

HOW ABOUT IT?

Have you made up your mind to take a look at land where One Crop Pays for a Farm

The homeseekers that accompanied our Mr. Elliott on the last excursion returned enthusiastic over the future prospects in

Thomas County, Kansas

They are now advising their friends to join our next excursion

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1st, 1907

This is the time of the year when you can leave, so get ready and go along with a good jolly crowd and convince yourself that we are trying to make you money

Phone, Write or Call

ELLIOTT, SPIECE & COMPANY

Postoffice Block, Columbus, Nebr.

BOB HAMPTON of PLACER

By RANDALL PARFISH AUTHOR OF "THE MURDER OF MURPHY" "THE LADY OF THE LAKE" "THE BROTHERS" "THE BROTHERS"



Continued from last week.

"Well, Billy," was Hampton's friendly greeting, "are they keeping you fairly busy with 'wars and rumors of wars' these days?"

"Nuthin' doin' just now," was the cheerful reply. "Everythin' goin' ter Cheyenne. The Indians 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 discommodin' 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 12, 1878.
Hampton, Glencald:
Seventh day 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 same 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 hobnobber 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. Guffy 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.

DR. PRICE'S Cream Baking Powder

The finest in the world

When ordering ask for Dr. Price's by name, else the grocer may forget the kind you are accustomed to.

tion 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 that 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!

The memory of his old plain craft would not permit any neglect of the few necessities for the trip. He bought without haggling over prices, but insisted on the best. So it was four in the afternoon when he finally struck into the trail leading northward. He rode a mettlesome, half-broken bronco, a wicked-eyed brute, which required to be conquered twice within the first hour of travel; a second and more quiet animal trailed behind at the end of a lariet, bearing the necessary equipment.

He had, by persistent questioning, acquired considerable information, during that busy hour spent in Cheyenne, regarding the untracked regions lying before him, as well as the character and disposition of the man he pursued. Both by instinct and training he was able to comprehend those brief hints that must prove of vast benefit in the pathless wilderness.

The night was already dark, but stars were gleaming brilliantly overhead, and the trail remained easily traceable. It became terribly lonely on that wilderness stretching away for unknown leagues in every direction, yet Hampton scarcely noted this, so watchful was he lest he miss the trail. To his judgment, Murphy would not be likely to ride during the night until after he had crossed the Fourche. There was no reason to suspect that there were any hostile Indians south of that stream, and probably therefore the old scout would endeavor to conserve his own strength and that of his horses, for the more perilous travel beyond.

About midnight, the trail becoming obscure, the rider made camp, confident he must have already gained heavily on the man he pursued. He lashed his horses and flung himself down on some soft turf, almost immediately dropped asleep. He was up again before daylight, and, after a hasty meal, pressed on. The nature of the country had changed considerably, becoming more broken, the view circumscribed by towering cliffs and deep ravines.

Late in the afternoon he reined up his horse and gazed forward into a broad valley, bounded with precipitous bluffs. The trail led directly down toward where a considerable stream of water shone silvery in the sun, half concealed behind a fringe of willows. And yonder, close in against those distant willows, some black dots were moving. Hampton gazed his anxious eyes to the glass. The leveled tubes clearly revealed a man on horseback, leading another horse. The animals were walking. There could be little doubt that this was Silent Murphy.

Hampton lashed his tired horses behind the bluff and returned to the summit, lying flat upon the ground, with the field glass to his eyes. The distant figures passed slowly forward into the midst of the willows, and for half an hour the patient watcher scanned the surface of the stream beyond, but there was no sign of attempted passage. The sun sank lower and finally disappeared behind those desolate ridges to the westward. Hampton's knowledge of plainscraft rendered Murphy's actions sufficiently clear. This was the Fourche; beyond those waters lay the terrible part of Indian raiders. Further advance must be made by swift, secret night riding, and never-ceasing vigilance. This was what Murphy had been saving himself and his horses for. Beyond conjecture, he was resting now within the shadows of those willows, studying the opposite shore and making ready for the dash northward. Hampton believed he would linger there for some time after dark, to see if Indian fires would afford any guidance. Confident of this, he passed back to his horses, rubbed them down with grass, and then ate his lonely supper, not venturing to light a fire, certain that Murphy's eyes were scanning every inch of skyline.

Darkness came rapidly, while Hampton sat planning again the details of his night's work. Then, with the two animals trailing cautiously behind, he felt his slow way on foot down the steep bluff, into the denser blackness of the valley.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Haunting of a Crime.
Murphy rested on his back in the midst of a thicket of willows, wide awake, yet not quite ready to ford the Fourche and plunge into the dense shadows shrouding the northern shore. Crouched behind a log, he had so far yielded unto temptation as to light his pipe.

Murphy had been amid just such gloomy and uninviting environments many times before, and the experience had grown somewhat pleasant. Even Indian-sounding drumbeats into a commonplace at last. So Murphy gazed contentedly at his old pipe.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

The Verge of Confession.
Murphy uttered one sputtering cry 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.

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Hampton Gazed His Anxious Eyes to the Glass.

PUBLIC SALE!

At my farm one-half mile west of Rising City, Nebraska, on

Thurs., October 10, 1907

Sale to commence at 1 o'clock p. m.

50 Head Poland China Hogs 30 Boars and 15 Gills

5 Sows with litters by their side, four of the litters are sired by ALLERTON CHIEF 29187, my hard boar. His weight 800 pounds in breeding condition, and is one of the best breeding boars in the state of BIG SMOOTH PIGS. The boars are the best lot that I have ever had the pleasure to offer to the public. They are large and growthy for their age. They have had the run of a pasture and will be offered in just nice breeding condition.

There will be four fall boars sired by DELIGHTFUL 37610, and two of them are good enough to head a good pure blood herd. There will be 26 spring boars sired by Allerton Chief and there are some hard headers among them.

The gills are not quite so large as the boars, but they are a nice even lot and will make fine brood sows. Parties that want boars that bought last year, please bring pedigree with you.

Terms—One year's time will be given on all sums of \$20.00 and over at 7 per cent interest, purchaser giving approved security.

Cattle Sale Dec. 12, 1907

O. E. WADE

COL. T. H. CALLAHAN, Auctioneer.
RALPH STANLEY, Clerk.

ber, and just as I turned the corner of the old powder-house there came a sudden snarl, 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 Slavia 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 slinking at me down in Glencald 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 incontinent insanity in his eyes. "Er' whar—do ye expect me ter say—all this, pervidin', of course—I was fule 'nough—ter do it!"

To be Continued.



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

"Up yonder before Custer and the officers of the Seventh, when we got 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 four years, 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 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' yer."
"Unbuckle your belt, and throw that over first."

"I'm damned—if I will. Not—in no infernal country."
"I know it's tough," retorted Hampton, with unparalyzing 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 so," and Murphy sat

contemptuously. "Do ye think—I'm afraid of yer—shootin'? Ye don't dare—er 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 named. Now I'm playin' 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, cardiac grin deserted Murphy's features.

"Unbuckle! It's the last call."
With a snarl the scout unclipped his army belt, dropped it to the ground and sullenly kicked it over toward Hampton. "Now—now—you, you grey-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 snarls 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 shimmer against the light brown background. Hampton, noticing that Murphy had stopped swearing to game, 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 30 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—closer in," he declared, finally, staring around into the other's face, all bravado gone. "There's another lot—backa, all o' 'em—out west yonder—an' over east a smidge in—just startin'. Looks like—we was in a pocket—er 'ther might be some—bar—rains' fore long."

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

"No? Why, push right long—while we kin keep under cover. Then—after dark—trust ter bull lick an' make nuther dash. It's mostly luck, anyhow."

"You mean we should start now?"

To be Continued.

Underwood Standard Typewriter



For Speed Safety, Surety

A solid roadbed is essential. Visibility & Speed in the Underwood (Tabulator) type writer are supported by perfectly balanced construction.

Underwood Typewriter Company
1617 Farnam St. Omaha