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# A History of the Gallant First Nebraska Regiment from Photographs

### UNCANNY HANDS AT POKER

Remarkable Freaks of the Cards that Put a Stop to the Game.

NEW DECKS FAIL TO CHANGE LUCK

All the Players Had Massive Hands Together or Else Nothing to Speak Of—Extraordinary Sequences and Flushes.

"I read in a newspaper the other day the story about four whist players—in this case British army officers in India—each of whom, in the progress of a game, caught the thirteen trumps of a suit on one deal," said an Oregon man to a New York Sun correspondent. "The four officers sat down and made their individual advertisements as to this occurrence, and a mathematician to whom the thing was submitted figured it out that such a thing could only happen once in over so many hundreds of billions of times. I would like to have that same mathematician's calculations on the probable recurrence of some poker hands that I got mixed up with one night in Baker City, my state, back in '91. I've seen lots of instances of one man's having phenomenal luck for protracted periods at the game of draw; I've had my own share of that kind of luck. But on this occasion that I'm speaking of all four of us had massive hands, not on any one round of cards, nor on any one man's deal, but right along for a solid six-hour sitting. It wasn't a case of bewitched cards that some of the old-time time turns talk about, for we changed the decks repeatedly, and almost shuffled and riffled the spots off them at that in our efforts to force them to come out in the ordinary, conventional way. They wouldn't do it. During that whole night's play we found that hands which would generally be counted pretty good and worth any man's money up to their proper poker value did not actually pan out one, two, three. It was like playing poker with a euchre or a pinocchio deck, if you can figure out how puzzling that sort of draw would be.

"It was an impromptu sort of game. All four of us were residents of Portland, friends of long standing, and our personal checks were as good to each other as pieces of eight. We just happened to be in Baker City at the same time and at the same hotel, and, as the after-dark amusements of Baker City are not particularly alluring except from the purest red-eye point of view, we started this queer poker game a-going along about fourth-drink time after supper. The top-notch among us from the financial point of view was a well known Oregon man who had a good deal to do with the building of the Columbia River jetty. Then there was a salmon canner, a meat contractor and myself. The meat contractor didn't particularly want to play, for he had been wretchedly hard a couple of weeks before in a Portland game, and he said that he felt like catching up before he did any more gateboard handling. He didn't have to be pressed very hard, however, and he was measurably glad when the session was over that he had sat in.

"The Oregon game is quarter ante and dollar limit, and the California game of no straight and no pat flushes never worked its insidious way up among the Webfets. We played straight eastern poker then, as we do now. I dealt the first hand myself, and I treated myself pretty kindly. I picked up three aces which had always been regarded by me as a pretty fair sort of draw. It was the salmon man's first say, and he played for a dollar's worth of it, the limit. The jetty man came back at him for

the limit, and I raised the both of them to the limit.

"He stayed in. 'I suppose you fellows think you've squeezed me out of it, eh?' said the meat contractor, whose ante had been pulled up this way, and then he raised us all the limit. I dished myself a pair of deuces, each of the other three taking a card each. Then we began to bet dollars. My ace full was as big as a house, and I stayed until there was close onto a hundred dollars in the center of the table. Then the settled, confident countenances of all three of the other players sort of worried me, and I suggested that a call would be about in order.

"You'll have to do it, then," they told me in chorus, and I did. My ace full wasn't in it. The salmon man had four fours, the jetty man had four fives, and the meat man took down the pot with a straight flush. It took us ten minutes to get over talking amazedly about this proposition for a first hand around, and then we went at it again, the meat man serving them out. I caught a lallapooosa—the worst hand known in poker, that is to say, a putrid full hand—three cards of one suit and two of another. I threw the hand down in disgust just at the moment all the rest of them did the same thing and then I saw that all three of the others had lallapooosas, too. We ridiculed the meat man for a while, and then the salmon man riffled them to deal the jack-pot. The jetty man had the first stay, and he gave a snort, throwing down, face up, a two, four, six, eight, ten of clubs. I heaved the same cards in spades, face up, on the table, the meat man showed up his ace, three, five, seven and nine of diamonds, and the salmon man revealed his ace, three, five, seven and nine of hearts. We had to look at each other for a while when we saw this extraordinary manifestation of valueless sequence.

All on the bluff. "The jetty man declined to have anything further to do with such a deck as that and so he dealt the jack with my deck. I got the first mens of five. I have the habit of picking up my cards in poker one by one in order, I suppose, to prolong the enjoyment in case they are coming my way, or vice versa, to spread the misery out this when cards served out to me are rank. The first card I picked up was a deuce and so was the second.

"Enough to stay on," I thought, and then I picked up my third deuce. "I can bluff on these and still have enough to fall back upon," I thought, and then I gathered in my fourth deuce. "The other three had meantime gathered their hands up in bunches of five and they were looking at me expectantly. I put on the most bored expression possible, said something about having to open a pot on a pair of knaves and akated a dollar chip into the middle. They all raised me without putting on any bored looks and I took a card just to make them think I was either four-flushing or trying to fill a straight or two pairs. They all stood pat.

"What's the color of your jacks?" inquired the jetty man, and he, too, stayed and took three. I had a pair of kings, which I thought were good enough to draw to, in view of the abominable way the cards had been running, and the meat man stayed and took three himself.

"Let's make this for five a throw," said the salmon man, who had opened the pot. Usually such suggestions are received with vituperation and scorn by the other players, but this time we were singularly unanimous in agreeing to raising the limit to \$5. I was agreeable myself, because I had caught another king in the draw.

Four of a Kind. "When there was close to \$400 in the pot the salmon man, a bit scared by our determination, called, showing his three jacks. The jetty man said something about getting money in a letter, and placed his three queens so we could all see them. I had a remark or two to make then about an El Dorado, where folks pick money up in the streets, and I carefully spread my three kings out, one by one.

"When you see a good thing," remarked the meat man, "hit it with an ax," and he tantalizingly laid down his three aces also, one by one, and hauled down the pot.

"We all agreed that four simultaneous deaths had often resulted from less cause than this, and I think it really tapped the nerve of all of us more or less. I know that the way the cards were going had me on the run. We summoned the proprietor of the hotel—a man we all knew well—and put him through a severe inquisitorial process as to how the cards purveyed at his newstand had got into his hotel, and in sundry and divers ways endeavored to talk away the spell which seemed to hover over the cards. We declined to play any further with cards bought in the hotel, and sent a boy down the street to get a dozen packs at another hotel. Then, after we had all walked around our chairs backward—each disclaiming any superstitious beliefs, by the way, in so doing—we resumed the game.

"I had the deal. I shuffled and riffled the cards until there wasn't any more newness to them than there is to a last year's hat, and then handed them out in sets of five. I caught a deuce full and, of course, stood pat when it came my turn. The other three also stood pat. We had, by the way, increased the ante to \$1, and the limit had been raised permanently to \$5. We laid our hands face down on the table and looked each other over.

"There's something devilish and uncanny about this," said the salmon man, finally. "Now, I don't say it because I'm bluffing or because I'm not well fixed, but what do you all say to having a show-down right now, just for curiosity, that we may all see what these weird hands contain and have something to go by for future play?"

"The jetty man and the meat contractor looked over this, and so did I. I was sorry that I had, later, so was the jetty man. We bet on those four pat hands up to \$500 for the whole pot, and the meat man took it down with a nine full. The jetty man had a flush and the salmon man had a six full.

"This was a bit too much, and we unaccountably decided to pass the game up.

"There's something wrong about this," said the salmon man. "It's a hoodoo. I'll bet my Astoria canneries are burning up, or something."

### LOVE LETTERS HER BUSINESS

Fun a Chicago Girl Got Out of Being a Professional Matchmaker.

MADE A GOOD LIVING OUT OF IT

She Wrote Tender Billet Doux for Loveliest Maidens Who, in Turn, Sent Them to Their Unsuspecting Admirers.

In the city of Chicago dwells a woman, Miss Rose Norman, who, through her cogent billet doux, has brought to a happy climax, via the altar, not merely one, but scores of pairs of hearts made happy as a consequence of the epistolary effusions of this mystic, cryptic "silent partner." No record has been kept, unfortunately, of how many unsuspecting men have been influenced by this clever medium to bestow themselves upon feminine worshippers, who, like poor Cyrano's rival, could keenly enough feel all the excruciating delights, hopes and fears of love, yet had not the gift of translating into rhythms and jingles of winning words the "dead language of hearts."

"Yes," said sly-looking Rose Norman to a Chicago Chronicle reporter, "the last match I made ruled my reputation and killed my business. And I rather think it will incidentally be the cause of fewer weddings and more old maids hereafter."

"Tell me, please," was urged, "about your far-reaching insight; whatever prompted you to adopt as a means of livelihood this psychological pursuit?"

"I over myself a mentally avowed rule of complete self-forgetfulness. With one exception, no patron ever risked introducing me to her admirer. Several times women were rash enough to tell me the names of my correspondents, and they happened to be friends of mine, but usually I carried on courtships with men whose names were never divulged, and I much preferred those circumstances. The latter were usually conscientious work when I had no idea whether I was writing to a man named Percival or Pete, and whether he lived in Chicago or China. There was no need of my knowing, for all my letters were copied and sent by the other woman and all replies received by her. The latter were usually submitted to me, however, for in order to successfully carry on a deception it was imperative that I be informed of all particulars. From the very first conversation with a prospective patron I would insist upon a clear breast of everything up to date, I emphatically forbade the concealment of future incidents also."

"Aside from the remunerative point of view, did you enjoy your unusual enterprise?"

"Most certainly. The study of different characters and their vagaries was interesting and often educational. I derived infinite pleasure from scientifically planning how to control various natures and I invariably felt the keenest responsibility over the destinies of people. Then there were all sorts of diversions. Frequently I have been employed to inscribe tender tributes in honor of birthdays, festival celebrations, anniversaries and other occasions un-forgotten. And I have rhymed together many, many stanzas for St. Valentine's day and Easter tokens were always popular. Oh," here Miss Norman rolled her eyes ceilingward, "I could write books—books that would sell, too," she exclaimed.

"Some of my most telling strokes were daily brought to bear upon that particular chap's sluggish organ of affection, nightly my fair confidant emphasized my foregone assurances with blushes and persuasive glances, and between us we accomplished his surrender. The next thing I heard from the victorious miss was that she had tired of 'that slave,' and a new idol was already being worshipped. As she referred in no way to the re-engagement of my services I wrote inquiringly about it. What do you think she replied? That she had saved all my typewritten letters and, as she doubted if this second 'venture' would amount to anything more than a 'little flirtation' she would just use those old letters over again and not waste money on 'an uncertainty.' That struck me as sublime," and Miss Norman twinkled her eyes as if the joke would never grow stale to her. "She never came back to me, and I've often wondered how many love-lorn youths have since found balm in those same magic doses of soothing promises, written long before they so

much thought of yearning for the owner of them.

"Did I ever write for a man?" was the query she repeated. "Yes, once," she answered soberly. "A strange and very sad commission it proved to be. A perfect stranger came to me one day on a peculiar errand. He gave me his name and address and stated that for certain reasons, which he preferred not to mention, he desired me to write an impassioned letter full of endearing terms and intense jealousy. I followed his instructions without the slightest curiosity, aside from thinking that he meant to pique an indifferent sweetheart by haunting my letter. Having fulfilled my part of the bargain I dismissed it from my mind. Several months later I walked a patron of former days, a woman from whom I had carried on a most delightful courtship which ended with merry wedding bells and bride's cake. She informed me that she had just received the papers which made null her marriage certificate. Her husband had proved faithless, she sobbed, and the convincing evidence was a letter from an unknown woman, found on the staircase when it had been dropped by accident. The envelope bore his name and address, he admitted his guilt and the divorce was granted. 'You married us,' she wept, 'so I wanted you to know the end.' I stared at the parchment before me and as I read the name of her ex-husband I knew that I had also parted them."

"But why did you give it up?" I asked, 400 curiously, perhaps, for she laughed in a most exasperating way, and said: "Some other time I will tell you—not today."

### TO ENDOW BOB WOMACK.

Cripple Creek's Discoverer Will Be Cared For by Pioneers' Society. A Denver, Colo., dispatch says that Bob Womack, the discoverer of Cripple Creek camp, which brought fortunes to scores of people, but failed to do anything for him, is not to be forgotten. A pioneers' society has been organized, with the express purpose of arranging for the endowment of the old prospector with a fortune of \$50,000.

Bob Womack was a cowboy in 1877. His father owned a ranch at Cripple Creek. Bob worked for his father. One day he was wandering over the fields in a spot that afterward came to be known as Poverty Gulch, and he saw what he supposed to be free gold on some flat or drift rock on the bank of Cripple Creek. When he got to his father's cabin he wrote to two friends at Clear Creek who were experienced prospectors and asked them to come and examine the country. They came, looked about for a time and then pronounced the country worthless. Bob Womack was disappointed. He was no miner, but he was sure that he had discovered gold. He knocked off a piece of it and when he went to Denver next time he took it to an assayer, who told him it returned \$200 gold to the ton. He sent for his two Clear Creek friends again and told them what he had learned. They made another investigation and concluded that it was put there by somebody who wanted to "salt" a claim and sell it.