

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 Bethune 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 talks 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 Mrs. Herndon. Hampton the Kid—runs away from Mrs. Herndon's and reclaims 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 him. Miss Spencer arrives in Glencaid to teach its first school. Miss Spencer meets Naida. Rev. Wynkoop, etc. She boards at Mrs. Herndon's. Naida and Lieut. Brant again meet without his knowing who she is. She informs him of the coming of the station. Brant meets Lieut. Brant. 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. He accidentally meets her again as he is returning to the ball room 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 preclaims an authority over her that justifies the station. Brant tells Hampton of the presence of Silent Murphy, and the fact that Red Slavin receives government messages for him. Miss Spencer called on Bob Hampton. This him—red-faced stranger mistaking her for Naida. Brant interviews Red Slavin. Finds that he is a 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. Sir Hampton attempts to force a confession from Slavin. Slavin insists it is Murphy he wants, and Murphy has 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. Hampton goes on the trail of Silent Murphy, then at Cheyenne, as the one man who can clear Capt. Nolan of the charge of murder of Maj. Brant 15 years before. Hampton arrives at Cheyenne. For Murphy had left with dispatches for Custer. He follows the scout, determined to wring from him a confession. Comes within sight of Murphy on the edge of the Indian country.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Verge of Confession.

Murphy uttered an exclamation of surprise, flinging his hand instinctively to his hip, but attempted no more. Hampton's ready weapon was thrusting its muzzle into the astounded face, and the gray eyes gleaming along the polished barrel held the fellow motionless.

"Hands up! Not a move, Murphy! I have the drop!" The voice was low, but stern, and the old frontiersman obeyed mechanically, although his seamed face was fairly distorted with rage.

"You! Damn you!—I thought I knew—the voice."

"Yes, I am here all right. Rather odd place for us to meet, isn't it? But, you see, you've had the advantage all these years; you knew whom you were running away from, while I was compelled to plod along in the dark. But I've caught up just the same, if it has been a long race."

"What do ye—want me fer?" The look in the face was cunning.

"Hold your hands quiet—higher, you fool! That's it. Now, don't play with me. I honestly didn't know for certain I did want you, Murphy, when I first started out on this trip. I merely suspected that I might, from some things I had been told. When somebody took the liberty of slashing at my back in a poker-room at Glencaid, and drove the knife into Slavin by mistake, I chanced to catch a glimpse of the hand on the hilt, and there was a scar on it. About 15 years before, I was acting as officer of the guard one night at Bethune. It was a bright starlit night, you remember, and just as I turned the corner of the old powder-house there came a sudden flash, a report, a sharp cry. I sprang forward only to fall headlong over a dead body; but in that flash I had seen the hand grasping the revolver, and there was a scar on the back of it, a very peculiar scar. It chanced I had the evening previous slightly quarreled with the officer who was killed; I was the only person known to be near at the time he was shot; certain other circumstantial evidence was dug up, while Slavin and one other—no, it was not you—gave some damaging, manufactured testimony against me. As a result I was held guilty of murder in the second degree, dismissed from the army in disgrace, and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. So, you see, it was not exactly you I have been hunting, Murphy—it was a scar."

Murphy's face was distorted into a hideous grin.

"I notice you bear exactly that kind of a scar, my man, and you spoke last night as if you had some recollection of the case."

The mocking grin expanded; into the husky voice crept a snarl of defiance, for now Murphy's courage had come back—he was fronting flesh and blood. "Oh, stop preachin'—an' shoot—an' be damned ter ye!"

"You do me a grave injustice, Murphy. Your slashing at me down in Glencaid hasn't left so much as a sting behind. It's completely blotted out, forgotten. I haven't the slightest desire to kill you, man; but I do want to clear my name of the stain of that crime. I want you to tell the whole truth about that night's work at Bethune, and when you have done so, you can go. I'll never lay a finger on you; you can go where you please."

"Bah!—ye ain't got no proof—agin me—sides, the case is closed—it can't be opened agin—by law."

"You devil! I'd be perfectly justified in killing you," exclaimed Hampton, savagely.

Murphy stared at him stupidly, the cunning of incipient insanity in his eyes. "En' whar—do ye expect—me ter say—all this, pervidin', of course—I was fule 'nough—ter do it?"

"Up yonder before Custer and the officers of the Seventh, when we get in."

"They'd nab me—likely."

"Now, see here, you say it is impossible for them to touch you, because the case is closed legally. But I've had to suffer for your crime, Murphy, suffer for 15 years, ten of them behind stone walls; and there are others who have suffered with me. It has cost me love, home, all that a man holds dear. The very least you can do in ordinary



"Hands Up! Not a Move, Murphy! I Have the Drop!"

decency is to speak the truth now. It will not hurt you, but it will lift me out of hell."

"Well—maybe I might. Anyhow, I'll go on—with ye. Kin I sit up? I'm dog tired—lyin' yere."

"Unbuckle your belt, and throw that over first."

"I'm damned—if I will. Not—in no Injun—country."

"I know it's tough," retorted Hampton, with exasperating coolness, his revolver's muzzle held steady; "but, just the same, it's got to be done. I know you far too well to take chances on your gun. So unbuckle."

"Oh, I—guess not," and Murphy spat contemptuously. "Do ye think—I'm afraid o' yer—shootin'? Ye don't dare—fer I'm no good ter ye—dead."

"You are perfectly right. You are quite a philosopher in your way. You would be no good to me dead, Murphy, but you might prove fully as valuable maimed. Now I'm playing this game to the limit, and that limit is just about reached. You unbuckle before I count ten, you murderer, or I'll spoil both your hands!"

The mocking, sardonic grin deserted Murphy's features.

"Unbuckle! It's the last call."

With a snarl the scout unclasped his army belt, dropped it to the ground and sullenly kicked it over toward Hampton. "Now—now—you, you gray-eyed—devil, kin I—sit up?"

The other nodded. He had drawn the fangs of the wolf, and now that he no longer feared, a sudden, unexplainable feeling of sympathy took possession of him. Murphy sputtered and swore, but his victorious companion

neither spoke nor moved. There were several distant smokes out to the northward now, evidently the answering signals of different bands of savages, while far away, beneath the shadow of the low bluffs bordering the stream, numerous black, moving dots began to show against the light brown background. Hampton, noticing that Murphy had stopped swearing to gaze, swung forward his field-glasses for a better view.

"They are Indians, right enough," he said, at last. "Here, take a look, Murphy. I could count about 20 in that bunch and they are traveling north."

The older man adjusted the tubes to his eyes and looked long and steadily at the party.

"They seem—to be a-closin' in," he declared, finally, staring around into the other's face, all bravado gone. "There's another lot—bucks, all o' 'em—out west yonder—an' over east a smudge is—just startin'. Looks like—we was in a pocket—an' 'thar' might be some—har-raisin' fore long."

"Well, Murphy, you are the older hand at this business. What do you advise doing?"

"Me? Why, push right 'long—while we kin keep under cover. Then—after dark—trust ter bull luck an' make—nuther dash. It's mostly luck, anyhow."

"You mean we should start now?"

"Better—let the cattle rest—first. An—if ye ever feed prisoners—I'd like ter eat a bite—meself."

They rested there for over two hours, the tired horses contentedly munching the succulent grass of the coulee, their two masters scarcely exchanging a word. Murphy, after satisfying his appetite, rested flat upon his back, one arm flung over his eyes to protect them from the sun.

At last they saddled up and passed down the coulee into the more precipitous depths of the narrow canyon.

Their early advance was slow and cautious, as they never felt certain what hidden enemies might lurk behind the sharp corners of the winding defile, and they kept vigilant eyes upon the serrated skyline. The savages were moving north and so were they.

It was fully three o'clock when they attained to the bank of the Powder, and crouched among the rocks to wait for the shades of night to shroud their further advance. Murphy climbed the bluff for a vider view, bearing Hampton's field-glasses slung across his shoulder, for the latter would not leave him alone with the horses. He returned finally to grunt out that there

"No—tired—don't want ter see—thet thing agin."

"What thing?"

"Thet green, devilish,—crawl'in' face—if ye must know!" And he twisted his long, ape-like arms across his eyes, lying curled up as a dog might.

For a moment Hampton stood gazing down upon him, listening to his incoherent mutterings, his own face grave and sympathetic. Then he moved back and sat down. Suddenly the full conception of what this meant came to his mind—the man had gone mad. The strained cords of that diseased brain had snapped in the presence of imagined terrors, and now all was chaos. The horror of it overwhelmed Hampton; not only did this unexpected denouement leave him utterly hopeless, but what was he to do with the fellow? They were in the very heart of the Indian country—the country of the savage Sioux. He stared at the curled-up man, now silent and breathing heavily as if asleep. If he only might light a pipe, or boil himself a cup of black coffee! Murphy never stirred; the horses were seemingly too weary to browse. Then Hampton nodded and sank into an uneasy doze.

CHAPTER XXX.

Alone with the Insane.

Beneath the shade of uplifted arms Murphy's eyes remained unclosed. Whatever terrors may have dominated that diseased brain, the one purpose of revenge and escape never deserted it. With patient cunning he could plan and wait, scheme and execute. He was all animal now, dreaming only of how to tear and kill.

He was many minutes thoroughly satisfying himself that Hampton actually slept. His every movement was slow, crafty, cowardly, the savage in his perverted nature becoming more and more manifest. It was more beast than man that finally crept forward on all-fours, the eyes gleaming cruel as a cat's in the night. Within a yard of the peacefully slumbering man he rose up, crouching on his toes and bending stealthily forward, possibly feeling the close proximity of that horrible presence. Then the maniac took one more stealthy, slouching step nearer, and flung himself at the exposed throat, uttering a fierce snarl as his fingers clutched the soft flesh. Hampton awoke, gasping and choking, to find those mad eyes glaring into his own, those murderous hands throttling him with the strength of madness.

At first the stupefied, half-awakened man struggled as if in delirium, scarcely realizing the danger. He was aware of suffering, of horror, of suffocation. Then the brain flashed into life, and he grappled fiercely with his dread antagonist. Murphy snapped like a mad dog, his lips snarling curses; but Hampton fought silently, desperately, his brain clearing as he succeeded in wrenching those claws from his lacerated throat, and forced his way up on to one knee. He worked his way, inch by inch, to his feet, his slender figure rigid as steel and closed in upon the other, but Murphy writhed out of his grasp, as a snake might. The younger man realized now to the full his peril, and his hand slipped down to the gun upon his hip. There was a sudden glint in the faint starlight as he struck, and the stunned maniac went down quivering, and lay motionless on the hard ground. With the quick decision of one long accustomed to meet emergencies, Hampton unbuckled the larriat from one of the led animals and bound Murphy's hands and limbs securely.

As he worked he thought rapidly. He comprehended the extreme desperation of their present situation. While the revolver blow might possibly restore Murphy to a degree of sanity, it was far more probable that he would awaken violent. Yet he could not deliberately leave this man to meet a fate of horror in the wilderness. That which would have been quickly decided had he been alone became a most serious problem when considered in connection with the insane, helpless scout. Then, there were the dispatches! They must be of vital importance to have required the sending of Murphy forth on so dangerous a ride; other lives, ay, the result of the entire campaign might depend upon their early delivery. Hampton had been a soldier, the spirit of the service was still with him, and that thought brought him to final decision. Unless they were halted by Sioux bullets, they would push on toward the Big Horn and Custer should have the papers.

He knelt down beside Murphy, unbuckled the leather dispatch bag, and rebuckled it across his own shoulder. Then he set to work to revive the prostrate man. The eyes, when opened, stared up at him, wild and glaring; the ugly face bore the expression of abject fear. The man was no longer violent; he had become a child, frightened at the dark.

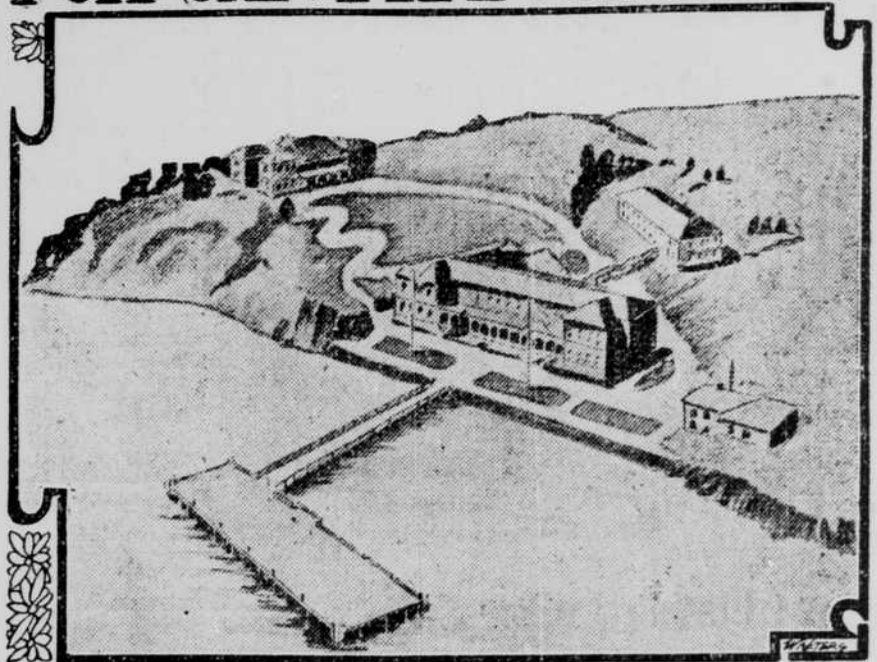
Securely strapping Murphy to his saddle and packing all their remaining stores of provisions upon one horse, leaving the other to follow or remain behind as it pleased, he advanced directly into the hills, steering by aid of the stars, his left hand ever on Murphy's bridle rein, his low voice of expostulation seeking to calm the other's wild fancies and to curb his violent speech.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Even Tenor of His Way.

A man who served as a hackman in Hempestad, Long Island, for over 50 years, died yesterday. Some days ago, as he sat dozing on his seat in front of the railroad depot, a commuter said to him: "You must have seen some queer things, Luke, in your half century of going to and fro?" "Dunno as I have," was the slow answer. "Just backed."—Pittsburg Gazette

NEW ELLIS ISLAND FOR SAN FRANCISCO



THE SPLENDID STATION TO BE BUILT ON ANGEL ISLAND IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY

At present San Francisco is the doorway from the orient to this great land, and when the Panama canal is completed it will be the gateway for the European hordes that now seek admission through New York to this country.

At the entrance to the Golden Gate the guardians of the law and of the city's safety have been watching almost helplessly the rising tide of oriental invasion. They have had no facilities, no equipment for struggling against it, and the leak in the dike of protection has widened ceaselessly.

But now the leak is to be stopped. On Angel Island is to stand one of the finest and best equipped immigrant stations in the country, second to none, except possibly that on Ellis Island in New York harbor.

Against the tide of Japanese immigration, against the gathering wave of white alien immigration that will break on these shores through the Panama canal, against the new but real Hindu terror; against orientals who are rotten with contagion of the body, diseased in mind, lepers in morals—against all these San Francisco has lifted up her voice in protest; and, in consequence, over ten acres have been set apart on Angel Island for a station. Plans have been drawn after months of the most careful study of the latest immigration requirements, which have been indorsed by the secretary of state, Secretary Metcalf and Commissioner General of Immigration Sargent, and work has already begun on the buildings with an appropriation of \$300,000 and \$200,000 more asked. This latter amount is to include the cost of two boats—one a barge for conveying immigrants to the island from the ships, the other a launch for accommodation of the boarding, immigration, medical and customs officers in whose hands the duties of protection lie.

Here, as on Ellis Island, every opportunity, every convenience, every necessity for careful supervision will be at hand to evidence that care which means not only each individual's but the nation's safety.

First there will be a large administration building 300 by 200 feet, two stories in height. Directly in the front and middle of this building, to which all the passengers come from the wharf, are two huge examination rooms for general inspection of the "manifests," as the passengers are called.

The first room is the waiting room, with row upon row of benches. Back of this is the "ship," where down by long stalls or counters they pass for inspection under the general immigration laws. From this room out at the back they go; to the right for the medical department if closer physical inspection is necessary; to the left for more rigid general inspection, or, if detained, to the European detention department, if white aliens; to the Japanese and Chinese, if orientals. Those who pass the general inspection may pass out to the baggage room to claim their own and be sent on their way rejoicing.

Besides these two front middle rooms, at the front right, are the chief inspector's office and that of the physician in charge. Back of these, four rooms for rigid inspection; the vaults for the safe keeping of the records—an important feature; a large room for stenographers; the baggage room, and still farther back in the wing, the officers' dining-room, the public dining-room—European and Oriental—with a kitchen in the rear.

In the left front are the officers' rooms—commissioner, chief deputy, statistician; back of these the medical inspection department.

Upstairs are the dormitories; one for stenographers, one for employees, and the European quarters—women on one side, men on the other, each with large pleasant sitting rooms, washrooms with showers, and so on. There is also a large enclosed porch, where the babies and children may play in the sunshine. Upstairs in the same building are the officers' quarters.

The oriental quarter is a building by itself; upstairs for the Chinese, downstairs for the Japanese—divided each into men's dormitories and sitting room on one side and women's on the other, as in the European division.

One of the most important features of the station will be the hospital, which has been beautifully planned

and might be a model for any hospital far or near. It is to be built in four wings on the hill on the extreme right of the grounds. There will be all the usual hospital rooms—operating, dispensary, nurses' and physicians' quarters, and the building will contain separate wards for Chinese, Japanese and Europeans—both men and women, though Chinese and Japanese women will have a ward together. The fourth building will be the power house, which will see to every electric need.

This will be made possible a systematic, time, nerve and energy saving inspection which in comparison with the old detention shed, hung up under the rafters of the Pacific street wharf where the immigrants are huddled together like sheep—to say nothing of the comfort of the officials or their ability properly to guard their charges so as to thwart ruses of confederates in the city who make use of every device to get their friends out—a place that even the crudest and most ignorant alien must laugh at—will seem like the perfection of immigration facilities, and be a station to which San Francisco may point with pride.

Laying a Cement Walk.

All things considered, where a walk is to be permanent, put it down with cement. The cement walk will last indefinitely. True, there are difficulties in laying it, but they can be easily overcome. If a cement walk is put down lay it on a foundation of at least 12 or 18 inches of such material as brickbats, cinders or the like, for drainage purposes. If the ground where the walk is to be put is low even more drainage would be better. Pound this material down or else let it stand until well settled before laying the cement, which should be put on in two courses. Let the first course be two or three inches thick and made of well mixed concrete composed of one part Portland cement, three parts clear, sharp sand and five parts broken stone about the size of walnuts. When this course has partly hardened, but while it is still moist, put on a finishing layer, omitting the stone, of one inch thickness. This last course can be dressed off and lined as desired. While it is necessary to let the frost get out of the ground before undertaking to lay a cement walk, the fact should be kept in mind that this phase of the work ought to be done before the gardening proper is begun in the spring—House and Garden.

Greed of the Benefactor.

I used to know a man who was insatiably greedy of influence and recognition, writes A. C. Benson, in Putnam's. It is true that he was ready to help other people with money or advice. He was wealthy and of good position, and he would take a great deal of trouble to obtain appointments for friends who appealed to him, or to unravel a difficult situation; though the object of his diligence was not to help his applicants, but to obtain credit and power for himself. He did not desire that they should be helped, but that they should depend upon him for help. Nothing could unseat him as to his own motive, because he gave his time and money freely; yet the result was that most of the people whom he helped tended to resent it in the end, because he demanded services in return, and was jealous of any other interference. Chateaubriand says that it is true gratitude to wish to repay favors promptly, and still less is it true benevolence to wish to retain a hold over those whom one has benefited.

Inhabitants of the Planets.

In Venus there are lizards and things. Thus opines Sir Oliver Lodge. If Venus is inhabited at all he believes that it is probably at the stage of the earth during what the learned call the carboniferous age, when the atmosphere was full of steam and clouds, when great lizards walked about and great fern trees grew. It is quite unlikely that anything like human beings are living there. In Mars it might be different. The day is nearly as long as ours. There is land and at the poles there is snow, and it has winter and summer like ours. Next August Mars will be easy to study, and all the great telescopes of the world then will be directed toward that planet and its two moons.