heart and hand of Rev. Wynkoop. Brant is ordered to take the field. Before he goes Naida tells him she loves him, but cannot become his wife, or offer an explanation. He insists he will return to her.

## CHAPTER XXV.—Continued.

She smiled at him through a mist of tears, a smile the sad sweetness of which he would never forget. "In the sense you mean, no. No living man stands between us, not even Bob Hampton."

"Does he know why this cannot be?"  
"He does know, but I doubt if he will ever reveal his knowledge; certainly not to you. He has not told me all, even in the hour when he thought himself dying. I am convinced of that. It is not because he dislikes you, Lieut. Brant, but because he knew his partial revelation of the truth was a duty he owed us both."

"You leave me so completely in the dark," he said; "is there no possibility that this mysterious obstacle can ever be removed?"

"None. It is beyond earthly power—there lies between us the shadow of a dead man."

He stared at her as if doubting her sanity.

"A dead man! Not Gillis?"  
"No, it is not Gillis. I have told you this much so that you might comprehend how impossible it is for us to change our fate. It is irrevocably fixed. Please do not question me any more. I cannot bear it!"

Brant rose to his feet and stood looking down upon her bowed head, her slender figure shaken by sobs.

"Naida, as you have asked it, I will go; but I go better, stronger, because I have heard your lips say you love me. I am going now, my sweetheart, but if I live I shall come again. I know nothing of what you mean about a dead man being between us, but I shall know when I come back, for, dead or alive, no man shall remain between me and the girl I love."

"This—is this different," she sobbed, "different; it is beyond your power."

"I shall never believe so until I have faced it for myself, nor will I even say good-by, for, under God, I am coming back to you."

He turned slowly and walked away. As his hand touched the latch of the door he paused and looked longingly back.

"Naida,"

She glanced up at him.

"You kissed me once; will you again?"

She rose silently and crossed over to him, her hands held out, her eyes uplifted to his own. Neither spoke as he drew her gently to him and their lips met.

"Say it once more, sweetheart?"

"Donald, I love you."

A moment they stood thus face to face, reading the great lesson of eternity within the depths of each other's eyes. Then slowly, gently, she released herself from the clasp of his strong arms.

"You believe in me now? You do

not go away blaming me?" she questioned, with quivering lips.

"There is no blame, for you are doing what you think right. But I am coming back, Naida, little woman; coming back to love and you."

An hour later N troop trotted across the rude bridge and circled the bluff on its way toward the wide plains.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### Mr. Hampton Resolves.

Mr. Bob Hampton stood in the bright sunshine on the steps of the hotel, his appreciative gaze wandering up the long, dusty, unoccupied street, and finally rising to the sweet face of the young girl who occupied the step above. As their eyes met both smiled as if they understood each other.

"There is nothing quite equal to feeling well, little girl," he said, genially, patting her hand where it rested on the railing, "and I really believe I am in as fine fettle now as I ever have been. Do you know, I believe I'm perfectly fit to undertake that little delicate operation casually mentioned to you a few days ago. It's got to be done, and the sooner I get at it the easier I'll feel. Fact is, I put in a large portion of the night thinking out my plans."

"I wish you would give it up all together, Bob," she said, anxiously. "I shall be so dull and lonely here while you are gone."

"I reckon you will, for a fact, but, Naida, it isn't likely this little affair will require very long, and things are

Slavin. That's why I'm after him and when I catch up he'll either squeal or die."

"But how do you know?"  
"I never told you the whole story and I don't mean to now until I come back and can make everything perfectly clear. It wouldn't do you any good the way things stand now, and would only make you uneasy. But if you do any praying over it, my girl, pray good and hard that I may discover some means for making that fellow squeal."

She made no response but stood gazing thoughtfully past him.

"Have you heard anything lately, Bob, about the Seventh?" she asked finally. "Since—since N troop left here?"

He answered with well-simulated carelessness. "No; but it is most likely they are well into the game by this time. Crook's column, I have just heard, was overwhelmingly attacked on the Rosebud, and forced to fall back. That leaves the Seventh to take the brunt of it, and there is going to be hell up north presently, or I've forgotten all I ever knew about Indians. But come, little girl, as I said, I'm quite likely to be off before night, provided I am fortunate enough to strike a fresh trail. Under such conditions you won't mind my kissing you out here, will you?"

She held up her lips and he touched them softly with his own. Her eyes were tear-dimmed. "Oh, Bob, I hate so to let you go," she sobbed, clinging to him. "No one could have been more to me than you have been, and you are all I have left in the world. Everything I care for goes away from me. Life is so hard, so hard!"

"Yes, little girl, I know," and the man stroked her hair tenderly, his own voice faltering. "It's all hard; I learned that sad lesson long ago, but I've tried to make it a little bit easier for you since we first came together. Still, I don't see how I can possibly help this. I've been hunting after that fellow a long while now, a matter of 15 years over a mighty dim trail, and it would be a mortal sin to permit him to get away scot-free. Besides, if this affair only manages to turn out right, I can promise to make you the happiest girl in America. But, Naida, dear, don't cling to me so; it is not at all like you to break down in this fash-

ion. The Injuns are gittin' themselves bottled up in the Big Horn country."

"Oh, that's it? Then maybe you might manage to rush a message through for me to Fort A. Lincoln without discommoding Uncle Sam?" and Hampton placed a coin upon the rough table.

"Sure; write it out."

"Here it is; now get it off early, my lad, and bring the answer to me over at the hotel. There'll be another yellow boy waiting when you come."

The reply arrived some two hours later.

Fort A. Lincoln, June 17, 1876.  
Hampton, Glencaid:  
Seventh gone west; probably Yellowstone. Brant with them. Murphy, government scout, at Cheyenne waiting orders.  
BITTON, Commanding.

He crushed the paper in his hand, thinking—thinking of the past, the present, the future. He had borne much in these last years, much misrepresentation, much loneliness of soul. To run this Murphy to cover remained his final hope for retrieving those dead, dark years. Ay, and there was Naida! Her future, scarcely less than his own, hung trembling in the balance. The sudden flashing of that name into his brain was like an electric shock. He cursed his inactivity. Great God! had he become a child again, to tremble before imagined evil, a mere hobgoblin of the mind? He had already wasted time enough; now he must wring from the lips of that misshapen savage the last vestige of his secret.

He dressed for the road, for hard, exacting service, buckling his loaded cartridge belt outside his rough coat and testing his revolvers with unusual care. He spoke a few parting words of instruction to Mrs. Duffy and went quietly out. Ten minutes later he was in the saddle, galloping down the dusty stage road toward Cheyenne.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### The Trail of Silent Murphy.

The young infantryman who had been detailed for the important service of telegraph operator sat in the Cheyenne office, his feet on the rude table, his face buried behind a newspaper.

"Could you inform me where I might find Silent Murphy, a government scout?"

The voice had the unmistakable ring of military authority, and the soldier operator instinctively dropped his feet to the floor.

"Well, my lad, you are not dumb, are you?"

The telegrapher's momentary hesitation vanished; his ambition to become a martyr to the strict laws of service secrecy was not sufficiently strong to cause him to take the doubtful chances of a lie. "He was here, but has gone."

"Where?"

"The devil knows. He rode north, carrying dispatches for Custer."

"When?"

"Oh, three or four hours ago."

Hampton swore softly but fervently, behind his clinched teeth.

"Where is Custer?"

"Don't know exactly. Supposed to be with Terry and Gibbons, somewhere near the mouth of the Powder, although he may have left there by this time, moving down the Yellowstone. Murphy's orders were to intercept his column somewhere between the Rosebud and the Big Horn. No other scout along this border would take such a detail. But that old devil of a Murphy just enjoys such a trip. He started off as happy as ever I see him."

"How far will he have to ride?"

"Oh, 'bout 300 miles as the crow flies, a little west of north, and the better part of the distance, they tell me, it's almighty rough country for night work. But then Murphy, he knows the way all right. Sorry you didn't come along a little earlier," he said, genially. "Do you know Murphy?"

"I'm not quite certain. Did you happen to notice a peculiar black scar on the back of his right hand?"

"Sure; looks like the half of a pear. He said it was powder under the skin."

A new look of reviving determination swept into Hampton's gloomy eyes—beyond doubt this must be his man.

"How many horses did he have?"

"Two."

"Did you overhear him say anything definite about his plans for the trip?"

"What, him? He never talks, that fellow. He can't do nothing but sputter if he tries. But I wrote out his orders, and they give him to the 25th to make the Big Horn. You wasn't planning to strike out after him, was you?"

"I might risk it if I only thought I could overtake him within two days; my business is of some importance."

"Well, stranger, I should reckon you might do that with a dog-gone good outfit. Murphy's sure to take things pretty easy to-day, and he's almost certain to follow the old mining trail as far as the ford over the Belle Fourche, and that's plain enough to travel. Beyond that point the devil only knows where he will go, for then is when his hard ridin' begins."

The moment the operator mentioned that odd scar on Murphy's hand, every vestige of hesitation vanished. Beyond any possibility of doubt he was on the right scent this time. Murphy was riding north upon a mission as desperate as ever man was called upon to perform. The chance of his coming forth alive from that Indian-haunted land was, as the operator truthfully said, barely one out of a hundred. To the end, to the death if need were, he would follow!

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Know Too Much of Them.  
Few men have been admired by their own domestics.—Montaigne.

## IN THE PUBLIC EYE

### HANDLED GOTHAM PANIC



William A. Nash, president of the Corn Exchange bank, probably did as much as any man in New York to put a stop to the recent panic. J. Pierpont Morgan alone excepted. When the flurry came on he was made chairman of the clearing house committee, and it fell mainly to him to pass upon the securities offered by banks in need of assistance, to decide which should be aided and which suspended. He was regarded by the other bankers as the balance wheel of the Wall street situation. Nor is this his first experience of a panic, for in 1903 he was one of five men who, as executive committee of the clearing house, had that panic in charge. His sound common sense, his keen business methods and his far-sighted mental vision in each case saved him from making any very grave blunders, and he came through both ordeals with flying colors.

Mr. Nash commenced life as messenger boy in the bank of which he is now president. He won his advancement step by step, through his own efforts, and 25 years from the day he entered the bank he was its president. It then had a capital of \$1,000,000; now it has \$8,000,000. He was the father of the branch system and the Corn Exchange was the first bank to open branches when the law was passed authorizing it to do so. To-day it has 22 branches and minor depositories throughout the city of New York.

Mr. Nash holds the idea that hard work, no matter how intelligent, will never raise a man very much above his fellows, unless it is combined with the power of thinking for one's self and aiding his superiors with suggestions. A man who can do this can practically dictate his own terms in the banking world.

### CHANCELLOR MAY RESIGN



Chancellor von Buelow, finding that it requires a man of more than the average attainments to fill the shoes of the late Prince Bismarck and to conduct the affairs of the German empire, is said to be on the point of retiring to private life. His uncompromising attitude towards the socialists, who are rapidly gaining in strength, has been the means of blocking many of the emperor's schemes and has caused the utmost difficulty in his getting the money he wants for an immense army. He has won for himself the hostility of some of the court favorites, because he has denounced their scandalous behavior, and he has even made enemies in the emperor's own household by his opposition to the marriage of the crown prince to the beautiful Cecilie, because she was the daughter of a Russian grand duchess whose escapades were the talk of all Europe. All this has reminded Germany that von Buelow was not so very impeccable himself when he was a young man, and that his marriage to the lovely Princess Camporeale was achieved only after she had run away from Count Charles von Doenhoff, her rich but aged husband.

The princess found the rambling old Roman palace lonely with only her husband, a man old enough to be her grandfather, for company, and she was attracted by the young attaché of the German embassy.

Without any pretense of secrecy the princess left her husband and fled from Rome with her young lover. That of course terminated von Buelow's connection with the embassy, and few people would have given much for his chances of advancement in diplomatic life. The appealing charm of his wife, even then little more than a child, her rare beauty and their fidelity, coupled with von Buelow's own undoubted talents, kept him in the imperial favor, and he was sent from one embassy to another until he returned to Rome as German ambassador.

Roman society conveniently forgot the elopement, and von Buelow having married the lady when her husband had divorced her 11 years after the elopement, they were received into the most exclusive circles. The incident is now being recalled in Berlin society, however, and strong pressure is being brought to bear upon the emperor to induce him to dismiss his chancellor.

### EX-SENATOR'S FLIGHT



Warner Miller, formerly United States senator from New York and once prominent in Republican politics as leader of the "Halfbreeds," has failed as a result of the Martinique disaster several years ago, "bankrupted by the acts of God and William Nelson Cromwell," as one of his friends expressed it.

He did not own a foot of land in Martinique, nor did he have a dollar invested there, yet the terrible explosion of natural forces that blew off the top of the mountain, wiped a city from the face of the earth, laid waste the fields and caused much destruction among the shipping caused his ruin years later. Deeply interested in the Nicaragua canal project, Miller had invested much of his money in it. The United States had virtually decided to undertake the work. Miller stood to

make a fortune. Then came the disaster, which brought with it the fear of similar outbreaks in Nicaragua. The Panama canal people had meantime come to their senses and were preparing to make an equitable bargain. The Nicaragua canal project was dropped and Miller was deeply involved. To meet his obligations he disposed of his pulp mill and lumber holdings and pinned his faith to the Sierra Consolidated Gold Mining Co., a West Virginia corporation. He held about one-third of its total stock of \$3,000,000, hoping to recover his standing through that, but the mines never became producing properties, although he held on for 12 years, and in the end it came to crash, bringing Miller down with it.

Miller first came into prominent notice when Senator Roscoe Conkling and Thomas C. Platt resigned their seats in the senate, to appeal to the people for their indorsement. They failed to receive the indorsement they sought, and Miller became senator to succeed Conkling. He never did anything remarkable in the senate, and retired almost as obscure a personage as when he entered.

### TROUBLE IN INDIA



Lord Elgin, secretary of state of the colonies, is accused by the British press of being responsible for the latest ferment in the Transvaal by allowing the colonial legislature to treat British Indians as criminals and send them to jail if they refuse to register their finger prints and other marks of identification. Many of the proud-spirited high caste Indians have gone to jail rather than submit to such an indignity, and in a few days their "martyrdom" will be known all over India.

Just as the stories sent home by Indian residents of the Transvaal before the Boer war of the powerlessness of the British there brought on several uprisings and two rather serious wars on the northwest frontier, so the story of the treatment of these Indians now may be the cause of still more serious troubles.

Lord Elgin is said to have explained that he was forced to consent to the registration law of the Transvaal on threat of a rebellion, but if he yielded to such a threat he shows himself to be a much weaker man than he was ten years ago when he was viceroy of India. The frontier was then in a disturbed state and the Afghans, stirred up by Russia, were committing outrages. Lord Elgin took upon himself the responsibility of sending an army to bring the disturbers to terms, which he did in short order.

Lord Elgin, although a Scotch nobleman and a descendant of an uncle of King Robert the Bruce, was born at Monklands near Montreal, while his father was governor general of Canada. The latter died in Canada when the present Lord Elgin was a lad of 14. The family had been in the British diplomatic service for generations, and the name was known all over the east.