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Vol. IX, No. 3
Mar. 1929

MARCH

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THE

FRONTIER

A Magazine of the Northwest

VOL. IX, NO. 3

MARCH, 1929

CONTENTS

- Homesteaders' Trail—a story of the Swan Valley..... Mary Hesse Hartwick
Willamette Portage—a poem..... Howard McKinley Corning
Poems of the National Parks..... W. E. Kidd and Norman Macleod
A Coffin for Anna—a story of Dakota..... Elise Rushfeldt
Sailor Bill—a poem of the logging camps..... Courtland Matthews
Two Errands—a story of irony..... Jay G. Sigmund
The Old-Fashioned Country—Eastern Oregon..... H. L. Davis
Ice Storm—a poem..... Eda Lou Walton
Up Huckleberry—a poem of mountain climbing..... Ethel Romig Fuller
Good Shepherd—a story of sheepherding..... Robert Tod Struckman
Wild Plums—a story of a child's isolation..... Grace Stone Coates
Clearing Sagebrush—a poem..... Irene Welch Grissom
The Kiskis—a story of homesteaders' children..... May Vontver

OPEN RANGE

- Buffalo in Judith Basin, 1883, with a painting by
Charlie Russell..... Pat T. Tucker
Four Sketches—Nature red-handed
Richard West, Emmearl McKinnon, S. T. Carlson
A Letter—Bill Adams, "Common Sailor," Portland Port years ago.

LYRICS by Eleanor Allen, Alicia O'Donnell, Naomi Wiley, Nina
Craw, Ethel Fuller, Mary Brennan Clapp, Dorothy Gill,
Muriel McKay, Alice Weister, Ernest Erkill, Kathleen Tank-
ersley Young.

HISTORICAL SECTION

"Dick's Works," An Overland Journey to California in 1852,
made by Richard Owen Hickman.

POEMS by Mabel Harlan Henry, Verne Bright, Lucia Trent, Ben-
jamin Musser, Ralph Cheyney, Elsa Swartz, Lori Petri.

BOOKSHELF—Books by S. V. Benet, C. E. Russell, R. W. Ritchie.
Paul Green, Ramsey Benson.

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Aboard The Covered Wagon.

Mary Hartwick lives in the Swan Valley, Montana. Another story about *Hans* appeared in the May *Frontier* for 1928. It was listed as distinctive in *Best Short Stories* for 1928.

Howard Corning, Courtland Matthews, Ethel Fuller, Verne Bright are Portland poets whose verse is known to *Frontier* readers. Mrs. Fuller's book of poems, *White Peaks and Green*, was published in December and is being widely appreciated.

Walter Evans Kidd and Ernest Erkill are graduate fellows at The University of Oregon. Norman Macleod edits *Palo Verde*; and Lucia Trent, Benjamin Musser, and Ralph Cheyney are editors of *Contemporary Verse*. Mr. Musser also edits *Japm*. Miss Trent is author of *Dawn Stars*. Their poems appear in a score of anthologies.

Elise Rushfeldt lives in Hawley, Minnesota. This is her first appearance, and a most promising one, in *The Frontier*.

Jay G. Sigmund's *Wapsipinicon Tales* is a volume of appealing Indiana stories. He contributes to many magazines, but now for the first time to *The Frontier*.

H. L. Davis is a vigorous Oregon poet. A reader never remains neutral toward his poetry. A striking poem by him was in *The American Mercury* for January.

Eda Lou Walton, a professor of modern poetry in New York University, has had poems in several of our national magazines.

Robert Struckman is a journalism student at *The State University of Montana*, as are Richard West and Emmearl McKinnon; S. T. Carlson is a forestry student; Alicia O'Donnell is a student in English. Dorothy Gill is a student at Reed College.

Grace Stone Coates, assistant editor of *The Frontier*, needs no introduction. She is at present in New York City.

May Vontver is superintendent of schools in Petroleum county, Montana. Naomi Wiley teaches in Geyser, Nina Crow in Sixteen, Montana. Muriel McKay and Mabel Henry live in Spokane. Elsa Swartz teaches music in Missoula.

Irene Welch Grissom, who lives in Idaho Falls, is the Poet Laureate of Idaho. Eleanor Allen lives in Portland; Mary Clapp in Missoula. Kathleen Young is in New York City. Alice Webster is the retiring president of the Northwest Poetry Society, Portland. Miss Young is associate editor of *Blues*.

"Bill" Adams lives in California. He is author of *Fenceless Meadows*. His stories and verse have appeared in *Adventure* and other magazines for several years.

Pat T. ("Tommy") Tucker now lives in Livingston, Montana. He came into Montana in 1883 from Texas with cattle.



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The Editor To The Reader

I hope that you are enjoying this magazine. I believe you are. The list of readers lengthens. The number of writers sending in material has doubled in the last few months. The quantity of good material that is received is much larger. This issue carries more than one hundred pages of material that I think good. The size means that the financial resources can no longer cover the cost of printing. However, I believe that there are enough readers interested in *The Frontier* to enable the editors to publish a larger magazine each issue. I am sure that there is sufficient good material. What I shall have to ask is this: Will each reader send to the circulation manager the names of three or four persons who are the sort of reader that enjoys the kind of material we publish? The manager will then send them a sample copy and a subscription blank. If the paid circulation can be doubled the larger magazine can be published each issue.

In its year and a half of existence the magazine has steadily progressed toward its aim, the fostering of a definitely Northwest literature. Several letters in my files tell me that. The creative material has been of a fairly good type, as editors of national anthologies of stories and verse have indicated by their choice of material from *Frontier* pages. Historians have written that the records of early days which have been printed have been valuable historically, and general readers have written that they have been interesting. The historical section is now being reprinted by The State University of Montana as *Sources of Northwest History* and being exchanged with historical, college and university libraries, and sent to historians.

I have every reason to believe that the work is worth carrying on. If you too think so won't you help us find the readers who will enjoy *Frontier* material?

H. G. MERRIAM.

BOARD OF EDITORS

Editor.....HAROLD G. MERRIAM
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Contributing Editors.....FRANK B. LINDERMAN, LEW SARETT, JAMES STEVENS

Manuscripts should be sent to the Editor; business communications to Gertrude White, Business Manager; subscriptions to Ernest Lake, Circulation Manager—all at The State University of Montana, Missoula.

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MARCH, 1929

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THE FRONTIER

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTHWEST

"The frontiers are not east or west, north or south, but wherever a man fronts a fact."—THOREAU.

Homesteaders' Trail

By Mary Hesse Hartwick

AT NOON, the third day out, the mail sled from Bonner arrived at Corlett. With a great jingling of sleighbells and milk cans and squeaking of runners on brittle snow, the four horses swirled into the yard and around the log house, and came to a stop at the side door. The passengers got out and stretched their cramped legs, and the mail-carrier took in the bags and parcels. Then he began to sort the freight. Some of the stuff he put on the front porch. The rest he carried across the yard to a warehouse. Inside this house were stalls for freight, marked Placid Lake, Cottonwood, Seeley Lake, Swan River, and so on. When he had arranged the freight, he locked the door and took the key into the postoffice and hung it up inside the window.

The ranch hand had taken the horses to the barn, and dinner was waiting. Hans and Anna with their two children had come in on this stage. Anna was sitting by the fire, the two children on her lap. Hans was helping her to unwrap them. The little boy was jealous of the baby girl and would not give up his mother's lap.

"He will be all right when he gets some hot bread and milk," Anna said in slow, precise English.

The ranchman's daughter soon came in with a bowl of bread and milk and showed it to the little boy. He came to her and sat on her lap, eating. Before he was through, his heavy lashes began to droop, and without looking to see where he was, he cuddled up to the girl and was asleep. The girl watched Anna over the child's head, curious. So this was Hans' wife, from Norway. Not blond like him but dark and kind of pretty. Anna took the boy and laid him beside the baby on a couch.

As soon as they had eaten dinner, and the horses were rested, the mailman went back. There was no mail any farther than Corlett. The mail for Seeley Lake and Swan River would lie there until some one came down after it.

Hans inquired of the ranchman whether anyone had been down, or was expected. No one had been down for two weeks. There was fresh snow at the Summit. A trapper had said there were three feet, and that it was still snowing when he came on snowshoes. No, he would not take any more teams over that damn Swan river road and kill them off. No, he didn't know of anyone who would try it. People living in that godforsaken hole ought to stay in there, or stay out. Especially men with families,

with little children. There was no getting them in until spring.

You couldn't tell whether Anna understood or not, she only smiled at Hans.

But Hans knew he was snubbed. He went outside and stood disconsolately looking down at the pile of his stuff on the porch. Presently two young men from Placid Lake drove up with a pung. Hans went out and talked to them.

They suggested that he ride up with them to where the Placid Lake road turned off, and then go on and see if he could get Blackie Davis, at Seeley Lake, to take him in. "If anyone can, Blackie will. He's the fellow you want to see."

Hans went in and talked a moment to Anna. He came out at once and said, "My wife wants to go, too. We have our skis. Could you wait a few minutes for her?" Sure, they could wait.

When Anna came out with Hans, the two men were disconcerted, seeing the two bundles. Hans hadn't talked of kids. Like chrysalides, wrapped and pinned. They looked at the bright eyes and little buttons of noses.

"Can you ski with kids, and that pack on your back?"

"Jah," said Hans.

They fixed a place for Anna in the hay. She smiled gravely at them, settling the children on her lap, pulling the blankets snug. Hans said he would go on his skis, but they had him climb onto the seat between them.

When they had gone the four miles they tried to drive on farther, but they could not get the pung along the unbroken road. They didn't like leaving a woman and kids off there in the snow.

But Anna picked up one of the bundles and started out. She was wearing the togs, and these were the skis, that she had brought with her from the Old Country. Slender and strong she looked. "She's headed home," one of the men said. Hans picked up the other child and grinned. "See you later," he said. "Thanks, much."

The men watched as long as they could see them, decided they would make it all right, lifted the pung around in the road, and headed for Placid Lake.

Hans and Anna found the going good enough. They went in the middle of the road on the high place left by the sleds; there was new loose snow in the sled tracks. When the baby was asleep, Anna put her in the top of the packsack on Hans' back. She followed as closely behind as her skis would allow, keeping her eyes on the packsack.

They had first to go a long way between the two wire fences of an upland ranch. The wind was bitterly cold. It whined dismally along the ground, and among the fluted drifts piled along the fences. Far ahead they could see where sparse little clumps of foothill growth stood. In all this vast expanse of sagebrush flat, extending as far as the eye could

THE FRONTIER

see, there were no trees except the growth along the gulches. A dead, frozen land. It was as tho they had left the world of warmth forever behind.

Catching up with her Hans pointed ahead where the little trees of the foothills would begin. It would be warmer when they got up there. And there was a small cabin beside the Ranger station at the head of Seeley lake.

Then, when the sun was far to the south, they were coming into the foothills. When they had rounded a wooded bluff they left the sun behind. Now the underbrush was white with frost, weighted with the burden of it. There were stumps at the sides of the road, like mushrooms, the white snow on them rounded into domes.

About four o'clock they came to the cabin. There was a stove and bed and table. They made a fire. While Hans warmed milk and made coffee, Anna rested and nursed the baby.

"Er du tired, Jeten min?" asked Hans.

"No, I am not tired," she answered

So they struck out again. Now the sun was going down across the lake. The sky was molten brass. Anna had seen no sunset like it since she had left the Sogne fjord.

As they left the thick frosty air about the lake and began to go up a long grade of the narrow road, the stars above the walls of the forest were shining brightly thru the thin

upland air. Here and there a big yellow one had a nimbus. It grew colder as they neared the top of this long hill, and there was a low whining wind in the tops of the pillared pines.

And now as they were coming down the long grade, where the forest fell to an immense bottom, which would lead on thru the little settlement called Seeley Lake, they could see a greater expanse of the star-studded sky, with the Milky Way like a band across the whole sparkling blue field. There was no moon visible from the dark canyon of forest, but it was growing lighter with the intensity of the stars and the reflection from the snow.

They were both tired. Hans was sweating. He stopped to say to Anna, "When we come out again where it is open hills to the left, you will see the long line of the river and you will maybe see a light beyond the river on one of the benches. That will be a homesteader's light. Or you may see along there a post with a mail-box on it. Then when we have passed the third mail-box, that will be Blackie's fence. You watch for these things." Hans was giving her something to occupy her mind, for he had seen that she was getting dizzy. Anna pushed ahead.

After a long while Hans heard a glad cry. Anna had been searching for anything that looked like a mail-box, and watching on the low hill across the depression of the river for anything that might be a light. She

cried out now, pointing with her ski pole. In the dim light of the stars and the reflections Hans saw a twinkling on the white expanse.

Then she found a mail-box. From there they speeded up.

"See, Hans, it's the third one."

"That's Blackie's fence, right there. It's all but covered with the snow, but it's Blackie's fence."

They skimmed lightly over the hard surface of the sloping field toward the river. Hans, ahead, brought up sharply, where the snow and earth fell away before him. The river with its frozen edges of white and the center dark and crunching with blocks of ice seemed directly below him.

"Hello!" he shouted.

Someone appeared down there. "What in hell are you doing on the roof, you damned squarehead. Come on down. Go back around the shed, and come down."

They came down and stood breathless in the light from Blackie's door.

"Oh, excuse me, ma'am," Blackie said. "I thot you was a boy."

"This is my wife," said Hans. "And this is my kids." He held out the two bundles to Blackie. "Go on and take them, they won't bite."

Blackie backed away, into the cabin. Then he came cautiously forward and took one and went in and laid it on the bed. This was the boy and he was awake and sick of this cramped swathing and the way he had been carried. He let out a yell. Blackie ran back and put him far

over on the bed and placed the two pillows in front of him, for a fence. Then he came and took the girl. He kept her in his arms. "A little devil, ain't it," he said.

"She's nearly eight months old," Hans told him.

Blackie was fascinated and held her carefully while Anna looked after the boy.

Blackie vigorously stirred up the fire in the heater. He was flabbergasted and said so. He had seen many strange things come up that road, but this got him. Skis and kids—gosh! Anna liked the big voice and the red face bristling with black stubble.

Blackie hesitated about starting supper. Hans saw his embarrassment and helped. When he saw Hans take some bread out of his packsack he said, "Gosh, that looks good. I've been stirring up a bannock. I hate bannocks. I've got yeast and plenty of flour, but I can't have any luck with light bread. Gosh!"

A thick black smoke rolled up from the cookstove. Blackie sprang and grabbed a smoking skillet and rushing to the door threw it far into the snowbank.

"Damn that thing. Excuse me, ma'am. I was trying to make some candy when you came. I never have any luck cooking. Can you make candy, ma'am?"

Anna smiled at Blackie. He calmed down. He decided she wasn't one of them finicky women, anyway. He went out on the porch and came back

THE FRONTIER

with a big ham of elk and a side of fat bacon. Throwing them on a block in the corner he began to cut steaks and bacon.

"No, no, Blackie, not so much, we can't eat it," protested Hans.

"I'll eat with you; I didn't eat any supper, that is, not much. I couldn't think what to cook. I fancied I'd like some candy and tried to make some."

Hans was afraid Blackie wouldn't have luck with the steak, so he fried it himself, and made coffee and got some cookies out of his packsack. Blackie scurried around and opened a tin of jam, and set the table, and went outside for some butter. He had enough grub around for wintering a dozen husky men. Bacon and beans and things in bags hung from the rafters. Sacks of flour and sugar were piled up; and boxes of fruit and vegetables were opened and set up, one on another, as in a store. "I like to have lots of grub on hands. I like company. There's always some old bum comes along and stops with me. I mean—excuse me, ma'am, I mean—I mean I like company."

After supper, when Anna was getting the children fixed for the night, Hans and Blackie washed the dishes; then they tacked up a tarp around one bed, making a little room. Blackie had nice new beds, from town.

"You needn't be afraid of my beds, ma'am, they are new and clean. I keep them that way. Whenever some old lousy-looking bum comes

along, I put him on one of them folding cots."

"Why," said Anna, "You have new blankets and pillows and everything. I think your beds are lovely."

He expanded under her praise. "I ain't tidy, ma'am, but I ain't dirty; you can see that."

When Anna and the children had gone to bed, Hans and Blackie sat up a long time, talking about the road. Blackie would try it. If he took all the four horses, he could lock up and be gone as long as he pleased. He would like to stay at the Ranch a few days, and visit with Red Davis on the way back. And he thought they could go back to Corlett tomorrow with the sled and get Hans' things that he had left there. That would break the colt. The colt had been worked only once. And could the Missus make some bread?

Whereupon, Anna, lying and listening, called out to Hans to set some sponge. He did this, wrapping the jar in a sweater, by the fire.

Blackie asked Hans if he needed any grub. Hans told him that he had taken in a load in the fall, and that he had a fresh cow waiting at the Ranch. And he had made a cellar, and had hay. "Then you are all set, if we can get you in," said Blackie. "By gosh, we'll get you there."

So in the morning they went to Corlett, and brought Hans' stuff and the Swan river mail and parcels, and

some things for Red Davis, who lived half-way up, and with whom they would stop on the way in.

That evening Anna had hot rolls for supper. And she had made two kinds of candy. She had tidied up the cabin, bathed the children and had a lovely day. Blackie was elated when he saw the hot rolls. "Say, now, that's quick work."

He thought they had better go a way tomorrow, and try to break some of the road, then start the next day. Hans and Anna were anxious to get home, but they were well satisfied at Blackie's and felt sure now that they would make it on in.

The next day they went a way and broke out some of the road. When they came back, they went over the harness, and tramped hay into the sled-box.

In the morning they put Anna into the sled in a nest of blankets. They had tied the things in one end, so that they could not slide back on her. She took the two babies on her lap. She had heated milk and put it into a hot jug, wrapped in a blanket.

The going was easy enough where the road had been broken out. Then they had to take it slower, resting often. The snow was gradually getting deeper. At noon, stopping in the road, they put feed-bags on the horses, and ate some sandwiches.

Where the ice was flooded in the road, Blackie turned out into the woods, winding among the trees with reckless skill, handling the four

horses with seeming carelessness, yet taking great care. Hans was worried sometimes, but Blackie scorned to pay any attention to the condition of the road. He chewed ferociously on his tobacco, and swore intermittently at the three horses, sparing the colt.

Sometimes the colt, exhausted, would sit down when they stopped to rest. He was so deep in the snow, he just leaned his weight back on his hips and looked around at Blackie with appeal in his eyes. Then Blackie would go to him and call him "Baby darlin'," and pet him. And curse the other horses.

Soon leaving the river bottom behind, they went over a long grade and into a deep forest, and entered the narrows along the two lakes where the road was cut into the bluff. There was just space for the sled to keep on the narrow road, with its straight drop-off into the frozen lake. During the heat of the sunny days water had run out of the bank and frozen on top of the deep snow, and in some places had eaten it away.

Hans and Anna laid their skis out on the crusted snow and, carrying the children, went up the steep bluff into the woods above the road. They worked their way along thru the timber until they got high up, where there was better going. Soon they were far ahead of the sled.

Hearing a terrific yelling and scrambling of horses over ice, Hans gave the children to Anna and shot

downward thru the timber, fetching up above the road to see the frantic horses digging their corks into the ice sheet that slanted over the grade into the lake. Blackie was standing up, yelling like a demon and lashing the horses. The horses seemed suddenly to gain a footing and rushed to the top of a slippery hill which led away from the shore and into the woods. Blackie pulled them out of the already deep snow of the road into a drift and there they floundered themselves out of wind and stood still, quivering, the colt down and panting. Hans had followed swiftly along above the sled, in the woods, and sprang down into the road, leaving his skis where he stopped.

By shoveling a space to start in they got the horses into the road. They mended harness, and Hans pulled the sled up to where they would hitch, getting Anna and the babies into it. The thermos bottles that Blackie had put in the sled full of coffee were still there. So when they had straightened the trembling horses and put feed bags on their noses and had the harness back on before it got too cold, they climbed onto the top of the load in the front end of the sled and Anna spread out sandwiches of elk meat, cake, and the hot coffee in tin cups.

They were glad indeed to get under way again. Even if ever so slowly, they could force along thru the deep snow. They went down a long sweep of forest road and were in a

bottom. At the upper end of this would be Red Davis' hay ranch, and Rainy lake. They shoveled drifts, and in the deeper places had to stop often to rest the horses.

So they came, just about sundown, to Red Davis'. When the horses saw the barn they picked up their heads and made a final effort thru the deep bottom. Red came out, a long, raw-boned man with fiery hair over freckles.

Red, too, was amazed at the contents of the bundles, but he took them like an old timer, and felt of their cheeks to see if they were cold. He was pleased to see a woman. Pleased to see anyone. "I've been watching the window for a week hoping some one would come."

"Why didn't you go and break that road out? Why do you sit in the house and wait for some one else to break it for you?" Blackie yelled at him. They went to take the horses to the barn, and Hans and Anna went on into the cabin. "I thought you was dead, poisoned from some of them bannocks you make. Why don't you clean your barn once in a while? I suppose that old pump is froze up as usual? Why didn't you build your cabin on the creek?" Blackie was glad to see Red and kept roaring at him.

When Red saw that they had brought bread, he hid his bannock, as bachelors do whenever a woman comes along. Red knew how to cook but he wouldn't. He was more tidy than Blackie, but not so clean.

Red, also, had elk and deer, and fish as well, and they fixed a nice supper while Anna cared for the children. Red soon had the boy willing to come to him, and walk about with him, looking at things. He had an old ugly-looking bulldog. Anna was afraid of him at first, but soon saw he was friendly and crazy about the little boy. Soon Red had the boy riding on the dog's back.

When they had eaten and cleared away the things, Hans and Blackie sat playing pinochle, and Red talked to Anna, and held the little boy on his lap. He brought out a box with some of his wife's things and told Anna about her death, and how his little boy was with Red's father in the East.

"She was a little thing" He showed Anna her tiny glove. There was a Bible among the things in the box. Anna picked it up and opened it to see where this other homesteader woman had read most.

"She read that a lot."

Anna answered, "I have an English Bible that my father gave me the day I left for America. I had been studying English in school. He stood so near the edge of the wharf and leaned out so far toward the little boat we were crossing in, that his tears fell into the water." She paused. "I never saw him again. He is not living now."

They sat silent for a long time, sympathy between them. "Life is queer," Red said and he got up to put away the things. He fixed the

fire for the night and got some more blankets for Anna and the children and left them the bed beside the stove. The men went up into the loft and were soon asleep.

The next morning, Red gave Blackie his team, keeping his colt and a smaller horse, so that they could rest and feed up. He went with the sled to the Summit, then struck into the woods to look at some of his traps around Summit lake. Anna watched him disappearing among the trees, thinking of the woman who had left the Bible.

They were three hours going down the long slope. The snow was getting thinner. The horses were carrying a mass of icicles, and Blackie stopping them, scraped the icicles off with a gunnysack. The little boy, cramped in her lap, began to whimper with the cold. His crying rose over Anna's crooning. Hans got out of the sled and wrapped the blankets more snugly around the children.

At the level of the Swan river the foothills receded to the left and there was quite a valley opening ahead. The two ranges on either side could be seen far away and infinitely white against the thin blue air. There was not a cloud in all the sky. And no wind stirred at noon. Anna sat watching snow-birds circle and alight, shaking the snow off the trees. Now and then the road would rise and go over a low ridge, the foothills of the Swan range, but the foothills were falling back so that

THE FRONTIER

as they came to the gate of the Gordon ranch the valley opened to both right and left. Now the white mountains, with their far stretches of forested shoulders, seemed endless toward the north. The ranch lay between them and the river bottom.

The two men who lived here had the place from a doctor, whose summer cottage was at the entrance to the Ranch. They came out to meet the sled when it drove up. Blackie, unharnessing the horses, fell to quarreling with them.

The Ranch house was lovely, Anna saw. She had the spare bedroom, with a stove in it and bearskins and elk hides on the floor. There was a dresser, a big glass, a washstand and bowl and pitcher, white curtains and towels. She picked up courage. She had been dismayed sometimes there on the road, and fearful. This wasn't so wild. It might be something like this at her own cabin. She had sent on in her furniture and dishes and had nice things.

When the supper was over and the children were asleep, there was still daylight. And Anna must needs go out to the barn and see her cow, which Hans had told her about when he came to meet her. It was a beautiful little Guernsey. A hundred and fifty dollars he had paid for her. Anna stood stroking her silky neck while one of the men milked her. "She won't give all this milk, of course, on slough hay. But she'll give you plenty, all winter. You

must sprinkle salt on the slough hay. She'll eat it better."

Again it was morning. They gave Blackie a fresh team; he would need only two horses. So he left Red's two horses and his own at the Ranch to rest.

Now they had come between the Swan and the Mission ranges, with the glaciers lying open above them, looking very near. And now they came to Hans' so hardly won road thru the forest. He pointed out the long white opening thru the tall lodgepoles that had grown up after a forest fire. It had cost him days of labor to make it. Soon he said proudly, "We are on our own land, the first forty."

"This is better. These tall trees and the open places under them," Anna said, and told Hans it would be a good place for pasture, would it not? And they could fence it?

They saw a pole fence tacked to trees, and a gap, and then pulled up the knoll in front of Hans' cabin.

"Do you know, Blackie, we could have gone to Europe, the time we've been getting here from Missoula."

"Yeh," snorted Blackie, "but look where you'd a been if you'd gone to Europe, and look where you are now."

"That's right," said Hans. "Look where we are."

They shoveled the snow away out of the little porch sheltering the door. Hans had this porch piled high with dry wood and pine knots. He took a key from behind the window

frame, and unlocked the door. They helped Anna out and Hans ran in to start the fires. Everything lay as he had left it, scarcely a film of dust showing on anything. The cabin was clean, and yellow, and shining in the sun from the uncurtained windows.

Anna, snow-blinded for the time, stood holding the children until the house would warm. This did not take long, the low roof and tight floors spreading the heat quickly. Hans ran around the half-partition that he had made of white cleaned poles, and started a fire in Anna's range.

Now that she was beginning to see, the familiar things appeared—her little sideboard, and table, and sewing-machine, the baby's big wicker buggy, the dishes in a cupboard, showing through the wide entrance to the kitchen; there were the shelves and windows that Hans had told her to bring curtain material for; and in the front corner, under the bookshelves, which were filled with all her own and Hans' beloved books, there was a small writing-desk, polished and waxed, showing the new grain, cut of the big pine, yellow and lovely. Under her feet there was the rug she had made, and—Anna could look no more, her throat choked up and the tears under her heavy eyelids blinded her. She buried her face in the baby's wraps.

"Why—Anna! Min kjaere, don't you like it?" Hans was amazed and fearful. "Tell me, Anna, don't you like it?"

She struggled to find her voice. "Oh, Hans, I like it so much—how you knew what I would like!"

"Jah," said Hans, and he went to help Blackie and show him around. They got the shovel out of the sled and dug the snow away from the cellar door. The new cellar was working fine. They took out some spuds and canned stuff and went into the cabin.

"Gosh, you got it nice here, Hans. I'm surprised you've got so much done already."

After lunch they begged Blackie to stay, at least until morning; but he felt that he had better leave them to themselves. He'd go back to the Ranch and fight with them two old sourdoughs. They pressed him. No, he'd like to fish in Holland lake. Besides, he'd stay there a few days, then stop a couple of days with Red on the way back. No, he wouldn't take any money; but Hans made him. They stood watching him out of sight.

Then Hans and Anna went inside and Anna heated water to wash the dishes she had been separated from so long. Hans began to dig among the things for the children's clothes and toys. Anna smiled, watching him. The sun glistened on the oil-cloth of her table. This was home.

Willamette Portage

By Howard McKinley Corning
Medorem Crawford, Medorem Crawford,
What do you see in the trail ahead?—
Your Spanish oxen sway and lumber
Like shadows out of a moody slumber,
Weary and surfeited,
Medorem Crawford.

Watch, as they round the river's turn. . .
The trail is long that leads them to rest,
Their yokes aside and the cropping cool.
But only the longest trails are best.
Whack up the oxen, here's the crest,
Medorem Crawford.

See how the river gleams its coins!
Count your purse as the hooves fall slow:
Thirty. . .and forty. . .fifty or more. . .
How many turns are you going to go
With your lumbering cart to the boat below
Medorem Crawford?

Look, how the wild falls plunge and foam!
See how the salmon leap and fail.
What do you see through the golden day?—
Indian braves on a silver trail
Driving canoes through the angry spray,
Medorem Crawford?

Listen! the boat at the landing shore
Whistles and waits through the afternoon,
Aaron Cook at the languid wheel.
You will be through with your portage soon,—
Only to take the trail once more,
Medorem Crawford.

. . .I look. . .and you lumber up through the years;
Your oxen sway and your wagon creaks.
And the searcher within me seeks and seeks
For the trail you went by the silver falls.
But only the voice of the water speaks,
Medorem Crawford. . .Medorem Crawford.

Gunsight Trail: Glacier Park

By Norman Macleod

More than I the winds that pass
 Have brushed the bloom from grass,
 Carrying the Bear Bloom, sorrel
 Past bars of stars; the coral
 Moon drives headily in blacks
 Upon Sky-fastness tracks
 Not as steep as Gunsight Trail
 That prickly pines impale.
 Over roller-coaster boulders
 I interrupt my shoulders,
 With a taste of Bear Bloom, sorrel
 Beneath a moon-immoral
 Light, the whitened sprays of Lake
 St. Mary leap and break.
 I—not as moonshine gale,
 Or beams of starlight hail,
 Arrogance of pungent scent
 On Bear Bloom Battlement—
 Run the course my bronco leads
 Where moonmist silver bleeds;
 But I know what they don't see:
 A desert south of me,
 And beyond these middle heights
 I sense the Northern Lights.

Yellowstone Park: The Sleeping Giant

By Walter Evans Kidd

With head back-thrown on lesser hills
 You lie alone in broad, articulate sleep
 Beneath the bending tree of stars,
 And from your dream a Homer-browed colossus shoulders,
 Nation-wise,
 Against a large, skyscrapered dawn,
 Mouthing the mighty epic of America.

A Coffin for Anna

By Elise M. Rushfeldt

THIRTY days lost in jail because of wimmin's vanity. Because Anna whined that she wanted a hat. He'd see to her. Didn't the Bible say that a man should be master of his own household? Just wait until he got home.

It had happened this way.

"Yes, we need money," she had agreed tonelessly, the morning he had hitched up to drive away for harvest wages.

Her once pretty face was drawn. Her skirt sagged in back. She twisted her dirty blue check apron nervously in thin long hands, red and damp from dishwater, with blue veins standing out on them like cords with knots.

She had been one of the Servaas girls of the big farm on the cross-roads before she married him. The Servaas girls were spoiled; always getting things.

Dully she had added, "But 'twill be hard to be left alone with the work. My back aches, and I ain't feeling so well. I don't know as I can care for the stock so very long. The baby might come—"

The early breakfast was finished by the light of the kerosene lamp. The heavy white dishes stood in a group on one side of the brown-checked oilcloth-covered table, a group about his plate. She had not eaten. She had been frying cakes for him. She was standing now by the

old kitchen stove doing things to pots and kettles. He pushed back his chair and took his overcoat from a nail by the kitchen door. Meanwhile he assuaged her worry with an easy carelessness.

"Won't come for a long time yet. You'll be durn lazy with only the stock to look after. It'll be bringing me in real money soon—that stock. Wouldn't take five hundred for it as it stands. And the calves will be worth more later on." He stopped and his large thoughts began to build air-castles about that stock. "Phoo! Sure you can care for the stock."

He eyed her slyly. What did she mean to do with her time when he was gone? "And hev' all the rest of your time for visiting around, I s'pose?" If there was one thing he couldn't stand, it was this wimmin's gadding. He had told her so, too.

"I ain't been visitin' for months and you know it. Not even to mother's, since you quarreled with my only kin—" The thin fingers had twisted the apron into a tighter knot. She leaned back against the door-frame watching him as he checked and untied the horses that he had hitched, waiting, by the unpainted grey board fence. A clammy grey dawn was over all the unkept little farm.

"Uppity kin," he growled. "Whoa there, Jumbo, back up a little! Back, I say! Yes, uppity. Trying to give

you notions. I s'pose Selma Servaas ses' I ain't good enough for you, eh?"

She said nothing. Her sagging outline against the door gave him more visible evidence of the coming of the baby.

"Ain't a wife's place home with her husband, eh? But I ain't stopping you from runnin'. Go 'head."

This was irony.

"I can't leave the house and you know it, without decent clothes. I ain't even got a hat left that I could go to a dog fight in. I'd be ashamed to be seen." She flared with resentment and defiance, her eyes challenging his.

He strode back to her, grabbed her bony arm and swung her around. "That ain't the way to taunt yer provider—But I ain't got time to tend to you now. The horses are waitin'."

But the memory of her sullen defiant eyes as she stood in the door of the unpainted sod-roofed shack, watching him drive away, stayed with him.

After a long day of slow jogging across a limitless prairie stretch broken by checkerboard fields he reached Fargo. But he did not delay there. He drove at once across the river to Moorhead, on the Minnesota side, to have a drink. Fargo, on the Dakota side of the river, had been voted dry by paternally minded city fathers. Moorhead was superlatively wet.

His thirst satisfied, he recrossed and once more rattled down Front

Street, then found a hitching rail and tied his team to it.

Broadway was becoming so crowded with these danged automobiles. He preferred to walk down it. He walked rollingly over the city pavement as if the wavy sod of the prairie were billowing under his feet. It was nearly six o'clock on a Saturday night. The streets and paved walks were crowded with out-of-town shoppers. The stores would be open on Saturday until late.

It was then that he saw the hat in the window. It was the only one there. A background of grey. Some posies in a narrow vase had spilled red petals on the soft grey. And the hat itself was a simple little thing of black and red. A feeling of lordly generosity came over him. Ann should see that he was a good provider. He would buy the hat for her.

"Want that bunnit in the window for my wife," he huskily told the girl in the shop. He sized her up as an awful stylish girl if she hadn't been dressed so plain.

As he stood awkwardly by the door, waiting, he glanced around him. Kinda like a sitting room. Not many hats around either. Selling out, maybe. Or like as not they hadn't the money to stock up the place. Just one little hat in the window. Gosh! That was no way to sell. Likely as not he could get the hat dirt cheap.

The saleswoman also appraised him. But no one can judge a man in Fargo by his outer apparel—especial-

ly if that apparel be the accoutrements of a farmer.

Tipping the hat over in her hands she named the price. "It's an importation from Paris," she murmured. "It was a special order." Her tone bespoke that some sacred thing was near.

The Parisian trademark in the soft silk lining meant nothing to him, but the price staggered him. Fifty dollars for a hat. That little black and red thing no bigger than your fists. He'd be jiggered! He had never known that a hat cost more than four dollars and ninety-eight cents. Anna had pointed to some in the village shop that were marked that much and her eyes were longing. But he had thought five dollars too much for a hat. Anna's had cost—but it was so long since he had bought a hat for Anna that he had forgotten how much it cost. Fifty dollars! His eyes were dismayed.

"Is it this hat you wish?" inquired the salesgirl, turning it reverently about. She didn't expect to sell it to him. He could see that. Maybe she was laffin' at him—inside. She'd say, "A big hick come in—" He gulped and nodded. "Sure—I'll take it."

He carefully went through all his pockets twice for a mislaid check book. "Must hev' forgot it to home." She guided him to a counter check-book. Some preliminary flourishes, a big scrawl and a blot, and then the hat, stowed in a neat round box with

colored pictures on it, was his to carry away.

He carried it down the street, but not very far. He'd been crazy.

Fifty dollars for a hat for a female. It was a crime. It fostered wimmin's vanity. It made them think themselves costly. Now, which of these places would he get the most for it?

He stopped farther up Broadway and Front Street before a brilliantly lighted department store all of four stories high. There was a window full of hats. Directed up an elevator. Almost a floor full of hats. Here he resold the Parisian hat and bought Anna a black sailor with a cabbage rose on it for three dollars.

It had meant thirty days.

And the hat, stowed under the seat of his wagon, was now all that he possessed for his strategy. He had lingered on the streets of Fargo the next two days. The young saleswoman who had looked up his check immediately, had identified him and had him arrested.

Sentenced to thirty days in the county jail. He had checked off the days on the walls of his cell. All that time lost.

Anna's fault: whining and complaining about nothing to wear. Weren't wimmin always saying that anyway? And he, the generous hen-pecked husband, had believed her. When he got home he would reason with her. 'Twas a man's duty toward weak woman.

He jogged over the rutty roads on

the outskirts of Fargo with flat little buildings growing up from flat muddy places.

Thirty days. She had been big with a child. A son, of course. Although he had heard her say that she would like a daughter since she had lost their first, a little girl. But a little shaver, a boy, would be more useful when it came to doing the chores and running errands for his papa.

Thirty days. He wondered about the stock. Something might have happened to the stock without proper care. If Anna got to gadding, for instance. He'd better go home and see to the stock.

Natural for wimmin to have babies, though. She needn't have looked so worried. She wasn't the first woman in creation with a child. Nothing would happen. He wasn't worrit.

But before going home he must have money. It was necessary to keep Anna's respect for him. Life would not be the same—so full of thrills and power—if it were not for her. He dramatized himself before her in a variety of roles. Her part to reflect wonder and amaze and sometimes fear of him. That was why her scornful look had stayed with him. Was he losing his grip on her? Yes, he had to have money. She ought to have come seen him, anyway. The livery man promised he'd tell her. Too stuck up because she was one of the Servaas girls. Only with money in his pocket could he make an effective home-coming

and regain his ascendancy over her.

Before starting home he'd go to Moorhead and get a drink or two. The road home would be long and dusty. Hot fall sunshine spilled from the overflowing bowl of the sky. And a drink or two might start his brains working. "Giddap Jumbo! giddap Stanley!" How the wooden bridge rumbled under their feet!

In Moorhead there were rows on rows of enticing saloons with damp penetrating aromas coming from behind closed doors. At Big Joe's Saloon they served a whooper of a lunch with the drinks. More terrible ruts that shook him into a greater thirst. Then the hitching rail before Big Joe's Saloon.

He slid into the place and took a seat at one of the tables in the rear near some men playing Norwegian whist. He was still afraid that someone might recognize him as the man who had been in jail for buying a hat for his wife—without a bank account. Not that he had given his own name. He was too smart for that. You bet!

Leaning against the bar were a score of thirsty harvesters in old overalls and dusty shirts. But their pocket-books were full. As he watched the glasses of cool liquor slip down their throats a poignant sorrow gripped him. Tears stood in his blue eyes. He wasn't worrit but it was three months.

Presently Red Nels, of freckled features and lurid hair, turned and saw him sitting pensively there. He greeted him loudly "Why, Kettles-

THE FRONTIER

rud, old feller. Why weren't you threshing this year? We missed you on our outfit. Good eats and big wages this year. Yessir. What's the matter, ole man? Sure, yo're lookin' down on the mouth."

Kettlesrud gulped and murmured. It might have been that way. He turned his head away and brushed his sleeve across his eyes.

"Not passed away! Pshaw now, fellers. Will you listen to that! Don't it beat hell? His wife just passed away and left him with a little baby, he sez. He and me threshed on the same outfit last fall. Come and hev a drink, old feller. Best trouble-chaser invented. Don't it beat hell how things happen!"

He walked up to the bar and with his flowing black hair and mild beneficent regard stood looking like a prophet out of the old testament. As the hot liquid flowed down his throat he felt comforted and alight with ideas. Such sympathetic fellers as one found in the old saloons. He amplified the story of Anna's death, added pathetic details, and wiped his eyes surreptitiously. They showed their sympathy by treating. But he told himself not to get soused. There was brain-work to be done. All was not yet accomplished.

So he waved back more glasses with a regretful sad gesture. "No more, fellers. I gotta go and buy her a coffin. Best coffin money can buy. Nothin's too good fer Anna. 'Twas ways was that way with me. Thanks. No more."

They wrung his hand with fellow feeling, murmuring as he strode out, "Pore old feller. Dod blasted shame."

He told the rotund, red-faced undertaker on the Moorhead side of the banks of the Red River. "God be merciful unto me. It is the Lord that gives. And He has taken away. Blessed be His Holy Name. So I try to be submissive to His Will." As he spoke he felt a keen pang of resigned sorrow at poor Anna's fate, a heart-broken regret mitigated only by religious balm.

He explained the need of a coffin for Anna immediately, blinking hard the while, and biting his under lip to keep it in control. "Don't hev' to hev' any certificates or anything, do I? Ain't got 'em with me."

Since Kettlesrud had just allied himself to the big family of Olsens—Valmar-Olsen; and since Old Man Valmar-Olsen owned one of the largest farms in the state, as well as one of the biggest broods of children, the undertaken waived the matter of certificates for the present. He was quite moved by the quiet distress and religious resignation of the man. He showed it in customary fashion. "Come up and have a—" Then he remembered the religious fervour and changed his original plan. "Come up and have a cup of coffee. We live upstairs over the shop, my wife and me. She's always got the coffee pot on. Ya, we're Norske, that way. Come on up. You'll have a long drive across the prairie. No, well good luck—" Then he coughed. He

did not know whether it sounded sympathetic to offer good luck to a recently bereaved husband.

The coffin was loaded on the wagon and Kettlesrud drove across the bridge into North Dakota. Undertakers, he told himself, were harpies preying on the sorrowful. Here he drew out a blue bandana, rather the worse for wear, and wiped his eyes. He was quite justified in getting the better of them. A coffin the better of them. He would sell it and have money to show to Anna.

Another undertaker's shop in Fargo on a side street. The lank Swede owner sprawled across the counter, picked his teeth and listened sympathetically while the long-haired good-looking but simple farmer huskily explained why he was trying to sell a coffin.

"It's been hell. The doctor said that Anna wouldn't live from one day to the next. I had to stop all farm work and care for her. The fields all rotted but Anna was wuth more—"

He paused. He saw himself tenderly caring for a white-faced Anna who lay helpless, dependent upon him. He saw great over-ripe wheat fields spoiling for lack of a harvester. He gained control of himself and continued, quoting a Biblical verse concerning the things that come first.

"I had 'ter morgage the farm to buy this coffin for her. Sent for it to mail-order house. Couldn't tend the fields, couldn't go to town. Only stayed there besides Anna. But she was getting well now. Gaining every

day." He didn't s'pose the mail-order house would take the coffin back. He had kept it too long. He had to sell the coffin, however, to get delicacies for Anna. His name? Olsen. One of the Valmar-Olsens.

Richer by a hundred and fifty dollars he started at sunset across the prairies for home. Peace within and without. One hundred and fifty dollars in a fat wad in his leather wallet.

There was a time for everything. Even for sentiment about posies and sunsets. Anna always stared at both as if they were so much. Well, it was nice, this sunset. Gold spilled over the wide stubble fields, over the red foxtail and prairie grass, over the yellowing leaves of the fringe of trees on his right, where the Red River ran. If only it could be harvested, this wash of gold. And if all the fields whereon it lay, were his.

But soon all the gold faded to a monotone of grey except that there flowed on the horizon a great after-glow: like the lights of a palace seen through smoked glasses. Something beyond? Anna had said so. All wimmin were religious-like.

God and the Bible were worth knowing, though. They had helped him out of many a fix. Hadn't they helped him today—in Moorhead, to get the coffin?

Night came on. The wagon jolted monotonously along in deep sandy ruts. A continuous hummock of grass in the center of the road. At least he wouldn't meet any of these dang automobiles on this road. If

THE FRONTIER

he did he wouldn't turn out for 'em. Let 'em honk and holler.

But say, with money in his pocket. Garn! Someday he might drive up before Anna in one of them contraptions. Then he'd get out and say, "That's the kind of man you married. The man that Selma Servaas says ain't good enough for you."

Jolted deeper into the ruts; blanketed deeper in a chilly greyness. What was beyond the greyness? He had seen headlines in the newspapers about bandits. He began intoning a hymn:

*"Shall we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high—"*

Ah, that willow hedge showed that he was nearing the cross-roads. Nearing home. How he would flourish the money before Anna! And tell tales of the discomforts of threshing. Sleeping in the hay in barns. Getting up at clammy dawn to the shrieks of the discordant threshing engines. It had been dang cold and uncomfortable. Meanwhile she had been snug at home doing nothing except care for the stock.

Or perhaps she had been gadding again. Running over to the Servaas Place and listening to those wimmin's tongues clacking against him. He had never been an unreasonable husband in his demands; never beat her up unless he was drunk. Yet she would not respect a simple little request of not to gad.

His muscles grew more cramped, and the chill more penetrating. The horse blankets that he had wrapped

about his legs weren't enough to keep him warm. He had to descend from the wagon and walk along beside it, beating his arms over his chest.

All the more vividly he painted his meeting with Anna. She'd have to get up. He'd see that she got out of her warm bed to welcome her lawful husband. He'd see that she listened to him while he talked and that her eyes stopped defying him.

Yes, there it was finally. The Servaas farm and the cross-roads. Anna's old home; a big, square white farmhouse with all modern improvements; great barns in the back-ground, and a thriving grove about all. Anna's people; a stiff-necked generation of vipers. Said he wasn't good enough for her, eh?

There was already light in the Servaas kitchen although it was only half-past three.

He jogged on the few separating miles between the Servaas Place and his eighty. Father Servaas had given it to him as a wedding present. Enoch had expected at least a quarter section.

By the bleak light of the late moon his unpainted sod-roofed shack looked tenantless and starved. The gates to the grass-grown driveway swung open on sagging hinges. The pasture bars were down. The little trees that Anna had induced him to plant the first year after marriage, stripped of their leaves, looked like a grotesque row of broomsticks. Beyond was the barn—and the barn doors yawned wide.

There came a hunch that Anna had been careless about closing up the stock. He retrieved a lantern hanging from the kitchen porch and strode with stiff legs toward the swinging barn door. He stumbled against a rusty scythe hidden among the tall brown rustling weeds. Hell! Anna ought to pick up a thing or two.

In the barn he looked about him with growing anger, the hot waves mounting to his brain. Anna had not taken in the cattle. And the bars to the pasture had been down, so of course they had wandered a-far. Wandered, and were now bloating up through over-eating in some wheat-field. It was time he came home and tended to things.

He made his way to the house, and stamped into the kitchen with ominous loudness. He lighted the pressed-glass oil lamp that swung from a bracket over the kitchen table. By its flickering yellow light he noted that the kitchen was dirty and uninviting.

"Anna. Anna. I want that you should get up," he ordered. He'd settle with her. "What you done to the stock?"

There was no reply, so he tramped to the little bedroom, the lamp held high in his hand. "Anna," he ordered roughly again. "You get up."

An empty bed. No Anna.

She had gone to her mother's, of course. Gadding again, just as he had supposed. Listening to Selma Servaas say things against him. A

heavy anger settled down upon him. He wasn't an unreasonable husband, as he had often told her. But a woman's place was in the house to welcome her husband instead of gadding about the neighborhood listening to gossip about him. He strode out into the yard and picked up the reins with hands that trembled.

"Giddap, you Jumbo. Giddap, Stanley." He jerked at the reins until the horses reared backward, settled down on four feet and began a startled gallop.

Without knocking he tramped into the Servaas kitchen. "Selma Servaas. I want to know what you done to my wife. I won't have her gadding about here."

Selma was at the table gathering up the breakfast dishes. At his question she dropped the pile of plates that she had in her hands. They crashed to the floor and were broken into slivers. She stood staring at the plates with such a woe-begone expression that Enoch laughed at her. She was so careful of her things. A thrifty housewife. Garn, but her look was funny! He rocked with mirth.

She turned on him. "Laugh, will you! You—you—prairie actor. Ha, Ha! Funny, ain't it? Funny life for all us North Dakota farm women. Ha, ha!" Then she turned her back to him.

"I want to know where my wife is," he shouted, his teeth clicking tight on his laughter. "Here I come

home after working hard all fall and find her gadding about. Where is she, I say? She's my wife."

Selma Servaas took her time stacking the remainder of the dishes in the big granite-iron dishpan. Then wiping her hands on the roller towel by the sink she wheeled about and faced him, replying deliberately slow:

"Anna is dead—in child-birth. Both her and the child are dead. She was alone. No one to take care of her. Your stock? They took it to pay for the coffin."

Enoch didn't speak. He just looked at her, tears welling out of his eyes. Then he said stupidly, "I—I had a coffin."

Sailor Bill

By Courtland W. Matthews

Who was coming to camp from the mail-boat,
Limping along the track
Between the moss-hung spruce-trees,
Bent with a bulging pack?
A big man wearing a peg-leg. . . .
He knocked at the boss's shack.

His blue eyes lit wild flashes,
His cheeks were plump and red,
His mustache drooped like a pirate's,
A white thatch covered his head.
"I hear ye've lost yer bull-cook.
Wi' ye gie me a chance?" he said.

He wouldn't tell what his name was
(Not a logger knows it still)
But because of a song he brought to camp
We called him "Sailor Bill."

Making beds in the bunk-house,
Hobbling up to the spring,
Splitting wood by the cook-house,
Hour after hour he'd sing:

"Oh, my Mary's waitin' for me where the rose blumes by the door
O' that peacefu' auld gray cottage on the hill;
She's lookin' 'crost the little bay, a-watchin' evermair
For the ship that took awa her Sailor Bill.

"I stole a tear-drop wi' a kiss, an' left my Mary there,
 A-standin' by the rose sae silent-*lee*;
 An' the bonniest lass in foreign ports can never half com-*pare*
 Wi' the lass wha waits for me beside the sea."

He'd always pause in the singing;
 Then, out of his drum-like chest
 Would burst in a sudden swelling strain
 The verse he sang the best:

"Oh, it's lanesome on the ocean when the waves is tossin' high,
 An' it's lanesome in the house upon the hill;
 But I know my Mary's waitin', an' she knows that by and *by*
 The wind'll blaw her back her Sailor Bill."

But Sailor Bill has left us,
 And Mary—where is she?
 Still watching from the doorway?
 Still waiting faithfully?

Yet, sitting outside the bunk-house,
 Smoking in nights of June,
 When the dark spruce woods are windless
 And the track lies white in the moon,
 We fancy we hear—faint floating—
 Sung to a well-known tune:

"Oh, it's lanesome on the ocean when the waves is tossin' high,
 An' it's lanesome in the house upon the hill;
 But I know my Mary's waitin', an' she knows that by and *by*
 The wind'll blaw her back her Sailor Bill."

Aberdeen, Washington

By Ernest Erkill

The night sky is red with blowing stars
 From the grinding mills on the river.
 The black river flows with the flowing stars
 And the seven of the Dipper quiver.

Two Errands

By Jay G. Sigmund

THE office of the lawyer was in a dingy room over the only drug store in the little Wapipinicon town of Ontarns, and George Mulroy, the lawyer, was glad he had chosen this room in which to locate with his dusty law books and his desk, after he had been defeated in his last race for county attorney. The reason George was glad for his choice was the creaking stairs that always gave him a warning when a client came up them, and if he was dozing, as he often was on summer afternoons, the noise would rouse him and give him time to begin fumbling with the papers on his desk before the door of his office swung open.

Since old Dr. Andrews had rented the long disused office across the hall, George had found himself often given a false alarm, for the old doctor had about twice as many callers as the lawyer, and many times the footsteps coming up the worn wooden stairs turned to the doctor's office when they reached the top. But George Mulroy had learned that, after foot-falls came to the last step, there was still time for him to take his feet off his desk and be busily engaged when the door opened, so of late he had got into the habit of merely opening his eyes and waiting until the sound told him whether the caller was in need of medicine or legal services.

But this morning the first slowly measured, light footsteps of two wom-

en had come directly to George's office door. The lawyer had just arrived at his office and was opening the solitary piece of advertising matter which was his mail, when the door opened, at first only wide enough to let the thin, pale face of Adelaide Norton peep in, and then wide enough to admit the frail spinster and her gray-haired, bent old mother.

"Good morning, Mrs. Norton! Good morning, Adelaide," called George Mulroy heartily, as he arose, pulled down his too short vest and pushed a stack of calendars off a dusty rocking chair.

"Here, sit down, take this rocker, Mrs. Norton. It's great growing weather, isn't it? Here, Adelaide," motioning to a stiff-looking old chair and at the same time pushing it toward the young woman with the toe of his dusty shoe.

Adelaide sat down timidly, twisting her handkerchief between her thin fingers. The older woman sat down in the creaking rocker and brushed the dust from her worn black dress with a nervous gesture.

"What can I do for you?" asked the lawyer in a business-like tone as soon as the women were settled.

The thin spinster glanced toward the old woman beside her, who was now tapping her soft leather shoe on the bare, splintery floor. The daughter moistened her lips and brushed back a strand of grayish hair.

"We come in on two errands," she answered in her colorless voice. "First, we want to have you make a will for Ma. You know, Pa didn't have any will and if the boys hadn't signed off, Ma wouldn't have had the use of the farm. Pa died twenty years ago and Ralph and Joe have both died since. Now, Ma feels that as long as I've lived with her and took care of her, I should have the farm and what little else she's got. Ma's eighty-four, you know, and of course she realizes she can't live much longer. Oh no," added Adelaide, seeing the lawyer's glances toward her mother, "she don't hear me when I don't talk any louder than this. Well, she realizes the danger of droppin' off any time, at her age. She's got two sisters in Pennsylvania. Them's the only relatives she's got besides me. But of course it's only right that the property should all go to me. I'm only fifty-five and if Ma passes on, it'd be real hard for me. Of course, after Ma's gone, I'll leave everything to the two aunts in Pennsylvania when I go, but I've talked all this over with Ma and we've agreed this is the best. She's kept puttin' it off and every time I'd mention it, she'd cry at first, but I've just brought it up again and again for I don't think things like that should be let go, do you?"

"Certainly not," answered the lawyer, "things of that kind should be taken care of while the principals are all alive."

"Well," went on Adelaide, "I

don't suppose I'd ever have got her started if I hadn't got to feelin' kind of bad. I ain't been very well since I had the flu last winter. Here lately I've been just miserable and Ma's been wantin' me to come in to see Doc Andrews. So last night I said: 'I'll tell you what we'll do, Ma, we'll go to Ontarns tomorrow and I'll see the doctor and then we'll get that paper fixed out at the lawyer's. We'll attend to both things on the same trip; kind of make two errands in one.' Kill two birds with one stone, as the sayin' is." Adelaide laughed nervously as she finished.

"Well, you're quite right, Adelaide. Such things shouldn't be postponed too long," said the lawyer in a low tone and with a lift of his eyebrows. "Your father was the kind of a man that always let everything go that way. He ought to had a will. It's just a piece of chance that your mother has the farm. But we'll fix out everything. It'll only take a few minutes. Have your mother move over here to the desk."

Adelaide shouted in her high-pitched voice to her mother and the old lady seemed to arouse from a deep reverie. Her pale blue eyes looked from the lawyer to the daughter as she tottered over to the desk. The lawyer had spread a document before him and was already writing.

"I'm leavin' it all to Adelaide," squeaked the old woman in the peculiar tones of the half-deaf.

"Yes, I understand, Mrs. Norton," said the lawyer in a booming voice,

scarcely glancing up from the paper

"I'll go first and it won't be long," continued the old woman, as she dabbed at one of her eyes with a crumpled handkerchief.

"There now, Ma," said Adelaide nervously, "just you answer all of Mr. Mulroy's questions."

"Adelaide, go across the hall and call in Dr. Andrews as a witness, will you?" said the lawyer, "I'll be ready for him by the time you get him in."

The spinster disappeared and George Mulroy kept on writing.

"Where'd Adelaide go?" asked the old woman, anxiously.

The lawyer explained, as he continued with his work.

"I kinda wanted my two sisters in Pennsylvania to have a little somethin'," said the old woman in a low tone.

The room was silent but for the soft tap of Mrs. Norton's shoe on the pine floor and the scratching of the lawyer's pen.

"But Adelaide thought it would be better this way," she continued. "Adelaide ain't well just now but she's got lots longer to live than my sisters have. I guess this is the best way. Adelaide says that she'll make a will after I'm gone and will everything to them. They're the only kin we've got left. I kinda wanted to leave them something now, just so it'd be comin' straight from me, but Adelaide thought this way would be better."

The door opened and Adelaide came in with red-faced old Dr. An-

draws following; his glasses were balanced perilously on the bridge of his nose and his breath came in jerky gasps, which told of the approaching hay fever season.

"We wanted you to witness Mrs. Norton's signature to her will," said the lawyer brusquely.

"All right," panted the old doctor, and as soon as Mrs. Norton had laboriously scrawled her name to the document on the lawyer's desk, the physician seated himself and signed his name with a flourish.

As the lawyer was affixing a seal, the doctor was talking to Adelaide:

"You say you're not feeling well? Well you come in and let me see you, while your mother waits here. It won't take long."

"I'm goin' in to talk with the doctor, Ma," shouted Adelaide to her mother.

The old woman nodded and settled back in her rocking-chair and began staring at a knot in the floor. The soft tap of her shoe marked off the seconds as accurately as did the little clock, ticking on the lawyer's desk.

George Mulroy busied himself by putting the finishing touches on the document before him. Sometimes he paused and pulled his scraggly mustache and chewed the long-cold stump of cigar which was tightly held between his discolored teeth.

The door opened again. Adelaide stood on the sill. The red roses on her cheap hat seemed to droop, as if from some strange blight.

"I've got some shoppin' to do,"

she said. "I guess I'll just leave mother here until I get back. I've got to come back up to the doctor's office in a little while to get some medicine and he's—he's makin' a test," she added, blushing.

The spinster crossed over to her mother and shouted in the old woman's ear:

"You stay here, Ma. I'll be back in a few minutes. I've got to come back and see the doctor again."

Her mother nodded.

"Here, Adelaide," said the lawyer, "better take your mother's will down to the bank and put it in your box. It's a valuable document."

"Oh yes, Mr. Mulroy, and how much for your trouble?" asked the spinster with a note of caution in her voice.

"Oh, two dollars," replied the lawyer nonchalantly.

He pocketed the money which the spinster fished out of her worn purse.

Adelaide was only gone a few minutes, and the lawyer was attempting to converse with the old lady about crops and weather, when the doctor came in.

Dr. Andrews walked over to the gray-haired woman and shouted wheezily:

"Give this medicine to Adelaide. The directions are on the bottle. Here's a card with a list of the things she mustn't eat and a list of things she *can* eat. Tell her to take the medicine regular. She's run down pretty bad. Tell her to come in again

in a week. I'll have to see her then."

The old woman took the package and card in her shriveled hands and nodded. It was rather hard to tell from the expressionless face which she turned to the doctor, whether she understood what he was saying.

As the doctor passed by the lawyer's desk, he pointed toward the door and winked one eye. The lawyer picked up his broom and pretended to be sweeping dust and cigar stubs from the room into the hallway. Following the litter, which rolled ahead of his broom, he passed out the door into the hall, where he found the doctor waiting for him.

Dr. Andrews asked in a low tone:

"Who'd the old lady leave her farm to?"

"To Adelaide," answered the lawyer.

"Adelaide'll be dead first. She won't live a year. She's got Bright's."

"You don't say so!" gasped the lawyer.

"Yes. The old man had it, too. Both of the boys died with it. There's no use worryin' the old lady though. Maybe I'll tell Adelaide when she comes in the next time, but no use worryin' her today. Maybe I'll never tell her, and the old woman shouldn't know at all, that's sure. Adelaide will be satisfied just to get some medicine. She won't ask questions. I guess she mistrusts what's wrong with her, though. I thought I'd better tell you how the land laid, so if you wanted to make any changes in the will on account of it, you could do it now.

THE FRONTIER

You may never get 'em in your office again."

"No, there's nothing to change. It's all left to Adelaide and they've got no other relatives, but the old lady's two sisters in Pennsylvania, so if Adelaide goes first that will take care of itself. The old lady sort of wanted to leave her two sisters something anyway, I guess."

The lawyer's voice droned out the words, as he broke a straw from his broom and began to pick his teeth.

The doctor closed his office door behind him.

As George Mulroy turned to go into his own office, he saw the red roses on Adelaide's hat, as she started up the stairway.

Farm Woman

By Lucia Trent

It was a night like this he went to town
When she had hurled her words against his heels
Like sharpened stones and smashed the window down
And gone on giving boarding-folk their meals.

Now this chill evening brings a cruel load.
It grips the twitching muscles of her throat.
Oh, but to see him trudging up the road
And feel the dusty roughness of his coat!

Retail Market

By Benjamin Musser

Each laden with her marketing and scandal,
They held the center of the crowded walk;
Our reputation wasn't worth a candle
When filtered through their confidential talk.
The daylight died while they were still dissecting
The morals of a future generation;
Under the stars their tongues were still collecting
Decadent remnants of a fallen nation. . . .

While in gigantic arc across the sky
A million planets laughed and hurried by.

Mesdames Judas

By Ralph Cheyney

Two gracious ladies sipping tea,
Demure and dapper as can be,
Fingering china daintily.

They poise "Do tell!"s and "Have you heard?"s,
Mix salted nuts with peppered words,
Turn human kindness' milk to curds.

They sneer, "that woman", spit the "that".
Perched snug upon Mt. Ararat,
They view the drowning with "eclat".

Don't blame my French! That's how they spoke,
Whose unloved husband died a joke
And she whose mainstay found the yoke

Of married life a hard, cold chain.
A dog-in-manger wife? Refrain
Lest you should cause unwonted pain

To gracious ladies sipping tea,
Demure and dapper as can be,
Fingering china daintily.

Desolate

By Elsa Elene Swartz

A sweep of wind,
A heavy dash of rain;—

Is it your hand that knocks on the lattice,
Or is it the rose bush against the pane?

Torn stabs of light,
And the dark skies flare;—

Is your spirit abroad in search of my own,
Or is it birds' wings I hear in the air?

A step like an echo
On the flags outside;—

I know it is yours! You are not dead—
You are coming to me! I fling the door wide. .

But the dusk outside
Hangs vacant and damp;

And the gusts of wind that sweep through the room
Snuff out the pale flickerings of my lamp!

The Old-Fashioned Land - Eastern Oregon

By H. L. Davis

I.

IT WAS gripping cold, with half-frozen rain spitting out of a 50-mile wind from the West. The old, old Lombard poplars over Antelope yanked and tugged at their heavy roots like hawks picketed by the leg. All the doors were shut tight, and all the windows were blank as damnation. The black, opaque panes of glass bent when the wind struck them. Cold. The motor car spit and gagged, belching raw gasoline, as I drove North toward Shaniko.

For once I wasn't sorry to be departing. Antelope in mid-May is no place for the return of a native. Visitors are welcome enough, but what to do with them? There is no hotel, no place, even, where one can wash or brush one's hair. When the weather is fine, guests sit on the board sidewalk out of doors. But mid-May, in those altitudes, is Eskimo's weather. Seldom does the frost let up until Memorial Day. And the people are all gone, cowpunching or working with the sheep-shearers. Antelope, in this season, is only for the people who live there. Later, of course, you'd be sure to like it and feel at home.

There were several herds of sheep nipping at the shoots of grass beside the road. One, which had been sheared, looked as if it had been kicked out of doors with nothing on but its underwear. Power-clippers

leave shorn sheep with a ribbed, balbriggan kind of appearance, which adds to their chronic expression of patient discomfort. They nosed about the new, blue-green sagebrush, uncovering jackrabbits and acting as if they had mislaid something, and didn't care specially whether they found it or not. The sheep-herder rose from between his two dogs, and saluted punctiliously. He was a short, stocky man with a dark, greasy face and enormously long arms. Good for that and nothing else, probably. Odd it should be so. A good sheep-herder is seldom any good for anything else. Most of them don't even bother to read newspapers. The nearest approach to Vergil's conception of the trade was a little, falsetto-voiced runt I met once in the Blue Mountains, who lent me his library. It was the complete works of Zane Grey. And he wasn't a good sheep-herder, either. His flock was always counting in about thirty or forty short. Vergil's shepherds may not have had more than that many woolies to bother with, all told. An Eastern Oregon sheep-herder has charge of 1000 head, often more. No wonder he can't find time to cut pastorals on the bark of trees. If there were any trees to cut them on.

That herd, and another, and still another, I passed; and then a herd of young steers in the road. They paid me no attention at all. The wind

whooped and whanged and drubbed their dripping sides with rain. The two punchers looked at me wistfully, saluted, and let their hat-brims blow down on their noses again. Taking beef to the railroad, to ship to market. *O, you'll be steaks for real-estate agents!* Indians raise their own beef nowadays, or else steal it. The two punchers, I thought, probably hated me, racketing around in an automobile while they had to pound leather in the rain and get their feet cold. One of them cantered close, leaned over, and yelled into my ear.

"They's a-goin' to be a big dance in Shaniko tonight!" he shrieked. "Better fix things so'st you can stay over!"

He dropped back to the tail of the herd again, and I went gouging on through it. That was the old-fashioned heartiness, I thought. They don't do those things anywhere else in the world, now. Elsewhere, when there's a good time, the instinct is to keep everybody else out of it. If it isn't exclusive, it's no good. Here, they want everybody in on things.

I nosed out around the herd-leaders, just as I was beginning to think I would be nudging steers out of the way till I died, and, with a straight road before me, I heeled down the gas. This was Shaniko Flat. The high country. When the clouds tore loose from the black Cascade Mountains, one could see all the snow-peaks in the West, from Mount Shasta to Mount Rainier. Pinnacles of snow and cliffs of ice. No wonder the

wind was so consarned cold, tearing right off their laps. I rode here for the Rooper Ranch, when I was a kid. Poetry didn't bother me then. I thought, then, that poetry must be a recourse which youths adopted when they found they couldn't learn to roll cigarettes. On some of them, I may not have missed it so far, after all. All this level prairie to run a horse on, tagging down the black, curly-haired Galloway cattle, which, the old ranch-boss insisted, were the only breed worth having. They could run like wolves. All the cattle now are red—white-faced Herefords, by the look. But the country is the same, the dear God knows. Even the trail we used to ride to town over. All this. Bless their pelts, they've had sense enough to let things alone!

A Ford, going toward Antelope, passed me, and a head came out to look after me. I could see, in the rear-view mirror, that the Ford had stopped, and was turning around. Here it came, hellity-larrup. A posse? I slowed up and waited for it. Three youths in Stetson hats grinned at me and said hello.

"We took a notion to see who you was," they explained. "Hadn't heerd you was in the country this early. Know about the dance in Shaniko tonight? Goin', huh? Look us up, huh?"

They spun the Ford on its heels, and dived south for Antelope. I had never seen them before in my life. That made no difference. People are not so plentiful, in that country, that

THE FRONTIER

it has become an irksome job to keep track of them. Where men are a novelty, much human nastiness and dullness disappears. The humanity remains; and that, even the ghastliest patterer that ever walloped a mahogany desk possesses, if one can but get it out of him. One can, in a lonely country.

There were such a God's plenty of lonely countries, only a little while ago. Now there are few upon the face of the earth, it seems. Eastern Oregon is still one of them. It is an old-fashioned land, and its people are the almost obsolete pattern in which I, too, was moulded, whether I like it or not. But I do.

II.

ONE or two little things have changed oddly. I rode to a little creek where, in the late spring, there used to be holes full of trout. When I was a youngster, I found the place unexpectedly, and fished with tackle extemporized from a willow switch, a bent pin, a hank of harness-thread, and willow catkins for bait. If I put down the number of trout which I caught on that rig in one forenoon, my name for truth and veracity wouldn't hold shucks a single minute. But, when I revisited the place, there was no creek there. Only the watercourse, with a faint trickle, in which a trout couldn't swim, even if he wanted to. I mentioned the circumstance to an old cattleman. Apparently it failed to surprise him.

"I hadn't heard," he said, reflectively. "I'd kind of wondered which way that Kentucky outfit had set up their rig. Over on Boot Creek, eh? They move around so fast a man can't keep track of 'em at all any more."

"But they don't drink a whole creek dry?"

"Not exactly. As a matter of fact, they most likely don't ever drink out of it, at all. But it ain't what they drink. It's what other people drink. Creek water appears to figure as one of the principal ingredients, by what they tell me."

I began to see. "Are there very many of them doing this around here?"

"Several. Quite several, I imagine. There's a moderately steady call for them products, right along. All the big ranches are steady customers. They keep right busy, I guess."

"And make money?"

"Money! They're gettin' rich! Do you remember these old wire-whiskered homesteaders that used to come to town drivin' a hog to swap for coffee and chewin'-tobacco? You ought to see one of them personages hit the place now. Cadillac automobiles is only the start. Money? Powers on high, they're the only people in the country that *are* makin' any money!"

"But the saloons didn't use to get rich?"

"No. And they don't now. But somebody got rich then—the distilleries, maybe—and you leave it to

these jaspers to collect their cut now. Man, if there was an election on prohibition in this country today, the whole sagebrush range would vote dry three to one. Or more. Homesteaders are runnin' automobiles here, that, in the old days, couldn't afford flour to make bread. I can remember 'em diggin' camas with the Indians."

"So can I."

"You've seen something you'll never see again, then. Them people are makin' more cash in a month, some of 'em, than they used to see in all their lives. Mind you, cash. Do you think they'd want to go back to the old times, when they'd have to steal a steer to buy clothes to cover their nakedness?"

"How about the ranches themselves?"

"Well, it's a funny thing. Most of 'em are perfectly satisfied with things as they are. Saloons was all right for their business, but this new system is all right, too. There's a sheep-ranch out there on the river that offers bonuses of whiskey to their crew for good work. When lambin'-time come, they offered a premium of five gallons of whiskey for every per cent. they lambed over one hundred. That is, if every ewe had twins, the crew got five hundred gallons of firewater. The way it worked out, they lambed a hundred and twenty per cent., I heard. That was a hundred gallons the men got. It makes good work. They work

harder for that than they would for the same amount in cash. I don't know why, but they do."

"But all the ranches don't?"

"Oh, no. But even the ranches where liquor ain't allowed at all—there's a lot of 'em, too—claim that moonshinin' keeps the homesteaders out of mischief. In the old days, when a homesteader got hard up, he'd go out and steal a steer, or a couple of head of sheep. More, maybe. Now he merely builds a fire under the kettle, and watches the nickels drip out. And, in the old days, the industrious homesteaders went out for more land. They'd crowd some of the stock-ranches hard, I tell you. A good, hard-workin' man could spread himself out over a couple of thousand acres before you knew he was there. Nowadays they don't bother. Makes easier neighbors."

"It seems quieter than it used to be."

"It is quieter. Towns don't mean anything any more. A bunch of cow-hands can load up and run down to Portland over the week-end now, with no more trouble than it used to be to ride into Antelope. The only thing that has saved Antelope at all, is the fact that it's in a kind of backwater. No main highways within reach of it. Where there's a paved highway, a small town ain't any more use now than a buggy-whip. Why stop there and spend your money, when you can travel two hours more and blow it in a big city? Little

THE FRONTIER

towns are cavin' in all over this country. Except out here."

He looked his town over, and his face had an expression such as Curtius must have worn when he looked upon Rome.

"We let things alone in this country," he said. "And we make other people let 'em alone, too. Antelope is goin' to stay the way it is. Right here. We're goin' to see that it does."

"May the Lord strengthen you," I said, or something pious and fervent of that kind. "I hope you keep it."

"Don't you effuse no perspiration about that," he assured me. "We'll keep it, all right!"

And that is a country I can love without being shamefaced about it, and without having to explain that, twenty years ago, it was a decenter object for one's affections. For, though twenty years have gouged dents in it here and there, they were wounds which healed quickly, so that now you could scarcely tell where they had ever been. Except the few creeks, excusably dry, all is the same. Old buildings fall; old fields grow over with crimson-seeded tickle-grass; old orchards, dying, squeeze out a sprinkling of blossoms, dazzling white, and more splendid because they are so few and so hardly given. The spring is a spectacle of great lines of horizon shaking and breaking lines and images in the wind, ridden over by blue-black cloud-shadows two hundred miles long; but, underneath

this immensity is all delicate flowers. Rock roses, that bloom where nothing else will grow, intricate petal-patterns of red and pink and pure white; foxgloves, great, uncanny blue pastures of them; wild anemones; wild hollyhocks; grass-flowers and lupin and wild sunflowers; blue flowers shaped like snapdragons, but scented; wild snapdragons themselves, yellow and black-spotted at the throat, or deep red; blue camas lilies and blue and white wild iris. And bird-bills and buttercups and yellow-bells, and flowers I couldn't guess the names of to save my life, or even tell whether they had any.

This is the same, and it is all the same, after tribulation.

III.

FOR tribulation the country has had, and, more than once, it has been a tossup whether it would live through it all or not. Most of it came, it is true, from outside. The United States General Land Office would, it seemed for a while, never run out of dirty tricks to spring. Its last one was almost a finisher. Many of the ranches actually did go under. But, for the ones that were able to stand up to the punishment, things have become easier. And securer, for now, so far as any human foresight can predict, they have done the last damage they can.

It was not through malevolence, but through ignorant charity, that the Land Office handed them its succession of body-punches. By 1910, about, the last acre of sagebrush from

which it was possible to live by farming was in private ownership. The thing had worked out to a problem in simple mathematics. You could homestead 160 acres, worth so much. To get it, you had to live on it five years. If its value amounted to wages for that length of time, it was worth taking. If it wasn't, why not do something else?

So, until about 1912, things traveled along as pretty as could be. And the Land Office got charitable, and spoiled it all. Since no more homesteads were being taken, and since the reason appeared to be that it was impossible to live upon any tract of the legal area, they would jack the limit. A homesteader would be allowed, not 160 acres, but 320; a whole, big half-section, all for his very own.

It caught a lot of them. If one employs judgment in selecting his location, he can make a stock-ranch a lot of trouble with 320 acres; and these boys were overlooking nothing. The sheepmen and cattlemen were in a place where they had to come through or quit. It was not a question of whether they wanted to buy land or not. It was whether they could buy it; and, if they couldn't, they need only get ready to kiss themselves good-bye. Many of them did so kiss themselves; but the thing had scarcely got beyond a preparation for a coming crisis, when another calamity busted. This time, it was a real one. A benevolent Government, viewing with concern the thirst of its

citizens for marketable chunks of the public domain, announced that, beginning with 1917, homesteads in the stock country might be filed upon to the aggregate of 640 acres per man. Worse, they ruled that those who had already homesteaded smaller areas might extend their filings to cover the newly ordained acreage; and the jam was on.

I had, at the time, just been deprived of a job; and making out entry papers for homesteaders at The Dalles Land Office filled in the hiatus elegantly and profitably. I soaked them \$5 apiece. There was scarcely a day that my takings didn't run \$100, clear; and there were many days that it ran more. It was not until after the dust had rolled away that I was able to evaluate what I had been helping to do. The range was gone. It was swamped, wrecked, busted, overwhelmed and eternally slowied. The stock-ranches viewed the thing, at first, with resignation; then with doubt; and, in the end, with terror. It was no longer a question of doing away with inconvenient neighbors. The problem was, to stay alive. Only one way was possible. Man by man, they unfurled the old money-sock, and started out to buy land. Even in this, many of them failed to survive, for, bidding against each other, as most of them had to, they formed the habit of paying from two to three times what the places were worth. Dollar and a half range sold, in those times, for as high as \$8 and \$10 per acre. They paid it, be-

cause there was nothing else to do. There was not even the alternative of allowing one's stock to starve to death, for, with the reformed times, such a trick would easily land a man in jail. It was not surprising that so many ranches went broke. The surprising thing was that such a number of them did manage to keep on top.

That, too, is done for now. The sagebrush is littered with old boards, here and there, where the entrants lived while they dickered for the sale of their land. There are some fences where, in the old days, there were none. The homesteaders have got their money, and it is all spent, exactly as it would have been if they had worked for it. The ranchers have spent, on an average, \$100,000 apiece for land which they enjoyed the free and unrestricted use of before they bought it. The Government has transferred all its holdings to private ownership, and owns nothing where it once owned everything. Everybody lost on the deal, and nobody won. Even the homesteaders themselves did not; for, in the time they spent proving up, they could have earned twice as much at honest work.

Yet, where one would expect resentment and ill-feeling, there is none. My people have back their country. It is no better than it was when they first found it; but, what is a great mercy, it is very little worse. Few people live in it; but the ones to whom it truly belongs, who grew up with it and learned its greatness and independence and forbidding splendor, think of it as home, even in its great loneliness.

I myself do. Fancies come to me, of this kind or that, wherever I am—scenes where I imagine myself to be, or adventures which I cast myself into; or some deep sorrow, like imagining that a beloved friend has died. For the adventures, I can dream myself into almost any quarter of the earth; but, for the profounder incidents, this is the country where I must take them to examine them with any truth or exactness. It is my element, which I look to because I must. The people there are my people, and the life my life, as they were when I rode across Shaniko Flat under all the snow-peaks, and wondered whether men didn't become poets to console themselves for being unable to learn cigarette-rolling.

A Rare Spirit

By Dorothy Gill

Thou art
As a crystal-winged creature
Slender, quivering, iridescent,
Caught in a web
Spun intricately,
Designed for flies.

Ice Storm

By Eda Lou Walton

The forest had been almost green then
 and the cold
 driven far backward, so that a tale was told
 how love had come again upon the earth
 with the star-driven rain and the quiet birth
 of grass.

And there were two again who came to pass
 hand within hand down the far forest path,
 two slender lovers went by wandering
 into another spring.

The forest had been almost green then,
 but a wind
 blew from the north, blew rain, blew winter wind
 back and a great cold, greater than the thinned
 anger of late December, hurled its panic down,
 gripped the great forest, held it in a vise,
 and the sun rose up upon a world of ice!

Great, glittering candelabras, iridescent
 the trees with all their jewels bent and broken,
 bushes of clustered stars, and feathered
 and shuddering little bars of grass, and shimmering
 soft heathered hills beneath the light,
 and sounds like many breaking rivers in the night
 over the pines and in the crystal heaven.

Where were the lovers, then, where in the ice-forest
 wandered these two who turned toward spring too soon?
 Under what lens of the reflecting moon
 lay the white bodies loving under glass,
 defiant in their passion to the last?
 Lingering together here, and frozen fast
 the bright dark hair and the defending arm;
 never to lift again beneath the charm
 of the sun's kiss, this breast fast to his breast.
 Here let them lie forever, here forever rest
 having so beautifully and so early come to die.

When the white forest blurs again to rain
they will rest lightly under the leafing,
under the flowering they will remain
bound so together until the dust
be drunk with pollen, and most ghostly back
into the golden dust they drift and nothing lack.

Ocean and Bay

By Lori Petri

The ocean is a huge, majestic mother,
In flowing robes of green and silver dressed.
Long breakers rise and fall on one another
To mark the rhythmic breathing of her breast.
Beneath her miles of water, large and lonely,
Where vessels ply in scattered questing, broods
A deep, maternal spirit, troubled only
By ruffling surface whims and passing moods.
Altho she storms in fitful, foaming fashion
When scourged by armies of the air above,
Austerity and beauty mark her passion,
And fury soon subsides to peace and love.

The bay clings to the garments of the ocean—
One of her many clamorous, small boys.
He scrambles shoreward with a boisterous motion,
And cherishes a hundred noisy toys.
He likes to listen to the whine and whirring
Of airplanes weaving patterns in the sky,
And revels in the busy puff and purring
Of countless little craft that hurry by.
A horde of hungry gulls is in his keeping,
And follows him with eager, screaming flight.
A ring of twinkling lights surround his sleeping—
And tolling bell-buoys lull him through the night.

Up Huckleberry

To E. A.

By Ethel Romig Fuller

To climb Huckleberry is to mount a green tower.

The trail spirals up tortuously from stratum to stratum; from loveliness to greater loveliness.

It starts at the black pool. It leaps up the mountain from the log over the black pool.

Always hold your shadow by the hand when you cross black water. A shadow loves to lie face up in black water; to feel the play of fishes on throat and cheek; to savor the pungency of drowned leaves.

The sun is climbing. Come—

Keep step with the swordferns marching up the slopes, rank on orderly rank; with the columbine hussies in their bright shawls; with the blue-hooded iris . . .

Crested quail fife. A grouse drums.

Left, right. Left, right . . .

Another spiral—another—

Then, at either side, space. Hushed space, and alders crooning to the sky . . .

Mountain alders rocking the sky to sleep in their arms.

Now in truth we are going up. Dig your toes in. Breathe deeply—

The trail is a cobweb swinging in the wind.

Above and above, height. Below, a canyon.

Strange, to look down on tree tops.

Listen! In the far depths, a river pulses . . .

The breath of a canyon is ineffably sweet . . .

Climb. Pull yourself up by earth's old ribs.

Ah, a new level won. New beauty . . .

Squaw grass like plumes in a thousand casques; manzanita; rhododendrons,—

Rhododendrons are virgins, gaunt flat-breasted virgins, who yet bring forth each spring a Mary-miracle of blooms; progeny as frailly, coolly pink as dawn on new snow; little naked bodies that float in the green night of the forest as mysteriously as sea anemones in tidal pools,—

And huckleberries. Here huckleberries tap wells for scarlet oil to fill their lanterns, or from frost and thin sunshine, distill purple wine for their elfin flasks. Here mountain huckleberries weave the lace that is the pattern of huckleberry leaves.

Up and up. This is no trail, only a scratch on immensity.

But yesterday, these larches, these pines, wind-lashed and bent, threw off

THE FRONTIER

their snow packs. Their foreheads still wear the thong marks; their backs, the scars of the whip.

Snow engenders moss. Moss cascades from branches; foams over boles.

Water moans under moss. Boulders are lichen covered.

Do not stay to decipher lichens. You might discover secrets that were better to leave undiscovered,—the wherefore of orange fungi out of rock; the why of fronds that find spice in rock.

The trees huddle together fearfully, their fingers ever pointing in one direction.

A white face peers through an open casement—

Hood, whom are you seeking? What are you remembering, old mountain?

The silence menaces . . .

And now we have climbed the green tower, the steep dusty stairs under the roof . . .

Then up through the skylight (duck your head, or you'll bruise it on a cloud!) and onto the top of Huckleberry; onto the wedge of earth just under the sky that is the summit of Huckleberry.

We have climbed the green tower.

Good Shepherd

By Robert Tod Struckman

MARC Carmen was a shepherd. Historically the profession was not without honor, but that was a long time ago, and they were called Shepherds then. A shepherd in the cattle country, such a one as Marc Carmen, was likely to be despised for his trade. A shepherd is of different stripe.

For one thing, following the sheep over the hills and along the alkali-bitter creeks was a lonely job, and men who know little must have company. If they do not, their minds begin to work and they grow distrustful of themselves and are restless. Marc Carmen was not a learned man, but there were thoughts buzzing around in his head. That fact would

not have surprised the men who simply judged him as another "crazy shepherd."

Marc had started out as a young man with high ambitions. They had never been permanent but they had always been high. When he was shoveling dirt on the railroad, he dreamed of being a railroad owner who rode in a private car, and bought machines to shovel dirt so that the working men could rest their backs. When he was wheeling concrete for a bridge he dreamed of being one of the engineers who looked through the little telescopes and made figures in a book. When he was pitching sawdust to a conveyor in a mill, he dreamed of owning the mill and ex-

tending the conveyor another five feet, so that no one would have to shovel.

In those days Marc sought the full bunk-houses in the evenings, but he sat apart and often would not listen to the disjointed arguments that buzzed and vaped among the men. He would be dreaming of the time when he would be better than these surroundings and could read in books; and ride to work alone; and have a woman for his very own. Days passed in a turmoil of dreams and hard work. Marc's back was strong and he had plenty of opportunity to use it.

Years passed and the strong back began to keep the bend put in it by the long work days. Marc began to find it a little harder to get employment along with the younger men. He began to look ahead and saw nothing but increasingly hard-to-get work. When he finally landed a job as shepherd he grew afraid of losing it. He took excellent care of his flock.

After the first week in the hills the continual blatting of the herd began to get on his nerves. There followed a month in which he nearly went crazy. One hot noontime he sat eating his lunch in a little bottom and the sheep were around him blatting and baaing from the heat and the flurries of excitement at losing each other for a moment. He suddenly stopped eating and stared around him as if seeing the animals for the first time. His eyes were red and vacant, but his mouth seemed to be

gasping with rage. He got up and walked toward the nearest feeders. They looked up at him and loudly voiced their denunciations of anyone who puzzled their empty heads by not looking like a sheep. He walked about for a minute with his hands clenched. His brain waved high with rage and toppled over the edge of sanity. The dust and the smell of sheep filled his head. Their many-keyed, inane voices resounded in his ears. He stooped and picked up a rock. As he straightened up, his back clicked sharply and the daylight blacked out from his eyes as a pain struck him. A half-grown lamb looked up at him and blatted insult right into his face. Marc raised both arms over his head. He threw the rock with convulsive might at the sheep's head. The animal fell although the blow was poorly aimed. It jumped to its feet and ran, but in its confusion it ran straight toward Marc. He caught the little animal and in a rage grabbed it by the throat.

The sheep-dog barked and the flock ran away to all sides. Under Marc's strong fingers only the lowest moan escaped from the lamb. Marc looked down and saw a look of dumb wonder and of pain in the animal's eyes. The small body sagged down on to his outstretched foot and he felt the spring going from it. He felt the softness of the wool. He released his grip and with a cry dropped to his knees. All that afternoon he worked over the lamb; by evening it ran to join its mates.

From then on Marc Carmen began

to get used to the moil of the sheep. He grew so accustomed to it that only an alien note would enter his senses at all. He could tell, lying in his camp wagon, if the cry of a lamb in the night meant a misplaced mother or if it was a skulking coyote. He grew adept at moving the flock with as little loss of flesh as possible and he went to the bother of trying to find the best grazing. When his band was brought in to the shearing pens they were in first-class condition and Marc was rewarded by a winter job at the feeding pens.

There were four men in the feeding crew. Much hay had to be loaded and hauled and spread for the sheep to eat. All day the men worked, and at night they sat around the stove in their shack and told the old, long stories of working men. Marc usually was stretched in his bunk out of the circle of lamplight and he rarely looked at the other three, whose faces were lighted by the yellow flame. He lay in his bunk and looked at the boards above him and at the tar-paper wall beside him. He thought his long thoughts, and none could guess them.

One cold afternoon the youngest of the crew and Marc were loading the sleds with hay. Marc got up to tramp it down and the whole side of the load slipped out and on to the ground. The youngest was vexed.

"Hey, you old flop," he growled. "You don't know anything. Get down from there."

"Flop," used thus was a new word to Marc. It alone stuck in his mind.

The insult was easily taken.

"What you mean, 'Flop'?"

"Oh, I don't know," growled the youngster.

"What you mean?" said Marc.

The youngest had a flash of Definition. "Failure, I guess," he answered. Marc knew what that meant, and it hit him in the heart. He opened his mouth; and shut it again as if on pain. His eyes grew dark with a stunned look and his brow wrinkled in questioning. "Failure!"

From then on his long thoughts might have been guessed as he lay in his bunk at night. They might have been guessed by anyone who had been hit as hard as he had by that last word, Failure. The youngest and the two others didn't guess, however. Least of all the youngest.

Dreams that had sustained Marc in his lonesomeness tumbled down before that bellowing word, Failure. Hopes smashed on it. His age descended on him and he found all things undone. Failure. Failure. Failure. He lay still and looked at the boards in the bunk above.

Spring came and Marc was glad to get into the hills and away with his sheep. He tended them well. His camp wagon was always clean. The camp tender came around once every ten days and left food and coal for him and hauled the wagon to new grounds. A pleasant young man was driving the camp-tender's wagon that summer. He found the old man hard to talk to. He vowed never to become a shepherd. The old man's

eyes glowed too blackly and the hands were too rigid. The young man had a foolish notion one day as he noticed those old hands that they could have found rest if they had been clasped together and lifted over the old man's head, as if in prayer. Still, old Marc took the best care of his sheep. He seemed to like them, and know one from the other, as if by name.

One noon in late August Marc Carmen saw storm clouds coming in the south. He looked for thunder that afternoon. The sheep might be frightened. He would have to watch them closely and avert a stampede in which some might be killed. He took a long, white, wool blanket with him that afternoon. This he often used as a raincoat, draping it around him. He allowed the sheep to graze until the storm was close at hand. That was at five o'clock. Then he rounded them closer and brought them nearer the low hills between him and the camp wagon. He worked his way around to the north of the band because the storm was coming from the south. He found a long stick on the ground, five feet long. He could use that to push the sheep back if they should try to pass him in their flight before the thunder. He draped his blanket around his shoulders and waited.

The pleasant young man saw the storm as he was on his way to Marc Carmen's wagon with a supply of food. He was driving toward the sun that day. At five-thirty the storm struck him, but he was only a short

way from the camp. Mark and his sheep were nowhere to be seen. The young man untied his horses and went into Marc's canvas-covered wagon to wait for the rain to tire itself. He looked around at the compactly arranged quarters. This was rather nice, but the young man's ambitions were much higher. He thought of old Marc following the sheep, and now probably trying to keep them quiet in the rage of the storm. Marc could keep them from hurting themselves if any herder could. Still, the old man was a failure certainly, judging by the young man's standards and ambitions. He hoped . . . but then, he surely would never have to herd sheep for a living.

The rain drove itself on northward and the sun, lowering, made fresh-washed beauty of the hills. Shadows stood out long and clean. The young man stepped out on to the tongue of the camp wagon. Old Marc came over the hill a short distance from him. In his arms was a half-grown lamb that had hurt itself in trying to get away from thunder. The lamb's mother came tagging along close behind and was looking up and snuffing at her carried child. The rest of the band straggled along behind. The sun's long rays came over Marc's shoulder. He wore his white blanket draped across his chest and it covered him to his feet. In his hand, carried like a staff, was the long stick he had found. "Well, I'll be darned," muttered the young man, staring at him. "He looks—like Lord Jesus."

Wild Plums

By Grace Stone Coates

I KNEW about wild plums twice before I tasted any.

The first time was when the Sunday school women were going plumming; Father hunched his shoulders and laughed without making any sound. He said wild plums were small and inferior, and told us of fruits he had eaten in Italy.

Mother and father were surprised that Mrs. Guare and the school teacher would go with Mrs. Slump to gather plums. I knew it was not nice to go plumming, but I didn't know why. I wanted to go once, so that I would understand. The women stopped at the house to invite mother. She explained that we did not care for wild plums; but father said we feared to taste the sacred seed lest we be constrained to dwell forever in the nether regions.

Mrs. Slump said, "Huh? You don't eat the pits. You spit 'em out," and father hunched his shoulders and laughed the noiseless laugh that bothered mother.

When father talked to people he didn't like he sorted his words, and used only the smooth, best ones. Mother explained to me it was because he had spoken only German when he was little.

After the women had gone mother and father quarreled. They spoke low so I would not hear them. Just before mother sent me out to play she said that even wild plums might

give savor to the dry bread of monotony.

The second time I knew about plums was at Mrs. Slump's house when she was making plum butter. She said she couldn't ask us in because the floor was dirty from stirring jam. The Slumps didn't use chairs. They had boxes to sit on, and the children sat on the floor with the dogs. They were the only people I knew who had hounds. I wanted to go in. We never had visited them. We were at their house now because father needed to take home a plow they had borrowed. Father didn't like to have his machinery stand outdoors. He had a shed where he kept plows when he was not using them, but the Slumps left theirs where they unhitched.

Mrs. Slump was standing in the door with her back toward us when we drove up. She was fat, and wore wrappers. Her wrapper was torn down the back.

Mr. Slump came out, and father talked to him. He was tall and lean. Mrs. Slump came and stood by the buggy, too. Mother and father sat on the front seat of the buggy, and Teressa and I on the back seat. Teressa was older than I, and had longer legs. When she stretched her feet straight out she could touch the front seat with her toes, and I couldn't. She bumped the seat behind mother, and mother turned around and told

her to stop. My feet didn't touch father's seat, so I wasn't doing anything and didn't have to stop it. Teressa pinched me.

I climbed out of the buggy without asking if I might. Teressa started to tell mother I was getting out, but waited to see what I intended to do. I was going to walk around behind Mrs. Slump. She had no stockings on, and the Sunday school women said she didn't wear underclothes. I wanted to see if this was so.

Mother called me back. Sometimes mother knew what I was thinking about without asking me. She took hold of my arm, hard, as I climbed onto the buggy step, and said under her breath, "I'd be ashamed! I'd be ashamed!" Her face was twisted because she tried not to stop smiling at Mrs. Slump while she shook my arm. I kept trying to explain, but she wouldn't let me. Her stopping me made me want to say the thing she thought I was going to, but I didn't dare.

Mr. Slump said he would bring the plow back in the morning. Father wanted to take it home himself, then; but Mr. Slump said he wouldn't hear to it, being as how he had borrowed it and all. He would bring it behind the lumber wagon the next day, and leave it in the road. They were going after more plums and would be passing the house anyway.

The next morning after breakfast, father, mother, and I were in the kitchen. Teressa had scraped the plates and gone to feed the chickens.

She did not like to sit still while people talked. She liked to do things that made her move around. Mother and father were talking, and I was looking out of the window. If I looked at the sun and then away, it made enormous morning-glories float over the yard. Father had told me they were in my eyes and not in the air, so I didn't call him to look at them. While I was watching them, Clubby Slump came up the lane in the middle of a lavender one. Clubby was bigger than I, and stupider. When any one spoke to him, he stood with his mouth open and didn't answer. His hair needed combing, and he didn't use a handkerchief. Mother said good morning to him. He pointed to a wagon at the end of the lane. He said, "Plums!" and ran back down the path.

Mother and father started toward the road, and I went ahead of them. The wagon had stopped at the foot of the cottonwood lane. Mr. Slump sat on the high board seat, holding the reins. Mrs. Slump was beside him, with the baby on her lap. Liney Slump was between them. On the seat behind were Mrs. Guare and two women I didn't know. The rest of the wagon was full of children. Mr. Slump had forgotten the plow.

"All you 'uns pile in," Mrs. Slump called to us. "We're goin' plummin' on the Niniscaw and stay all night. The younguns can go wadin'. There ain't no work drivin' you this time a' year, so just pile in. We got beddin' for everybody."

Mr. Slump sat looking at the horses' ears. Whenever Mrs. Slump stopped talking he would say, "*I tole* you they-all wouldn't go, but you *would* stop," and Mrs. Slump would answer, "There now, paw, you hush!"

I had not known one could live so long without breathing as I lived while Mrs. Slump was asking us to go. I could see my heart-beats shaking my collar—a lace collar that was hanging by one end down my chest; I had forgotten to put it on right.

I waited for mother to lift her foot and plant it on the wagon hub, ready for "*pilin'* in"; for father to take her elbow, and lift. Everyone would laugh a little, and talk loud. They always did when women got into wagons. I had never seen mother climb into a wagon, but I knew how it would be. I wondered if father would jump in without tossing me up first. Father got into wagons quick, without laughing or joking. I wondered if he would forget me. The children would see me, and lean over the end-board, and dangle me up by one arm. I thought frantically of Teressa.

Then father was speaking, and my breath came back.

He was saying, "If you happen on a plum thicket, an outcome highly unlikely, you still face the uncertainty of finding plums. The season has been too dry. And should you find them, they will prove acrid and unfit for human consumption."

My collar hung limp and motion-

less. My heart was dead. Father was spoiling things again.

Mrs. Slump said, "They make fine jell," and Mr. Slump repeated, "*I tole* you they-all wouldn't go, but you *would* stop." He was gathering up the lines.

I hated to see mother's face, feeling the stricken look it would have. But I knew I must smile at her not to care. Strangely enough, she had a polite look on her face. It was the look that made my fingers think of glass. My mind slipped off from it without knowing what it meant. She was smiling.

"Really, it isn't possible for us to go with you today," she said. "It was kind of you to ask us. I hope you will have a lovely outing, and find lots of plums."

As she spoke she glanced at me. She moved closer, and took my hand. Mrs. Slump looked down at me, too, and said, "Can't the kid go? Kids like bein' out."

Mother's hand closed firmly on mine. "I'm afraid not, without me. Besides," with a severe look at my collar, "she isn't properly dressed."

"Oh, we kin wait while she takes off that purty dress," Mrs. Slump suggested comfortably; but mother flushed and shook her head.

Mr. Slump was twitching at the lines and clucking to the horses. His last "*I tole* you" was drowned in shouted good-bys, and the wagon clattered down the road.

Mother walked back to the house still holding my hand. Once inside,

she turned to me. "Would you really have gone with those—" She hesitated, and finished, "with those persons?"

"They were going to sleep outdoors all night," I said.

Mother shuddered. "Would you have gone with them?"

"Mrs. Guare was with them," I parried, knowing all she did not say.

"Would you have gone?"

"Yes."

She stood for a long time looking out of the window at the prairie horizon, then searched my face curiously. "It might have been as well," she said; "It might be as well," and turning, she began to clear the breakfast table.

The next day I played in the road. Usually I spent the afternoons under the box-elder trees, or by the ditch behind the machine-sheds, where dragon-flies and pale blue moths circled just out of reach. But this day I spent beside the road. Mother called me to the house to bring cobs, and called me again to gather eggs in the middle of the afternoon. She called me a third time. Her face looked uncomfortable.

She said, "If the Slumps go by, do not ask them for any plums."

Mother knew I would not ask.

"If they offer you any, do not take them."

"What shall I say?"

"Say we do not care for them."

"If they make me take them "

"Refuse them."

When the Slumps came in sight the horses were walking. The Niniscaw was fifteen miles away, and the team was tired. I thought I could talk to the children as the wagon passed, but just before it reached me, Mr. Slump hit the horses twice with a willow branch. They trotted, and the wagon rattled by.

The children on the last seat were facing toward me. They laughed and waved their arms. Clubby leaned backward and caught up a handful of plums. The wagon bed must have been half filled. He flung them toward me; and then another handful. They fell, scattering, in the thick dust, which curled around them in little eddies, almost hiding them before I could catch them up.

The plums were small and red. They felt warm to my fingers. I wiped them on the front of my dress, and dropped them in my apron. I waited only for one secret rite, before I ran, heart pounding, to tell my mother what I had discovered.

She interrupted me, "Did they see you picking them up?"

I thought of myself standing like Clubby Slump, mouth open, without moving. I laughed till two plums rolled out of my apron. "Oh, yes! I had them picked up almost before the dust stopped wiggling. I called, 'Thank you'."

Still mother was not pleased. "Throw them away," she said. "Surely you would not care to eat something flung to you in the road."

THE FRONTIER

It was hard to speak. I moved close to her and whispered, "Can't I keep them?"

Mother left the room. It seemed long before she came back. She put her arm around me and said, "Take them to the pump and wash them thoroughly. Eat them slowly, and do not swallow the skins. You will not

want many of them, for you will find them bitter and not fit to eat."

I went out quietly, knowing I would never tell her that they were strange on my tongue as wild honey, holding the warmth of sand that sun had fingered, and the mystery of water under leaning boughs.

For I had eaten one at the road.

Clearing the Sagebrush

By Irene Welch Grissom

It stood alone, the crude low shack,
Tarred paper walls, a blot of black
Against a vast and tawny plain
Men called *The Place of Little Rain*.
The dusk was shot with crimson light
From piles of sagebrush burning bright.
The man who watched, with eager gaze,
The flaming sparks and purple haze,
All day had torn the fibers strong
And raked them into windrows long.
The acrid smoke was prophecy
Of wondrous changes soon to be.

He did not see the arid land
With weary miles of desert sand,
The scanty grass, and prickly-pear,
That fought to hold a footing there.
He caught the flashing silver gleam
Of ripples dancing on a stream,
Now gayly winding all about
Through fields of green, then in and out
Of nodding grain; and everywhere
The water went the earth was fair
With growing things. . . the embers died . . .
The barren plain was dark and wide.

The Kiskis

By May Vontver

“HADN’T you better eat in the house today? It is cold outside,” the teacher suggested.

Pretending not to hear her the three Kiskis slipped silently through the door with their double-handled Bull Durham tin can. They stood in a knot on the south side of the school house and ate from the one tin. From her desk Miss Smith observed that they now and then put one bare foot over the other to warm it. This was the second time they had disregarded her invitation to eat in the house with the others. The rest of the children had drawn their seats into a circle about the stove and begun to eat.

Teddy Kirk at last decided to enlighten the teacher: “They have only bread in their lunch-pail. That’s why they won’t eat with us.”

Miss Smith made no reply. She suspected that the lunches of the group around the stove weren’t very sumptuous either. She knew hers wasn’t. The people with whom she boarded were homesteaders, too.

“What about these Kiskis? Who are they?” she asked Mr. Clark that evening at supper.

“The Kiskis?—Oh, they took up their claim here last fall. They are pretty hard up. They have only one horse. Kiski hauled out all the lumber for his shack and barn with it. Thirty miles it is to Hilger. I was hauling wheat then and I used to pass

him on the road walking beside the load and pushing when it was uphill.”

Miss Smith smiled crookedly. One horse in a country where four- or six-horse teams were the rule was somewhat ludicrous. It was pathetic, too.

“Now, now! you needn’t look that way! Kiski broke ten acres with that horse of his last spring. Got the ground in shape and got it seeded, too. The horse pulled and the old man pushed and, by golly, they got it in.” There was respect, even admiration, in his voice.

“They have eight children, though,” Mrs. Clark broke in. “The two oldest girls are doing housework in Lewistown.”

Eight children. That meant three at home younger than the ones at school.

“Have they any cows?”

“One, but she’s dry now. It’s pretty hard for them.”

Miss Smith decided not to urge the Kiskis again to eat in the school-house.

The Kiskis in school were painfully shy. Rudolph, the oldest, going on eleven, hid his timidity under a sullen demeanor. Once in a while, however, he could be beguiled to join in a game of “Pum-Pum-Pull-Away” or horse-shoe pitching. He was a good pitcher. Margaret, next in age, expressed her shyness in wistfulness.

THE FRONTIER

Johnny, barely six, refused to speak. Never would he answer a question in class. Never a word did he utter to the children on the playground. He might, now and then, have made remarks to his sister and brother in Bohemian, but, if so, he wasn't ever caught making them. Yet, he was by nature a happy child. When anything comical happened in school or something funny was said he would laugh out loud with an especially merry infectious laugh. It was plain that he observed and understood more than his usual behavior indicated. The teacher, mindful of her psychology texts, tried vainly again and again to utilize these occasions of self-forgetfulness by surprising him into speech.

At the beginning of the term in September every child had come to school barefoot. As the season advanced the other pupils, family by family, donned their footwear, but the Kiskis continued to arrive barefoot, although it was now late in October and getting cold.

"Why don't you wear your shoes?" "Aren't your feet cold?" "Haven't you got any shoes?"

With their bare goose-fleshed feet Rudolph, Margaret, and Johnny picked their way between the prickly pear cactus without answering. But it was plainly to be seen that more and more the continued questioning and the curious staring at their bare legs and feet embarrassed them.

Gradually the weather grew colder. The cracked gumbo froze to cement.

Still the Kiskis came barefoot to school.

Then the first snow fell. It was but a thin film. Disks of cactus and tufts of bunch grass stuck through. Yet it was heavy enough to show plainly the tracks of the Kiski children's naked feet.

One day when John and Margaret had planned to reach school just as the bell rang, to escape the inevitable and dreaded comments of the others, they miscalculated the time. All the children were on the porch watching as the Kiskis walked, heads down, toward the schoolhouse.

"I don't see how you can stand it!"

It was the irrepressible Teddy Kirk speaking. The others left their remarks unspoken, for this time Margaret answered and there was defiance in her indistinct mumble.

"We like to go to school barefooted. We get there quicker that way."

She did not tell them that they had not come barefoot all the way; that at the hill nearest the school house they had stopped and undone the gunnysacks wrapped about their feet and legs and hidden them under a rock. When they went home they would put them on again, for no one else went their way.

But little Johnny wasn't so good at keeping his mouth shut at home as he was at school. He didn't know any better than to tell that none of them had worn the gunnysacks *all* the day. Fortunately or unfortunately for the children, a little Old World discipline

was exercised upon them. The next day they wore the gunnysacks *all* the way to school. They wore them all day, too.

Their schoolmates and their teacher after a while grew used to seeing the coarse string-bound sacks, but the Kiskis never became used to wearing them. No longer did Rudolph take part in the games. Margaret grew sullen and unapproachable like him. On pleasant days when the girls strolled by two's and three's with their arms about each other Margaret stood alone in a corner against the wall. Sometimes they invited her to come with them; but she never answered. All recess she would stand there just looking at the ground. At last the girls quit asking her. Margaret made believe that she did not notice either them or their neglect. No longer did Johnny's laughter ring out in unexpected places. All three were creeping farther and farther into their shells of silence. Finally Rudolph ran away. After two days his father located him in a barn, where he had been hiding in the hay-loft. Unless he had milked the cows in that barn he had had nothing to eat during his absence. He was brought home and made to go back to school.

In November the threshers came to Kiski's place. Because the field there was so small, they made that threshing their last job before pulling out of the country. Mr. Kiski hauled the wheat to Hilger and bought shoes and stockings for the children who attended school.

Other school children, the smaller ones especially, always proudly displayed their new shoes at school the first day they wore them. Several times that fall the teacher had been asked to admire the pretty perforations on the toes, the shiny buttons, or the colored tassels on the strings. But the Kiskis were almost as painfully conscious of their new foot wear as they had been of the gunnysacks. They arrived with faces darkly flushed, sat down immediately, and pushed their feet far back under their seats. The teacher had hoped that to be shod like others would gradually restore their former morale. She was mistaken.

Kiski's cow had come fresh. The children had butter on their bread now. Miss Smith heard about it. She had occasion to pass by the children as they stood eating and she saw that it was really true about the butter. Yet the Kiskis would not eat with the others. They continued to go out at noon time. If the weather was severely cold or stormy they ate in the hall, quickly. Then they would come in, without looking at anyone, and go to their seats.

As the four-month term drew to a close Miss Smith's heart ached for the Kiskis. They had not learned a great deal from their books; she had been unable to supply them with the many bare necessities they lacked; and their own keen realization of being different had made their attendance a torture. They were so unapproachable, too, that she had found

little opportunity to show them her love and sympathy. She had had but one chance that she knew of to do so, and she was grateful for that one occasion, though it had not affected the Kiskis' silence nor changed in the least their subsequent conduct.

It came about in this way. Miss Smith had been late to school. There had been a heavy snowfall in the night and she had not had previous experience in breaking trail. If she had not been new in the country she would have known that wading three miles through knee-deep snow takes considerable time. When at length she reached the school house the Kiskis were there standing about the cold stove. All were crying—even Rudolph! They had been too miserably cold and numb to attempt building a fire for themselves. As soon as Miss Smith had the fire crackling merrily she took Johnny in her lap, undid the new shoes and stockings, and began to chafe the cold little feet. And when his crying still persisted she began telling "The Tarbaby". She had noticed early in the term that he particularly relished this tale. And sure enough, at the very first "Bim" of Brother Rabbit's paw on the tarbaby's cheek Johnny laughed through his tears right out loud—something he had not done for a month. Miss Smith decided to tell stories all day.

She felt justified in entertaining the Kiskis this way, for they were the only pupils who braved the roads that day. She had a great fund of fairy

tales and folk tales and a gift for telling them; also she had that day an audience whom professional entertainers might well have envied her. Johnny leaned against her knee. She put one arm about Margaret, who stood on one side, and would have put the other about Rudolph on the opposite side had she dared. He was a boy and eleven. With shining eyes and open mouths they drank in "Cinderella", "Hansel and Gretel", "Snow-White", "The Hag and the Bag", "Jack and the Beanstalk", "Colter's Race for His Life" and "Mowgli".

Only to replenish the fire and melt snow for drinking water did Miss Smith stop. Her audience was too timid and self-effacing to make any spoken requests, but after each happy ending their eyes clamored, "More, more!"

At noon the water on the top of the stove was boiling. Miss Smith put condensed milk and a little sugar in it and brought the hot drink to the Kiskis in the hall. For out there they had gone as soon as she announced that it was dinner time. They accepted with smiles and drank every drop, but without a word. Miss Smith, too, stayed in the hall to drink her tea with them. Then the story-telling went on again, until three o'clock in the afternoon, when the teacher bundled them up in some of her own wraps and sent them home.

Going back to her boarding-place, stepping carefully in the tracks she had made in the morning Miss Smith

reflected that should the county superintendent ever learn of her program for the day she would be in for a reprimand. In such a case, she thought, she would defend herself on the grounds that since formalized education had failed noticeably to benefit the Kiskis, it was not altogether unreasonable to try a little informality. Anyhow, she was fiercely glad that the Kiskis' school-term would include one happy day.

It was with sorrow and regret that Miss Smith made her way to the school-house on the last day of the session. With the other pupils she had accomplished something in the way of progress, but the Kiskis she would leave embittered, shyer, and more isolated than she had found them.

She had just reached the shack and barely had time to pile the kindling into the stove when she was aware of subdued noises in the hall. She thought absently that it was unusually early for the children to be arriving. When the door opened a crack to allow some one to peer in, she began to wonder what was going on. Then with a rush the three Kiskis were at the stove.

With her unmittened purple hands Margaret was thrusting something towards her. It was a small square candy-box of pristine whiteness. A wide pink silk ribbon ran obliquely across the top and was looped into a generous bow in the center.

"We brought you a present, Teacher," Margaret began breathlessly.

This time, however, Rudolph did not want his sister to be the chief spokesman. "There are fourteen pieces, Teacher. Two have something shiny around them. We looked."

And before Miss Smith had time to recover from this surprise a miracle came to pass. Johnny spoke, and he spoke in English!

"It is to eat, Teacher. It is candy."

Miss Smith said, "Thank you, children. It was very good of you to give me this."

She shook the stove-grate vigorously. The ashes flew into her eyes. She had to wipe them.

"Open it, Teacher. Open it now."

The teacher took the box to her desk. The Kiskis followed and stood about her watching. There really were fourteen pieces. Johnny pointed out the two with tinfoil. Each of the fourteen reposed daintily in a little cup of pleated paper. It was a wonderful box and Miss Smith was lavish with praises of it.

She held the opened box out to them. "Take one," she invited; and as they made no motion, "Please, do."

The three black heads shook vigorously. Johnny's hands flew behind him.

"They are for you, Teacher," they protested. "You eat."

But Miss Smith couldn't eat just then. More than anything else she wanted to see the Kiskis enjoy the contents of that box themselves. She felt small and unworthy to accept their astounding offering. But again,

THE FRONTIER

how could she refuse to accept it and kill cruelly their joy in giving? It was a gift not to be lightly disposed of. An inspiration came.

"Would you care if I shared it? There is enough so that every child in school can have a piece. Johnny could pass it around when they all get here. Would you like that?"

"Yes, yes, yes." Their black eyes shone.

Johnny carried the box to his seat and sat down with it. Rudolph and Margaret hovered about the teacher, happy, eager, excited. Rudolph explained how it all came about.

"Anna came home from Lewistown last night. Margaret and I wrote her a letter once and told her to buy us a present for you. We were afraid she'd forget, but she didn't."

Teddy Kirk was coming. Rudolph and Margaret saw him and ran out on the porch.

"We brought candy for teacher. You are going to get some, too. Johnny has it. Come and see!"

Teddy was too taken aback to say anything. They led him in easily. The pieces were counted again.

Other children came. Rudolph and Margaret met each new arrival before he got to the door. To each in turn Johnny exhibited the box and its contents. He did not mind being the center of attraction now. He made use of his new-found speech, too.

"I am going to pass it around," he told them. "When the bell rings I am going to pass it."

Rudolph and Margaret talked.

They chattered. The other children kept still. They had to get used to these new Kiskis.

When the bell rang, a few minutes before time, everybody was in his seat. Johnny got up and passed the candy. Teacher saw to it that he got one of the shiny pieces.

Candy—candy of any kind—was a rare treat to everybody. These chocolates were very fresh. They had soft creamy centers. Some had cherries in them. The children had not known that sweets like these existed.

They took their time about the licking and snibbling. Delights such as these had to be given their just dues. There was no needless or premature swallowing. And to think that the Kiskis had provided it! The Kiskis were assuming importance.

The Kiskis ate candy, too. They beamed on everybody. They had had something to give and everybody thought their gift wonderful.

The sun shone. At recess the girls again walked about by two's and three's. Margaret walked with them. Teddy presented Rudolph with one of his horse-shoes, and Rudolph began to pitch it. Edward, the other first-grader, found a string in his overall pocket and promptly invited Johnny to be his horse. Johnny accepted.

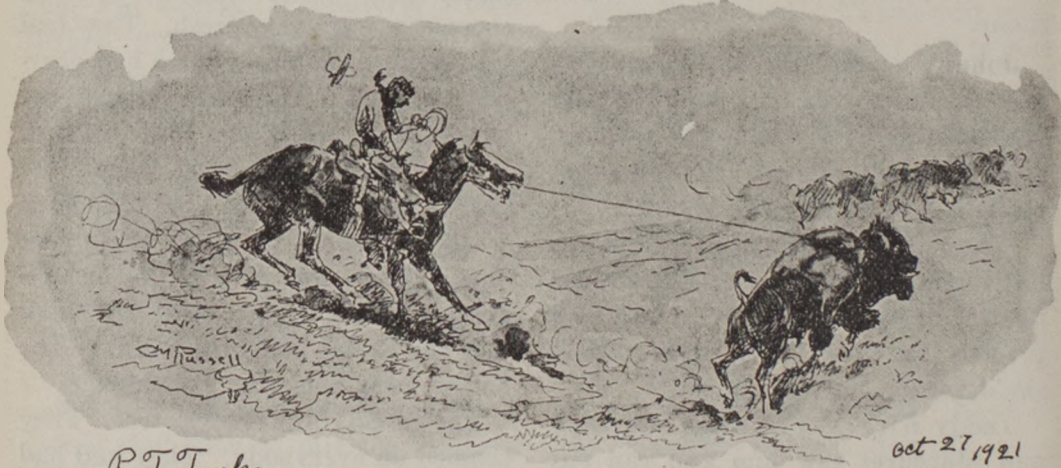
He trotted; he paced; he neighed surprisingly like a horse. Then he kicked at the traces a while.

"You should say 'Cut it out'," he instructed his driver.

That noon the Kiskis ate lunch in the school-house.



C. M. RUSSELL
GREAT FALLS, MONTANA



P. T. Tucker

Oct 27, 1921

Friend Tommy I'm a long time answering your letter but that don't mean I forgotten you. Your daughter came to see me and I was glad to meet her and I want to thank her for the photograph she sent among them was one of you and a bull that bull was same size but he'd look puny compared to the one you dropped your loop on thirty seven years ago. If I remember right he got one for foot through the loop and the lion'd lay in front of his horse and judging from the way he traveled you and Bunkie wasn't eavin a good rough look he started for Texas like he didn't mean to make many stops but you an Bunkie didn't want to go that far so you through of your dallyes and made him a present of your raw hide. Those were good old days Tom we were kids then the buffalo went long ago the wild cows we knew and the cow bosses have joined them and most of the cow punchers of our time have crossed the big divide we usta know every body but time has made us strangers but we got no lieency to kick we got the cream let these cornlathes have the skim milk. If ever I get down on your range I'll round you up and I want you to do the same.

With best wishes to you and your
big family from me and my small one
your friend C. M. Russell

THE OPEN RANGE

Each issue will carry accounts of men's personal outdoor experiences. Only accounts of actual experiences are solicited.

Buffalo In The Judith Basin, 1883

By Pat T. Tucker.

IN mid-winter of 1883, myself and several cowboys, including Charles M. Russell, famous as the "Cowboy Artist," camped on the Judith river. Those of you who have visited Montana will recall the Judith river valley, located in a huge basin about eighty-five miles across and about the same in length, the Missouri river skirting the northern boundary, the Moccasin and Snowy mountains on the east, the Belt mountains on the south and the Highwoods on the west. The buffalo that roamed these hills came in from their different summer ranges and wintered on the long bunch grass that grew in the Judith Basin. There was always plenty of open water and good shelter in these foothills.

Our daily work was to pair off and trail through the foothills and bad lands of the Missouri river, to look after the range cattle, as the Indians and rustlers were at work on this range. Whenever a suspicious-looking trail or sign showed an Indian rustler had been killing or stealing cattle, our orders were to report at the camps immediately. Then a larger force of cowboys would hit the trail to run down the offender.

One day in January Frank Davis, my old side-kick, and I were out trailing through the foothills. We struck Sage creek, one of the tributaries of the Judith river. Trailing up this creek we came into deeper snow, it striking just above our horses' knees; while passing through some jack pines we chanced upon a track,

which upon a second look proved to be a buffalo trail. Seeking to affirm this, and likewise to see if buffalo were still left in these parts, we took up the trail, riding very carefully through the deep snow. The depth of the snow muffled all sounds of our horses' feet on the dead branches underneath. Our fear of being discovered, however, was very great, as the snow still lay on the branches of the pines where a slight jar brought down a shower of snow. To overcome this we dismounted and proceeded on foot. As we had the wind in our favor no danger came from this source.

We finally came up within sight of the buffalo. They were on the edge of the tall timber, lying down. As we looked at them we thought of the possibilities of fresh buffalo meat for camp as well as ready cash for hides. We feared we could not handle the whole herd of fourteen, as our only arms were our six-guns.

Returning to the cow camp we changed horses and picked our mounts with care; these particular horses had been on buffalo hunts before and could be ridden up close without showing fear. After cleaning our Winchester carbines, we rode out to the place where the buffs had been.

They were gone, to our despair, but we quickly trailed them to a small blind canyon, which was the source of their water supply. This box canyon had an opening about fourteen feet wide. The whole distance around was a wall of

granite rock, about three hundred feet high. At the other end it was about thirty feet high, and tapered to the top. Water had at some time formed this natural death-trap for the buffalo.

As we rode up to the mouth of the canyon we could see the buffalo about three-quarters of a mile away and quite close to the rock wall at the other end. They had seen us and were trying to climb up the wall where it was lowest.

Our plans were made at once. I was to leave my horse at the entrance of the canyon. Frank would stay there also and kill any buffalo that escaped me, as I was to sneak up within shooting distance and get what I could; so I left him there and proceeded on, bending low and keeping behind the rocks, willows, sage-brush and other objects that would hide me from their sight.

Frank, meanwhile, kept in view and tried to attract their attention, which I believe he did, as the buffalo appeared unaware of my presence behind the large granite rocks, about eighty yards from the milling herd.

My Winchester rifle was of the very latest model and held eight cartridges in the magazine and one in the barrel. Smokeless powder was still to be discovered, and whenever a shot was fired a small cloud of blue smoke appeared. At the first crack of the rifle I dropped the leader of the herd, a magnificent creature that had done well to preserve this last remnant of a once countless herd.

This only tended to increase their efforts to climb up the wall, or to mill around. As they continued to do this, I was successful in dropping six more of their number. They then split into two bunches and bolted for the mouth of the canyon. One bunch of three went off in a direction away from the rock behind which I was hiding. The other bunch of five came almost directly towards me. So I dropped two before they ran back

to their former place. The three that had bolted for the entrance were killed by Frank before they could get out into the more open country. The others tried again to climb up the almost perpendicular side of the canyon, but only fell back when they lost their foothold. In a very short time I had killed the last one as it made a final attempt to get away from my deadly fire.

After the smoke had cleared and the last buffalo had given a few dying gasps. I made my way from behind the rocks and went up to the dead buffalo. As I was looking them over, Frank rode up leading my horse. We selected the choicest of the meat, which was a three-year-old heifer, cut off the two hind-quarters, tied it on behind our saddles and rode for camp at high speed, reaching it just before supper.

Mike Ryan, the cook, was delighted on seeing the fresh buffalo meat. It meant a change for the rest of the boys, as well as ourselves, and it pleased them very much. The straight beef three times a day was not favored and a change was always desired. Getting the meat into the shack and cutting it up into steaks was left to Frank and me.

Soon the hungry cowboys were enjoying a real feed, on the choicest meat of the land. Mike Ryan, as a cook, was unequaled. Formerly he cooked on the Missouri river steamers, but cowmen traveling up and down the river to St. Louis, induced him to come and cook for their cowboys. It took a good cook to keep a bunch of cowboys satisfied during the long winter months.

After this sumptuous feed, Frank and I saddled up fresh horses and rode down three-and-a-half miles to the stage line station. The station was run by E. J. Morrison, a typical New Englander. He owned the store and furnished supplies to cattlemen and prospectors, freighters, etc., and through him we found a place to sell our buff meat. He agreed to pur-

THE FRONTIER

chase twelve of the buffalo at four cents per pound and get them from where we killed them. This was not much for him to do, as he had the ox teams and sleds. He had the buffalo dragged over the snow to where the sleds were left and loaded them on. He had no trouble in selling the buffalo meat, as it was getting scarce and the demand was great.

The buffalo hides we sold to T. C. Powers at six dollars apiece. T. C. Powers, now of Helena, Montana, controlled the fur and hide market in those days and he offered the best prices. His commercial life was given its start there.

After disposing of the buffalo and splitting half with Frank Davis, I plaited a forty-two foot, four-strand rope. This rope made out of rawhide was very durable and strong. To make such a rope it took about a month of real work in the evenings. Other small details of repairing my outfit for the spring round-up were made about the first of March.

I had decided to go on a tour of inspection around to the heads of several creeks. I wanted to see the condition of the cattle, as March was the time when they were hit the hardest by the cold and lack of feed. Cowboys were stationed on different creeks to see that no cattle were bogged in the mud. The melting snow made the banks of the creeks very boggy, and a weak cow might very easily become fast and unable to get out. A cowboy rope was usually needed to pull an animal out of such a place, a good cowhorse being able to pull by the horn of the saddle as much as a horse would by the collar. Such work kept the boys busy until the first of May.

Then the real fun and work started. All the horses were rounded up and brought in. Each rider would have from eight to twelve horses in his string for his summer use. This string was composed of both broken and unbroken horses. The broken horses did not cause much trouble. It was the unbroken ones that

caused the new and untried cowboys their trouble, while it enlivened very much the life of the old riders. Each cowboy had to break his own string of horses, and a good number hit the dust before they had all their string broken.

The round-up finally started on the fifteenth day of May, and our number of riders had been increased to sixty-eight.

The captain of this round-up was an old hand at the game, having seen cowboy service in Texas. He was a cowman and knew his calling. His name was Horace Brewster, and he is still in north-western Montana in government service.

The captain of the round-up would detail the men to ride together and bring in all cattle that they could find during the day. He told each two just what range they were to ride over.

The cattle were driven to the round-up grounds close to camp. There they were held until all the calves were branded with the same brand that their mothers wore. Then they were turned loose and the camp moved farther along, and the same was done over again. An average of seventeen hundred calves and cows were rounded up every day, and by the first of July the work was about over.

Our last camp was on the Arrow creek, close to Square Butte, a spur of the Highwood mountains, and an old landmark. The round-up grounds were to be located at Lost lake, which is within three miles of the Missouri river.

On the second day of July I had the good fortune to be detailed with Charlie Russell to go out and ride the Cottonwood creek range. We were in the foothills and had stopped to eat our lunch. The horses grazed on the green grass and drank from the pure water of the creek. I was furnished with field glasses to enable us to see the country better. I was looking through them when I saw a small herd of buffalo farther up in the hills.

On reaching camp that evening we told of what we had seen. The next day

about twenty boys were sent out in that direction to see if by rounding up the cattle and buffalo together, they might be driven carefully to the round-up grounds. This proved successful, and on the eve of July third, the night herder had seven buffalo to watch with about twenty-five hundred cattle.

As the next day was the fourth of July, and the round-up was practically over, the boys had all decided to celebrate. The celebration was to consist of roping and tying the buffalo. About twenty men who were accomplished cowboys and clever with the rope were picked to go in and single out the buffalo to rope and tie them. I had the fortune, or misfortune, to be one of the twenty picked men. All the rest of the cowboys took positions around the herd to see the fun. As we rode into the herd, the buffalo bolted and started on a dead run for the Missouri river. We all took after the buffalo, twenty wild, shouting cowboys, ably followed by forty-eight more, likewise whooping and yelling, riders that would do justice to any Indian war party.

I was on the outer edge and to the left flank of the buffs, so I had an open field for running. My horse, "Bunky," was an old timer at running buffalo.

The buffalo took down a long ridge that sloped towards the river. Running at his very best "Bunky" was able to overtake them about two miles from the start. I rode up as close as I could, took down my cowhide rope, singled out a big bull, and shaking out a loop, I whirled my rope twice and let it fly, catching Mr. Buffalo around the neck and right front leg as he turned to go down the ravine. As I threw the rope I took three turns

around the saddle horn. The rope tightened like a violin string. "Bunky" having sat on his haunches so that he could stop the buffalo; but there was no halt on the buff's part, and we kept on moving, against our will. Down the ravine we went, "Bunky" trying to hold, and his feet, plowing the ground, threw clouds of dust and rocks in the air.

I kept thinking some of the boys would run up and catch the buffalo around the legs; but no such luck. We were jerked down the ravine, while all the time "Bunky" was doing his best to stop the buff. His hind feet kept leaving the ground and at each jump of the buffalo the riding became rougher and faster. Thinking that we would be turned end for end any minute, I threw off the turns on the horn of the saddle and said good-bye to my new rawhide rope.

The boys caught up and we all saw the buffalo jump off a low rimrock into the Missouri river and swim across. My rope was still around his neck and front leg. The last we saw of it was when the herd reached the opposite bank and the rope looked like a snake as it whipped through the grass.

The boys afterwards said that this buffalo would weigh about two thousand pounds. That is no small amount for a nine-hundred-pound horse to stop.

Years after this experience C. M. Russell of Great Falls, Montana, who was on the grounds at the time, said that it was the only time in all his travels on the plains that he ever saw a cowboy rope a wild buffalo. A few years before C. M. Russell died he painted the picture of the tussle "Bunky" and I had with the buffalo bull, and I have turned down many attractive offers for this painting.

Four Nature Sketches

I. The Killer

By Richard West

THE end of the locoed steer's life was going to be like his long struggle for existence, violent and relentless. There would be no mercy shown him. His dazed brain realized this as he faced his cruel enemy, a grey wolf, shaggy, and, like himself, hungry.

When the riders had taken the cattle off the high summer range, the red steer had been missed in the brush and timber of the mountains. Since then he had led a wandering, lone life, and had sought the bare knolls where the large, white loco blossoms grew aplenty. Cold weather and a snowstorm had now driven him, weak from thirst and hunger, into a small canyon, and here he was making his last stand. A shelving rock broke some of the force of the wind, but it had caused the snow to drift into huge piles across the only entrance to his refuge.

The red steer had been locked in for three days. He had eaten the grass to the roots and grazed the bushes and even the pine needles. He could now barely stand from weakness; and the cold sapped his strength unmercifully. His eyes were sunk far into his head, and his ribs stood out from his backbone, patches of bare hide showed, and his flanks were drawn together.

The wolf did not wait. A long leap and a slash opened a twelve-inch slit in the steer's shoulder. He bel-lowed a weak defiance and sank to his knees. Again the wolf rushed in. This time his fangs tore a tendon. The steer's rump dropped to the ground, paralyzed. Blood ran in streams from the slashed body as the killer, closing in for the finish, sank his teeth deep into the steer's neck. The struggles of the steer became less frequent and more spasmodic. At each breath the blood gurgled out of his flaring nostrils. The eyes became grey and glazed; the death film spread over them. The wolf did not wait until the animal became quiet, but at once tore at the red flesh. His muzzle was stained and the hair on his neck and chest was dyed a dark red. Small spirals of steam arose where the warm blood came in contact with the cold air. The killer gulped down mouthfuls of the half-chewed, hot, quivering meat.

It was an hour before the gaunt wolf got his fill. When he was gorged, he lay down alongside the dead animal and licked his paws and bloody fur. When he had cleaned them, he rose on his haunches, pointed his long nose into the air, and gave a throbbing cry into the night.

II. Big Game

By Emmearl McKinnon

JULES Holderness was lost in a wilderness of windfall brush and dead standing trees. All around him was the deep gloom of night. For four hours he had struggled in every direction, in an effort to find his way to camp. He had made his kill that day, a fine seven-point bull elk. Filled with elation over his luck, he had turned homeward, but not before darkness was upon him. Then he could not discover the trail; he had no food; he could not find his way back to the elk.

Panic now filled his mind. He raced through the brush over fallen trees. Scratched and bleeding, he stopped to breathe. A minute's rest and again he scrambled through the thicket. Light, fluffy flakes of snow covered the ground, and kept falling.

His hands were wet and cold; the clothes he wore were soaked and torn. On and on he plunged, madly.

Montour creek, rambling by, sounded to him like a giggling witch. He didn't think to follow the creek. All he thought about was getting out of the hateful brush that tore his clothes and cheeks.

All through the night he struggled against the odds of nature. The night, silent, oppressive, mocked the feeble attempts of the human thing caught in the meshes of the wild.

Early the next morning, searchers found Holderness. They tracked him to the end of his trail in the snow. A light skiff of snow covered his body. He was not twenty feet away from the elk he had killed the day before.

III. Hunger

By Richard West

THE chilling wind that had been blowing out of the northwest all day and which had drifted the loose snow into long ridges and covered the grass and low sage-brush now began to die down. The short afternoon darkened and the sun slid towards the aloof mountains in the blue distance. The white wastes became silent and the air colder. The snow particles sparkled in the rays of the slanting sun. Stunted pines and black-barked firs that grew on the

rim of the canyon were turning white with frost and a hard crust was forming on the surface. Shadows formed in the deeper places. Dark evening merged the hills into blurs.

A coyote, wild-eyed and hungry, limped out of the trees that fringed the mouth of a coulee. A hind leg swung back and forth from his hip. Blood ran from his feet and froze. The sharp snow-crust cut the pads of his toes like a knife. Mange had left white patches in his grey fur and

now and then bare hide showed through, like the spots on a checker-board. The bushy tail dragged behind and the hair on his neck pointed towards the frosted ears.

His crippled leg had made it impossible for him to catch the small birds that live in the cedars or to run down any of the swifter game of the hills. His body was thin and pinched, and the proud bearing of all wild animals in the winter, when their fur is thick and long, was gone. The broken leg ached and throbbed whenever it happened to hit a tree or stump. His sides heaved with his gasping breath; he weaved from side to side, but still struggled on. He fell over a limb on the ground; he made several attempts to get onto his

feet. It was useless. The helpless leg was twisted grotesquely over his back.

The coyote lay in the snow and shivered from the intense cold. The snow that had drifted into his fur had melted and then frozen, leaving the hair matted and the hide exposed. He dragged himself a few yards towards a small cedar and stopped, with his tongue hanging far out of his mouth. A low whimper escaped him; the first noise he had made. His body slowly began to stiffen and as he thrust his muzzle sideways into the soft snow his eyes closed.

Silence settled down on the land, the trees loomed up like ghosts in the darkness.

IV *Norway Point*

By S. T. Carlson

NORWAY Point juts out from a rather broad base with a deep bay on either side and extends into the lake about half a mile, the tip resembling a partially submerged flat-iron on end. The high, steep sides of sand and rocks are covered with a litter of needles from the scattering pines on the razor-back top. There is little undergrowth except for a bit of ivy here and there and a stray bull-thistle where the shadows are not too heavy and deep.

In the summertime the point teems with life from base to tip. The silent flights of crows to and from the point

reveal many nests of eggs and young. About nine o'clock in the morning the martins begin to gather at the "old snag", a large dead pine tree, white and weather-beaten. Out in the pit near its tip the mud-turtles are clambering and waddling about in search of a safe hatching-place for their eggs. Chipmunks and pine squirrels skip jauntily about. The woodchuck and her family are out in the sunshine and air in the tall flowers about their den. In the shallow water among the weeds the crane stands on one leg.

At night, after the wind has almost died down, above the lap-lap of the

waves against the rocky shores there sounds the plop of the diving muskrat. Between the whines and wails of angry bands of mosquitoes, the clear, striking 'cheer-up, cheer-up' of the frog choruses goes out over the waters. On a low stump in the shadows of the pines the whippoorwill pours forth his song in competition with the little screech owl in a tall pine top. The wild cry of the startled snipe rips through the gloom as he is frightened from his night perch. Towards morning all is quiet except for the hissing noise of the pine needles as the breezes rise.

By the time November comes, the scenes have changed. Chipmunks and squirrels hurry about restocking their food caches. The scarlet ivy leaves rustle frostily when searching birds patter over them. It looks like a hard winter ahead, for the muskrat houses are high and wide. Migrating crows gather in the old snag and then trail off towards the south in noisy bands. All through the night the wild geese honk high overhead.

In the dead of winter the point is bleak, swept clear of snow except where the low boughs of a pine shield it. The coyote nightly haunts

the point over well-beaten paths, sometimes alone and sometimes with a posse of associates, sending out shrill cries over the cold air and causing the rabbit to dive for his hole in the nearby snow bank.

Everything is frozen and rigid. Up on the "hump" the smaller trees huddle toward their leader, a monstrous Norway pine, that stands about a hundred feet high, the tall straight stem lifting its branches to the sky into a broad irregular pyramid. The light reddish-brown branchlets blend in color with the ridged and fissured scaly bark. Of the winter inhabitants the chickadees are, perhaps, the most cheerful and inspiring.

About the time the woodchucks begin to frequent the sunny hillsides it is evident that spring weather will set in. The sea gulls and crows arrive as the ice begins to break up. Then come the ducks, geese, snipes, robins, and cranes. The martins are the last of the birds to arrive, just when the sides of the point are billowy with white cherry blossoms. The warm water in the lake has thawed out the frogs and turtles, and the summer activities on the point again begin.

The Western Hill

By Alice Weister

This is not a hill where men
Go once—come back
And go again.

It is the peak men climb to learn.
The sun goes down—
There's no return.

"Common Sailor"

A Letter from Bill Adams

I ENJOYED 'The Passing of the Timber Beast' immensely in the January Frontier. In a way Timber Beast and Common Sailor were of one breed. I remember Portland thirty years ago when square-riggers lay all along the waterfront. It was a tough port in those days. Not many deep water sailors got farther away from the waterfront than Fourth street: the 'Golden Eagle' saloon, the 'Elegant', the 'Thetis', the 'Badger'.

The lowest villain of the many low villains who as sailors' boarding-masters made a fat living by shanghaiing poor devils of deep water sailors was Larry Gallagher who had a boarding-house at Portland. He had a branch house at Astoria. The last I heard of him he was in the state penitentiary of———. In three years he cleaned up \$80,000 in his crimping business. I remember that when I was in Portland he put a crew aboard a full-rigger called the 'Wiscombe Park'. Skippers had to pay \$25 a head blood money to the boarding-masters in those days, \$25 for every sailor. Larry was a man short for a crew for that ship. One of the men whom he had been going to take off to her died in his house. No matter. Larry dumped him into his boat, dumped the poor sailor's friendless corpse down at the feet of the living men whom he was taking off—all of them too sodden with

boarding-house rot-gut to know what was going on. Larry and his runner, Ford, hauled the stiff over the ship's bulwark with a rope under his arms, carried him forward, and tumbled him into an empty bunk. Then Larry strolled unconcernedly to the cabin door, and said to the skipper, "Well, Cap, I've brought you off a cracking fine crew." The skipper paid him the blood money, \$25 a head for a dozen men, \$25 for the stiff.

There were fine ships in Portland that winter. Some were old timers that had been built in the grand days of sail. Some were of the clumsy modern type they turned out in the latter part of the last century—big, box-like hulls built for cargo-carrying with little idea paid to speed. We came to Portland from Liverpool and but for a bit of bad luck should have made a grand passage out. We were a short twenty days from the Mersey bar to the line. In fifty-three days out we were abeam of the Horn. Off the Horn we passed a great new full-rigger, the 'Rajore', that had sailed fifty-seven days before us. I recall that when we were thirteen days out from the Mersey we overhauled a ship that was thirty-three days out from the same port. She refused to believe our signal and asked to have it repeated. In seventy-one days from Liverpool we crossed the line in the Pacific. From the time we came clear of the Horn we never had to

take a sail off the ship till we were away up north of the line, till we had run out of the northeast trades. We 'sweated' up sheets and halliards every evening, of course, and once in a while took a pull on the braces as the wind hauled a little one way or the other. But we ran from the Horn to out of the northeast trades under full sail all the way.

One evening just after we had left the trades the booby birds appeared, as they always did in those latitudes. They are unafraid of man and have a habit of roosting on the yards of a ship at night. We used to go aloft and catch them. They never fly away at the approach of man, but merely turn a rather stupid gaze upon one. We never harmed them, just caught them and let them go again. But that night a young fool by the name of Hickman, a lad who was perhaps meant for a farmer but certainly not for a sailor, caught a booby and wrung its neck, meaning to skin it and take its skin home as a present to his girl. Within ten minutes of the time Hickman killed the bird the wind hauled ahead. We had the first head wind we had had in some 5,000 miles or more of sailing.

From that night on not a man aboard the ship would speak to Hickman. He was 'put to Coventry'. He was forced to live in silence. Days passed with the ship beating to and fro against a fresh head wind. Driven desperate by his solitude, by the contempt of his shipmates, Hickman broke down and wept like a

baby. No one paid the least heed to him.

We were one hundred and ten days from Liverpool to the Columbia. That is a good passage, far and away better than the average. It was the best passage of the year. But, had it not been for that young devil of a boy we should have made the run in ninety days in all probability and the old ship would have established a record as great as that of McKay's famous 'Flying Cloud' or greater—'Flying Cloud's' record being eight-nine days from Boston to Frisco.

Of the many fine ships that were in Portland that year I doubt if one is left today—unless it be the big four-poster 'Hougomont', which a few years ago was still sailing, under the flag of the Norwegians, I believe. I remember the old clipper 'Patriarch', and the fine four-mast clipper barque 'Province'. Alongside my ship there lay a lovely old clipper, 'City of Athens'. She was then thirty-two years old. She was so worn that they did not dare to chip the rust from her sides with chipping hammers, as was usually done. They scrubbed her with sand and canvas, instead. I never saw a prettier ship. Despite her age she gave us a good race back to Europe. 'Euphrosyne' was in Portland then, also, a grand ship. The 'Forthbank' came in after she had been put on the overdue list. Two hundred and ten days at sea she had been ere she came in to Astoria. She came with a cargo of sulphur from Sicily. 'Galgate', a big Liver-

pool four-master, lay just ahead of us. She was sunk by a submarine late in the war. I recall that as the young apprentices of the ship 'Cambrian Hills' were rowing their skipper ashore in the gig one day, or rather as they were returning to the ship after rowing him ashore, they found a corpse floating in the stream. They took it ashore and were wild with delight on receiving the reward of \$100 that had been offered by the family of the dead man for the discovery of the body. A sea apprentice drew no pay whatever. He served for four full years, lived one of the hardest lives a man could live, with no remuneration. His food consisted of salt pork, often spoiled, and of hard tack that was usually either weevily or so hard that to break it with teeth or even knife handle was not possible. I was one of the young sailors who helped in the spending of that \$100. A glorious day!

When we left Portland it happened that a number of Liverpool Irish sailors who had been working on the railway had come back to town to look for a ship. Larry Sullivan brought them off to us. They mutinied while we were going down-stream to the sea. The skipper talked in vain to them. He went ashore and brought off the British consul, hoping that the consul might be able to scare them into good behaviour. They told the consul precisely what they felt like telling him. It was not polite enough for me to repeat. The skipper went ashore and brought off

the sheriff. They laughed at the sheriff. Since there were no other men to be had just then the skipper took the ship to sea with eight apprentices to work her. A 1,770 ton barque, a four-poster, with thirty sails to set and handle, for eight lads to work. We had some pully-hauling, we eight boys! We were glad enough when the Liverpool Irishmen grew tired of loafing, away down in the North Pacific somewhere, and took their places at the gear while we were shortening sail in a hurry as a big black squall came piping up.

It was in those days that we used to see a sign stuck up in a certain big seaport, at the edge of a fine city park, "Trespassers will be prosecuted. Sailors and dogs will be shot."

I don't know much about the old-time Timber Beast. I do know that the old-time sailor is almost extinct. The ships are gone. You don't hear our chanties ringing over the still dawn-lighted waters of the wide Columbia as, after lying at anchor for the night, we heave the anchor up to continue on our way to Astoria and the sea beyond the bar.

"A Yankee ship came down the river,
Blow, boys, blow!

Her masts they bend and her sails
they shiver,

Blow, my bully boys, blow!

Oh, blow today and blow tomorrow,
Blow, boys, blow!

Oh, blow for all old tars in sorrow,
Blow, my bully boys, blow!

Barnaby Bright

By Verne Bright

Barnaby Bright! Barnaby Bright!
What is it comes in the deep of the night,
Silver as fog that floats on the weir,
Out of the dust of this many a year?

What is it comes from the dusk-blue wood,
Waking and breaking your solitude,
With a white-light face and a thin pale cry,
Like a windy music across the sky?

Beyond the pasture, *whose* dark grave-stone
Stands knee-deep in the weeds alone
Where the currant-bush drips in the moony gloom
Its dew of blossoms as red as doom?

Barnaby Bright! Barnaby Bright!
What is it comes in the white moonlight
Out of the woods of Brighton Keep
To trouble your sleep—to trouble your sleep?

Gifts

By Mabel Harlan Henry

They gave me peace:
Three yellow flowers at dusk
Ignoring me from a bowl
On the table—
A sleepy china cat
Immersed in its own musings—
A fragile chiseled profile with lowered lid
Wise with a wisdom won centuries
Before I awoke—
They gave me peace.
But you, child, with your big eyes seeking,
Teasing with thoughts that perhaps I am
More than an atom—
You gave unease.

LYRICS

Water

By Eleanor Allen

Water black, and sliding slow
Over stones of red.
Water dark, that quiet holds
Jewels in its bed
Stones of jade and amethyst,
Stones of blue, and white,
Water covers them with green,
Guards them from the light
Only silver fishes know,
As they dart, and gleam,
All the hidden jewels that
Lie within the stream.

Sufficient

By Muriel McKay

Her friends complained
That now and then
He failed her—
As at moments when
She dwelt on peaks
Concealed from him
Or strode companionate
To grim
And secret gods.

So.

They could not see
Wherein lay his sufficiency.
Nor even know
He filled her valleys
To the brim—
The hollows of her little hills
To overflow.

Tears

By Alicia O'Donnell

There are fountains of tears
In the popular trees
Where the sighing wind
Stirs the silvered leaves.

* * *

Fountains of tears
That never fall. . .
I will walk
By the poplar wall.
Only the trees
Shall know my eyes
Are bright with the tears
The sad wind dries.

Après Avoir Entendu Une Voix Cherie

By Naomi E. Lee Wiley

Be still, my heart—
Sing not;
Lest the harshness
Of your human sound
Shiver the fragile beauty
Of my joy.

Faith Is For Seed

By Mary Brennan Clapp

Faith is a hard fruit,
Slow to ripen.

Faith is a slow fruit,
Let it be!

Let the winds swing it,
Let the frost sting it.

Harvest will come
When the fruit can spare the tree.

Lines For a Day in Early April

By Kathleen Tankersley Young

Although the day is grey
And wreathed in tangled rain,
Down under the hill road
Spring has returned again.

Down beneath the garden
White apple trees that bend
Snow, monotonously,
Under the bated wind.

Calypsos

By Ethel Romig Fuller

In this solemn wood
Was treasure-trove
Of elfin orchids,
Picquant, mauve.

As unseemly
As a birch
In the dooryard
Of a church;

As a red curl
In a locket
Hidden in
A beadle's pocket.

Restless

By Nina Crow

I have not seen beauty in the trees,
Nor on the hills, nor in the limpid sky,
Nor on the placid surface of the lake
With my unquiet eye.

I have not found repose along the stream,
Nor in the wood—nor in the quiet church,
Nor yet amid the dwellings of the dead,—
And always I must search, and search, and search.

HISTORICAL SECTION

Each issue will carry some authentic account, diary or journal or reminiscence, preferably of early days in this region of the country.

"Dick's Works"

An Overland Journey to California in 1852

The Journal of Richard Owen Hickman.

Editor's Note: This journal has been edited by Professor Paul C. Phillips of the State University of Montana. The journal is among the early accounts of trips to California. Being in the form of letters it has a personal tone. There has been editorial cutting-out of too personal and of repetitive material.

RICHARD OWEN HICKMAN

Richard Owen Hickman was born in Shelby County, Kentucky, November 1, 1831. Two years later his father, William Hickman, filed a claim to government land in Illinois. Soon after the removal of the family to that state, his mother, Mary Cardwell Hickman, died. His father married again and it was to his step-mother, Elizabeth Hickman, that the manuscript here printed was addressed.

In the spring of 1852 Richard Hickman decided to join the crowds of gold-seekers still moving westward to California. With a party of thirty-two men he left Independence, Missouri, on the 5th day of May and after the hardships and dangers described in these letters to his mother, finally reached Nevada City on the 17th of August. He remained in California eleven years, engaging in mining and trading in miners' supplies. In 1863, because of ill-health, he disposed of his interests and returned to his home in Illinois, making the return trip by way of the Isthmus of Panama.

After a few months spent in Illinois without marked improvement in health, Mr. Hickman again decided to cross the plains. At St. Joseph, Missouri, he found a party preparing for a journey to Montana. He immediately purchased twelve yoke of oxen and three wagons. Having loaded the wagons with miners' supplies, he joined the emigrant train. At Alder Gulch Mr. Hickman disposed of his goods at a fair profit and returned to Illinois to vote for Abraham Lincoln for President.

In April, 1865, after buying another outfit at St. Joseph, he started on his second journey to Montana. This time his destination was Virginia City, which he reached about the middle of September.

Two months later he went to Portland, making the trip on horseback, and from there took a steamer for San Francisco. There he purchased a stock of wines, liquors, and tobacco, which he had shipped to Los Angeles and loaded into wagons for the long overland journey to Montana. Because of various delays his supplies did not reach Montana until June and by that time steamers were carrying merchandise from St. Louis to Fort Benton at a cost of twelve cents a pound in greenbacks. Since Mr. Hickman's freight had cost thirty-one cents a pound in gold dust, his losses in this undertaking were heavy.

Mr. Hickman remained in Montana, engaging in the freighting business. Later he started a store in Silver Bow but still continued freighting goods both for himself and for others. After 1868 he turned his attention to dairying and stock-raising. He was among the first to introduce thoroughbred shorthorn cattle into Montana.

He took a prominent part in the government of both the Territory and the State of Montana. In 1869 he was elected a member of the legislative assembly and in 1871 when the territorial treasurer defaulted, Mr. Hickman was appointed by Governor Potts to take charge of the office.

Mr. Hickman was affiliated with the Republican party from the date of its organization. In 1876 he was elected delegate to the national Republican convention held at Cincinnati. In the fall of the same year he was again elected to the territorial legislative assembly. During the next ten years he served three terms in the assembly. In 1889 he was elected a member of the constitutional convention which drew up the constitution for the new state. In February, 1893, he was appointed state land agent. This office he held at the time of his death, July 20, 1895.

M. CATHERINE WHITE,
Acting Assistant Librarian,
State University of Montana.

May 4th, 1852

Dear Mother:

As we expect to start across the plains to-morrow, I shall commence with my journal today. We are now at Uncle Thomas's. We left Mr. B. V. C.'s company yester-

THE FRONTIER

day; they are too slow about starting for us. We intend going as far as the line¹ to-night.

May 5th, 1852

We arrived at the line about sunset last evening and camped. As soon as we got supper over, we retired, but we had not got to sleep before it commenced to rain, which was accompanied with loud claps of thunder and the lightning glaring most vividly. It was a hard night for our initiation into camp duty. We laid in wood this morning to do over night, there being none on the road to-day.

May 6th, 1852

We are now on a large creek called Sweetwater, after a march of 20 miles. Yesterday we came 22 miles and camped in the open plain by ourselves, and passed another very disagreeable night in the rain. Where we are now we have plenty of good wood and water. The country is as beautiful as any part of Illinois, but timber is very scarce. I find it is going to be too much of a task to sit down every evening and give the proceedings of each day, and as I expect to take a minute account of all the road, I shall write at leisure which shall be copied from the other.

Tuesday, May 11th, '52

As we are laying up this evening, I shall record a few more of the past events. Early in the morning of the 7th we were under way, crossed the stream I mentioned above and came 10 miles to a small river called Wa-ca-ru-tia². Here we came up with and passed the company which D. Love is traveling with, stopped an hour to noon, then resumed our journey. Camped again without wood or water; still traveling by ourselves. On the 8th we started early, traveling a northwest direction. The country is most beautiful, but a more crooked road never marked this green footstool. Stopped to noon at a fine spring to the right of the road. Whilst here I noticed a storm was approaching from the west and by the time we were ready for starting, the rain commenced descending in torrents. Both of the boys crawled into the wagon, and I had to take it. I have seen it rain in Illinois, but it was not worth talking about. Besides this, we were in a large level place on the dividing ridge of the Wacarutia and the Kaw³, and in less than a half hour I was standing in water over my boot tops. I don't want to be in many rains on the plains. On the 9th we left camp about 8 o'clock and came into the road behind a company from Sangamon Co., Ill., 17 in number, some of whom I was acquainted with. Traveled till late in the afternoon when we came to and crossed a large creek called the Shunganung. On the following day we crossed the Kaw river. This is a large and deep stream, which had the appearance of being navigable for common sized steam boats. On the south side is situated the Baptist Mission. There is a farm attached to this Institution for the purpose of learning the red men of the forest the art of using agricultural implements. There was also settlements on Sweetwater, Wacarutia, and the Shunganung.

This morning we left camp near the ferry and at 1 P. M. arrived at our present camp, which is on Cross Creek. Here there are some French who have Indian squaws for wives, and half breed papooses. The Indians are remarkably fond of whiskey. I saw two Potawatamies almost dead drunk to-day. We are sunning our provisions and clothes this evening. There is a toll bridge on this creek; the rates are 50c per wagon.

Sunday, May 16th.

Laying up to-day, so I will write some to keep you advised of passing events. Early on the 12th we struck tents and rolled away from our former resting place. The

¹ The "line" was the boundary of the Indian country two years later to be organized into Kansas and Nebraska.

² Wakarusa.

³ Kansas.

road runs along the north side of the river, which we crossed day before yesterday. After going some distance we passed a small farm. There was also a circular sawmill. After crossing another large creek, we ascended the bluff, where I found a pen, the dimensions of which was about 4 feet square. It was constructed of rough logs with the bark on, well notched and fitted together, covered with slabs and some large stones on them. As might be expected, I had a curiosity to know what was in it, so I took hold, but it was with great difficulty I raised it and looked in. There was nothing to be seen but the head of an Indian. I supposed it to be a chief buried in a sitting posture with his head out of the ground. The pen was no doubt built for the purpose of keeping the wolves out. About 11 o'clock we came to the village of St. Mary's, or the Catholic Mission. Here is several stores and quite a number of dwellings. The Catholic Church is a large building with a bell in the cupola. Still traveled up the north side of Kaw river till the 13th about noon, and having crossed quite a number of streams, we raised our wagon bed and crossed the little Vermillion, then turned more to the north, camped on Rock Creek opposite a high bluff, which was covered with beautiful cedar. On the 17th we left camp about 20 minutes past six and came nearly a north direction. In the afternoon we crossed the Big Vermillion by letting our wagons down with ropes. On the next day about 10 o'clock we came to the Big Blue River, and after raising our wagon beds about a foot, crossed without injuring anything and at 12 o'clock arrived at our present camp. Raining like fury. About 3 P. M. I went down the river with W. F. N. of Menard Co., Ill, and came in before night, he with a deer, and I with the largest wild turkey I believe I ever saw, and to-day we are enjoying the great luxuries.

May 21st, '52

We are now camped on Little Blue River, about 80 miles from where I last dated my epistle. At 6 o'clock A. M. on the 17th we struck tents and resumed our march; heavy frost and the air very cool. At 11 o'clock we came to the junction of the Independence and St. Joe roads*. We are just coming into the crowd of emigration. As far as the eye can reach to the east and to the west, nothing is to be seen but large trains of wagons and stock. When I beheld it first I could not help asking myself where all this mass of human beings come from, but then the thought arose in my mind that if every county in the United States should send out as strong a delegation as old Sangamon, there would be a great many more on the plains than there was. We passed a company soon after we came into the road that started from St. Joe, out of which 16 deaths have occurred within 8 days of cholera; four died one morning and was buried in one grave together. Camped without much wood or water at night. On the next day we passed a large train that had the cholera among them. Traveled all day through dust so thick that it was with great difficulty that we could see our teams at times, and at night camped on a small stream called Little Sandy. I saw an old man traveling along to-day with a cow packed. The next day we made an early start and passed a company in camp. After going some distance I heard that Hodge and Coleman were in the company. I concluded to wait till they came up to see them. When they came up they told me that they had had some sickness in their company but were all well again at that time. Mr. Coleman told me he had heard from home stating that all were well on the hill. The country is not so beautiful as it has been. It is more broken and the soil more sandy. Camped on Little Blue for the first time. On the 20th we traveled up the north side of Little Blue River, trav-

* This was the Oregon trail which was used as the Overland trail to California to Fort Bridger on Green river. Hickman's route was much longer than the one usually taken from St. Joe.

THE FRONTIER

led about 22 miles and again camped. There is three young men going to California that have no teams, but have their bread and dinner on their shoulders. When I first saw them I thought it was a hard way to serve the Lord. I think they must want to go worse than I do. There was also five Irishmen started from Independence the week before we did with wheel barrows. This was called the wheel-barrow train. This morning we started merely to get a better place to camp. We traveled two miles and again pitched tents. It is raining now and has been all day.

Sunday, May 30th, '52

We are now camped about 130 miles above [below] Fort Kearney on Platt River. I am sure nothing could give me more pleasure than hearing from home this morning; but this is impossible. Whilst I am scribbling, the rest of the company are amusing themselves in different ways; viz. reading, writing, singing, fishing, shooting, washing, patching, etc. On the 22nd we left the Little Blue for the Platt River. The roads were very muddy. Accidentally let my hat fall and the wagon run over it; nice hat now! Passed by where there was a man murdered on the 11th. All his clothes were burnt with the exception of his shirt, which I saw myself. It had quite a number of holes in it, where he had been shot and stabbed, and it was all covered with blood. His body was found covered up with some sand but a few yards off. We also passed the grave of W. W. Wilson of Adams County, Ill., who died on the 25th of cholera. Here our deaf and dumb man began to exhibit signs of alarm and wrote on his slate to me that he was afraid we would all take the cholera and die before we got to California. As we were turning off the road to camp, I found a new panama hat just to hand; thought I to myself, it was intended for me. On the 23rd we crossed from Little Blue to Platt, where we arrived about sunset and camped. Wood scarce, water muddy. The Platt is a very wide stream and has the appearance of being navigable for the largest sized steamboats. We are now in sight of Fort Kearney. On the following day we came to the Fort just at 12 o'clock, stopped and got some of the best water I have drank since I left home. Came out a half mile and stopped to noon. After remaining there some time the captain sent us a message to leave within 30 minutes or be canonaded. We chose the former. The Fort is situated one mile south of the river on a level valley; there is but about half a dozen houses there. The most of the soldiers was out after the Pawnees, they having been committing depredations on the emigrants; the troops were ordered out with the artillery to subdue them. On leaving the fort we traveled about 10 miles and again camped with muddy water and a few green willows for fuel. On the 25th we traveled about four miles when we came to a ford that had just been discovered. We determined to cross as the lightest of the emigration was on that side. Now, I can assure you it was a scary undertaking to start into such a flood of water, but we blocked up our wagon beds and started in about 9 o'clock, and at 12 we were all over safe. Where we crossed the river was about two miles in width. The name of Platt is a very appropriate one for it is so broad and has such a number of islands in it that it looks like 3 or 4 rivers platted together. In the evening after crossing, we traveled about seven miles up the north side and camped on Elm Creek. This is a singular looking place resembling an old apple orchard. We passed J. Lane & Co. of Springfield to-day. He is cousin to John Cook and made a great many inquiries about the rest of the company that started with us. He had fell out with his company and wanted to travel with us, but in starting from the ford we did not get to see him. Early in the following morning we left camp, and passed a large number of teams in Carrals. Whilst we were nooning there was a company of four teams came back to where we were. The fathers and

husbands had both died of cholera and the widows were on their way back to the states; but here they met some friends who persuaded them that to attempt to return would be more dangerous than to go on, so they turned right about face and began to travel over a portion of Platte valley for the third time. The country along Platte is considered beautiful by some. The valley is from 5 to 20 miles in width, and is level as a barn floor. The principal grass that is in the valley is called buffalo grass and in appearance resembles the common blue grass. Wolves, deer, antelope and buffalo are very plentiful off from the road a few miles. I never knew that there was any antelope on the plains till since I started across. On the 27th, I took my rifle at noon and crossed over on an island in the river and killed a deer. The deer here are pretty much the same kind we have in Illinois, but are not near so large. We laid in a supply of wood for our little stove this morning, as we shall not have any more for some days. Camped again on the bank of the river, but no wood to be had. All hands gathering buffalo chips. This looked right simple to see all the cooks out with sacks gathering chips but more so still when they come to cook with them. The next day we were off early and eight of the boys started on a buffalo hunt. After going some six or seven miles off to the right of the road they saw a herd of 300 or 400 down on a valley still further off by a couple of miles; so they laid their plans how to make the attack so as to kill as many as possible. The plan was about in this way,—four of the company were to go to the right and the others to go to the left, so that when the four to the right made the attack the ones to the left could have an opportunity of cutting off their retreat and in this manner surround and take them down in numbers; but they were sadly disappointed. After running down there a distance of two or three miles, they expected to immortalize their names, but they had just come in about 100 yards when they looked down in a deep ravine and saw five old ruffians making at them. Some were delighted at seeing them so tame, whilst others thought they were too tame. Those of the former began to look for some place to secrete themselves and the latter took to flight. One of those delighted was a little Vermont Yankee with long red hair and whiskers. He fixed himself in a sort of ditch and was waiting for the word "fire". When he looked around for the rest of the company, the first he heard was "Come Yankee they'll have us". Two of the company was then forty yards off and running for life. Boo-oo went the foreman of the band of bulls. Now for the first time poor Yankee saw his danger and his red hair rose so that it pipped his bearer. Grabbing it in his left hand he began to make tracks in a hurry. How were they to escape? Only by flight. The band of bulls were bearing down on them strong, coming up in Indian file; and as they run Yankee took occasion to look back, Boo-oo went the old fellow again who had now come within 40 paces of him; and Yankee said, "Now legs if you expect to do me any good now is the time." About this time one of the foremost boys fired his gun, which caused them to slacken their speed, and poor Yankee thus saved his bacon. After fairly outstripping these five they stopped to rest, and one of three foremost broke silence by saying, "Boys I'll not run another step; I'll die first," but before he got fairly through he looked up and saw them coming on their trail and he spoke more emphatic and said "I will not run;" then turning around again and looked he saw they were still coming and he began to walk pretty fast, but they gained on him so fast that he saw that to run was the only chance for saving himself; but he looked around and in the place of five saw ten, five on his track and the other five coming in from the right forming a tie, so he took to his heels and so far outrun the others that he made them ashamed of themselves. When they got back to the river they found they were about the same place where they

THE FRONTIER

left it in the morning, but the teams were at least ten miles further off so they dropped in with us one at a time till dark, when little Yankee come marching in and said "Boys, I've seen the elephant^a, darn old roper if I ain't". Early in the next morning we struck tents and rolled out and about 8 o'clock came to the "Cold Springs." These are the greatest springs I have ever seen. One of them is at least 30 yards in circumference and boils up in a most beautiful style. The water was very cold. We traveled about 15 miles and reached our present camp about one o'clock P. M., and all stopped for the purpose of hunting Buffalo, but little Yankee could not be hired to leave the wagons. This is a most beautiful day; the valley is covered with herds of cattle belonging to the emigrants which have stopped to try to observe the Sabbath. Forgot to mention at the right time that James Piatt and family passed us yesterday. They are traveling with mules. There has been 149 teams passed us today, but before the week is ended we shall be ahead of them again. Five men passed drawing a handcart. There is no timber along the river, even the Islands that are in the river are as bare as these plains. When we first struck it there was some cotton wood trees along it, but we are now clear out of sight of timber of any description. Our principal fuel is Buffalo chips.

Wednesday, June 2nd, '52. On Monday last we were on the road at sunrise and after traveling 4 miles passed a company from Seneca County, Ohio. They were burying two of their men who had died of cholera. There was another company from the State of Michigan camped about 40 rods distant that were burying their third. This is taking them off. Yesterday morning we got an early start and soon found ourselves in sand about ankle deep. This was hard traveling for man and beast. We passed a great many teams that had the cholera among them. In my private opinion, publicly expressed, that in ten years from this time, if the emigration should continue across the plains as it has since 1849, that this end of the road will be a complete grave yard. It would astonish you if you could see some parts of it. During the day we crossed several beautiful streams of clear water, which is very rare on this river. We left camp about half past six this morning and after a drive of 12 miles, came to our present camp. We are laying by this evening. Some of our men have the promonitory symptoms of cholera, Jas. among the rest.

Sunday, June 6th, '52. We are now encamped on the River nearly opposite the Court House Rock. This rock is one of the greatest natural curiosities I have seen since I left home. It is situated about 12 miles south of the road, but looks no more than 3 or 4. When the sun shines on it, it presents a very beautiful appearance, and in structure bears a very striking resemblance to the state house in Springfield. On the 3rd, 4th and 5th we done some good traveling, for we were in the midst of sickness, pain and death, and thought if we could manager to out travel the bulk of immigration we would not be so much exposed to the cholera, measles and smallpox, which is scattered along throughout the whole road thus far. James has been gradually growing worse since the second, and last night I thought he would surely die. Our medicine did not seem to have any effect on him as we could give him nothing but what he would immediately vomit up. This morning I looked for and enquired after a physician for some time, but without success. I was then persuaded by one of the company to give him some morphine. Then the question arose; who knows how to administer it? The prescription said, from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ grain per dose, so I had to guess at it and began by giving a small portion and thought I would increase it. I believe it is having the right effect as he appears to be a good deal easier. During

^a An old expression meaning "I have seen death."

the last night he was calling for water constantly and if he did but swallow one tablespoonful I could see his nerves or flesh begin to draw and he said he was cramping. After I saw the effect it had on him I did not let him swallow any when I could help it. We burned some brandy this morning for him to make use of instead of water and have been giving small portions of the cholera medicine we brought from St. Louis. I did not give the particulars of our three last days' travels as I wish to write home this evening if I can find time. There has been no timber on our road for nine days, but we have occasionally seen some low, scrubby pine and cedars on the bluffs which are about ten miles off.

Sunday, June the 13th. It is Sunday again and we are still on this river. It begins to seem like a long one as we have been coming up it for three weeks. On the 7th we came about 12 miles and then halted to let our cattle eat whilst we would get some dinner. Where we nooned was opposite the famous Chimney Rock. It might be counted as another of the many curiosities of nature. At the base it covers about 10 acres of ground, which is of a circular shape, and after running up about 1/3 of the way it breaks off and runs up something similar to the steeple on the First Presbyterian Church of old Dr. Smith's. The valley is becoming more narrow daily and the soil very sandy. Some places there is no other vegetation than prickly pears. I have seen a great many acres with scarcely anything else. They are of two kinds; some are circular like a sugar loaf; others are broad and flat. The former bears a beautiful red flower and the latter one of orange color. The thorns on them are much longer, larger and sharper than those cultivated in flower pots. Julia has a few. In the afternoon we came up and camped near some large bluffs called "Scott's Bluffs." On the following morning about 10 o'clock we came in sight of the Larami Peak, the summit of which is covered with snow. We could see it very distinctly, though at least 120 miles off. The river is becoming more narrow every day. On the 9th we came within 10 miles of Fort Larami. We found the road very sandy most of the day so that we did not get along very fast. On the 10th we passed the fort. It is situated about 1½ miles south of North Platte and about the same distance from Larami fork. By those who went over to it I learned that it was in good repair and a most beautiful place. In the afternoon we left the river and came a northwest direction through what is called Cedar Hills. We camped at the Cedar Springs that night and for the first time had enough wood to cook with for 2 weeks. James has been on the mend slowly ever since Monday last, but complained a good deal today, as the road was rough. We were off early the next day and at 10 o'clock reached the river, where we found a company from Tazewell County, Ill., preparing to bury one of their men who had just died of cholera. They came to us to get a spade to dig his grave. His name was Robert Bell and he was much beliked by all who knew him. His father lives near Washington, Ill. There was one thing singular attending his death and burial. I was informed by one of the company that on leaving his father presented him with a favorite dog, and when he was dying the dog sat by looking at him, and after committing his remains to the grave he refused to leave it, and they put him in the wagon and had to hold him for some distance before he was willing to part with his master. On the next day we passed an Indian village. The squaws were engaged in making moccasins. Here I saw a Chief that was 105 years old and boasts of never having shed white man's blood yet. He is a Cheyenne.

Sunday, June 20th, '52. Don't think hard of my paper for changing size and color, for my blue foolscap is all gone. Early on the 14th we left camp and after coming some distance met a company of Packers from Oregon. There was two women

THE FRONTIER

along who were riding mules, straddle at that. I thought to myself they would see the old elephant before getting to Missouri, if they had not already seen it. We have travelled up Platt River until it has dwindled to quite an insignificant stream to what it was when we first struck it. In some places it is not more than 200 yards wide. As it becomes narrow it becomes deep and the current more swift. Came over the Black Hills today. They are the most rough and steep hills we have had to contend with. On the following day we traveled about 17 miles, the most of the way through deep sand, which is the most irksome and disagreeable travelling a person can have. About 2 o'clock there came up an unpleasant hail storm from the northwest. The wind blew so hard that I looked for our wagon to capsize. After the storm was over I could have shoveled up bushels of hail. Passed the mouth of Deercreek, a large stream on the opposite side of the river, today.

June 16. Off this morning by sunrise, and after traveling two miles came to where a company was cutting up a Buffalo which they had just killed. We got a few pounds to try it as some thought it would be a great luxury. B. Haas, of Logansport, Indiana, who has been traveling with us ever since we crossed Kaw River, came and wanted me to go out on the plain with him to kill an antelope. We went out together and overtook the wagons at noon, having killed two antelope. The hind quarters of each we brought in with us. Late in the afternoon we passed the upper ferry and two miles further on we camped. Here, for the first time, we cooked with wild sage. After getting supper ready we all sat down expecting to have a good supper off of buffalo beef, and indeed some were afraid they would not get enough and helped themselves to two pieces, but was soon satisfied that one was as much as they could get through with, for some of them run their fingers down their throats, but the old fellow had become sullen and refused to obey the call. It happened that the old veteran was of the masculine gender and in the possessive case, as the meat possessed the most disagreeable odor and taste of anything of the meat kind I have ever come up with yet; so after cooking some antelope we made out our supper. I made out to swallow some of the buffalo merely for the sake of saying I had eaten of buffalo. Some of the boys could not wait till they got through supper to throw it away, and it was not to be wondered at.

June the 17th. After coming three miles this morning we left Platt River for good and struck for Sweetwater. Traveled about 17 miles and camped at some fine springs called the Willow Springs. Passed a number of fresh graves today, also a man dying by the side of the road. There was three men with him.

June 18th. This morning before it was light I took the bucket and went to the spring after water. On arriving there I saw at a short distance off a man laying on the ground. I went up close to him and saw that he was dead. He was laying on the ground without anything over him. I returned and told the boys of it, but for some time they thought I was trying to deceive them; so I offered to go and show him to them. Some went and found a man digging a grave near by. He told us that the man was from Cass County, Michigan, and that his company had left him unburied, and that he had volunteered to bury him, and wished some help. Some of the boys assisted him and he then came to our wagon and got breakfast. Now you see, men on the plains have less feeling for one another than dumb brutes. We arrived at Sweetwater about sunset and camped. We passed the Saleratus Lakes this evening. The earth around them is covered with a thick incrustation of an alkaline nature. Some of the company tried it and they say the bread is as good made up with it as with soda or saleratus. I did not try it as we had plenty of the original

and did not need a substitute. On yesterday morning I ascended the Independence Rock⁴. This was situated on the north side of Sweetwater. The rock is of an oblong structure, oval at the top, covers about 100 acres at the base, and is said to be 306 feet high. It is composed of pure granite and is as hard as nether millstone. After passing it about a mile we crossed the river, came up the south side to what is called the Devil's Gate. This is a place where the river runs between two mountains of solid stone. The banks on either side rise about 400 feet from the bed of the river and stand about perpendicular. In the afternoon we came to our present encampment. Mr. James Short of Petersburg, Ill., is camped a short distance from us. When we arrived at Sweetwater on Friday last we found a company there from Iowa. One man in the company had been the cause of a husband and wife separating. The old man's name was Prouty. The man and woman's names I disremember, but through the persuasion of some of our company they were made to drop it and live together again. On yesterday this old Prouty, who was instrumental in parting them was seized with the cholera and died and was buried at the Devil's Gate. The river we are now on is one of the principle tributaries of North Platte. It is about the size of the Sangamon.

Tuesday, June the 22nd. We stopped this morning on account of one of our men being very unwell. I think it is cholera or something like it, and he is so far gone that I believe we will have to dig his grave before night. On yesterday we did not start so early owing to our cattle being absent, and after the sun got up and its rays coming in contact with the dry sand, the heat became almost insupportable. We traveled 27 miles and camped without water.

10 o'clock A. M. Our man Mansfield is no more. One hour since he breathed his last and some have began to make preparations for committing his remains to the tomb.

12 o'clock. We are through with our burial and are making preparations for crossing a desert of 16 miles this evening. We have no tools nor materials for making a coffin so we had to dig his grave with a vault, then wrap the corpse up in a couple of pair of blankets, then cut wild sage, and place it across to keep the sand from pressing too heavily on it. This done, we erected tomb stones, and gave him as decent an interment as we could. His name was George B. Mansfield, from Deleware County, Indiana. He was deaf and dumb.

Wednesday, June 23rd, '52. We are camped this evening on a small stream called Strawberry Creek. It looks as if we are getting pretty high up in the world. Yesterday afternoon we traveled 20 miles, 16 of which were on a desert where there were no other vegetation than wild sage. This looks very much like the common garden variety, only the stalks are much larger. It is the only thing we have had to cook with for some days, and am happy to state that it is an excellent substitute for wood. Last night when we reached the river we turned our cattle loose and drove them across the river to shift for themselves. This morning, in attempting to throw Jack's boots across the river I accidentally let one of them fall in, for I had not the power in my arm that I thought I had, and as he had been complaining for some days, I had to go in after it. The water was so cold that I got completely chilled. The river is narrow and deep. I saw a buffalo calf this morning which some Oregon emigrants caught a few days since. It was following a cow and appeared to be well contented. This afternoon we came over a very rough ridge called the Devil's Backbone. I was on a bank of snow today that was 8 or 10 feet deep. This was in the valley of the

⁴So named by a party of trappers who spent the Fourth of July there about 1830.

THE FRONTIER

Sweetwater. I think we are getting ahead of the most of the immigration, for I do not see half so much old rubbish as there was on Platte River. Along that stream there was old clothes of every description, and there was towels, gowns and hairpins strewed all along the road from the time we struck till we left the river, and books of every sort and size from Fanny Hill to the Bible. There are more long yarns spun at night when sitting around the camp fires and all kinds of songs and hymns from Yankee Doodle up to Old Hundred. Now you will have a pretty good idea of the plains.

Sunday, June 27, '52. We are now on a large river west of the Rocky Mountains. The name of it is Green River and is the head waters of the Colorado. On Thursday last we left our former camp on Strawberry Creek and after coming nine miles stopped to noon for the last time on Sweetwater, and in the afternoon ascended the dividing ridge of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. For about 7 miles the ascent was so gradual that we would almost mistake it for a valley. The road then passed between what is called the Twin Mountains. These took their name from their resemblance. Then for something like two miles the ascent became more steep, when we found ourselves on the great divide¹. To our right comes up the Wind River Mountains. These are very high and covered with perpetual snow, and immediately before us was Fremont's Peak. This is seven thousand six hundred feet above the pass. After ascending till I came to the summit I turned around and looked back towards old Sangamon. For some time I gazed, but could see naught but hills. I then bid farewell to the Atlantic side and began the descent. Whilst passing down the Western declivity I was forcibly struck with the resemblance of this to the long ravine which the railroad passes down from Jacksonville to Naples, only these hills are much higher. It was raining as we came through so that I could not get a very good view of the country south, but as well as I could see, the mountain presented a grim and rugged appearance. At sunset we pitched our tents at the Pacific Springs. These are located on the Western declivity of the South Pass, about four miles from the summit. Around the Springs there is a large bog or swamp. On it the grass had the appearance of being very good, so as soon as we turned our oxen loose, they all rushed on to it after the grass. Here, for the first time in my life I noticed the great tenacity and elasticity of the earth. When our cattle went on to it the earth would yield and sink in the form of a basin, and where it looked to be perfectly dry on top it would sink until they would be standing in water knee deep. Some of the largest of them broke through and went clear under except their heads. I thought some of them were going to China, but we got them all out again. On the following day we came to the junction of the Salt Lake and Oregon roads². About 3 o'clock P. M., and after some deliberation, concluded to take the left hand. The one to the right crossed a desert of forty-five miles from Big Sandy to Green River, and the one we came had plenty of water. At night we camped on the Salt Lake Road about seven miles from the junction, on a small river called Little Sandy. The earth here has an abundance of Mica and Isinglass in it. Yesterday we traveled about 20 miles and camped on Big Sandy. This is a stream about as large as the Sangamon, though shallow on account of the quantity of quick sand in the bed of the river; and this morning after coming seven miles we left the Salt Lake road and took what is called Kennie's Cutoff, and are now at the middle ferry on Green River. We have got our wagons all across without accident. The rates of ferriage was \$4.00 per wagon. We have also crossed our cattle on to an island in the river and intend letting them remain there till morning, there being some grass

¹ South Pass.

² This was not the main Oregon trail but the Sublette "cut-off" to Fort Hall.

on it. Grass is getting very scarce, in fact our cattle have been living on faith for the last ten days.

Friday, July the 2nd, '52. Having been too busy to record the incidents as they passed, I will have to trust to memory, which on some portions of the road is very indistinct; but one thing I remember, that is on last Monday we had to cross on cattle, and out of the 30 men there was but two besides myself that would undertake to swim to the island. The reason they were all afraid was the current was so strong and the water so cold that they were not willing to risk their lives, so as has been common ever since we left, I had to do the drudgery, so myself and two others started and went above the island, which was 2 miles above the ferry, and after drawing off my coat, hat and boots, started in with the rest of my clothes on to keep the water from cramping me, for it was running off the snow but a few miles above. When I first struck the water I thought I should perish, it was so cold, but determined to make the best of it, and started. The current carried me down stream at least 300 yards, but at last caught a willow bush that was leaning over the river, and for the first time found out what it was to hold to the willows. I took cold there and have not got fairly over it yet. About ten o'clock A. M. we started and came to a beautiful stream 10 miles from the ferry. I believe the name of it was Slate Creek, and the following day we traveled about fifteen miles and stopped to get some dinner. This place was one of the most singular looking places I have yet seen. It is called the Indian Springs. There was a most beautiful spring of pure water flowing from the foot of the mountain and the bluffs along the north were composed of a soft substance resembling both chalk and lime and carved so full of names that I could hardly find room to register my own. In the afternoon we came to some very rough road and across some high mountains and camped at the junction of this road with that of Sublet's Cut Off*. There is none other than bunch grass along here, and it grows on the side of the mountain, where it is too steep almost for anything to get to it. Wood is scarce, but wild sage is very abundant. On the following day, about an hour by sun, we reached Ham's fork of Green River and camped for the night. Here we had some fine fish. The Snake Indians came to our camp with large sacks of fish to trade for hard bread or fish hooks. I caught some very fine ones and whilst I was fishing there was an old squaw came to our wagon with some fish to trade. James made a deal with her for several fine salmon trout, and when I returned I commenced to run him about trading with a squaw. He flew into one of his old bachelor pets and almost angry enough to throw it all away. Here I saw the Indians have their dogs or wolves packed like mules. They have wolves in place of dogs. I saw a little pappoose lashed to a wolf's back and the animal appeared to be as harmless and gentle as a lamb. He followed close to the squaw all the time. Yesterday we came up the highest mountain we have yet made with our wagons. It was the dividing ridge between the waters of the Colorado and the Great Basin, and in the evening came through the most beautiful grove I have yet seen. It was composed of spruce, pine and aspen. It was the prettiest place I have seen on the whole journey. After passing it we descended the mountain four miles down to the valley of Bear River, where we camped in the most luxurious and nutritious grass I have seen since we passed Fort Larami. This morning we started early and came 5 or 6 miles, where we arrived at and crossed four forks of Bear River called Smith's Forks. These four forks were not more than that many rods apart and two of them were so deep that the water ran into our wagon bed. After crossing we kept along down the north side of the river and passed through

* This was the west end of the "cut-off" where it rejoins the main trail.

THE FRONTIER

what is termed the Narrows, which are two large Bluffs, one on either side of the road, and at 12 o'clock came to our present encampment in the beautiful valley of Bear River. Of all the mountains we have had to encounter these are the most rough and steep. There is also some beautiful scenery along this country and in some places if you could behold the huge masses of pure granite which have been heaved up from their original resting place by some convulsion of nature, it would astonish you. There are more mosquitoes here than any other place I was ever at. Took a walk this evening out across the valley. Saw a grave of a man which the wolves had exhumed and the body eaten by them. Tis a trying place on people even after death.

July 5th, '52. We are still on Bear River, but expect to leave it in the morning. Jack is sick. He has been complaining ever since we came across the Sweetwater. James has the ague and fever. I have been hauling them both in the wagon since the second. On the 3rd we had to cross several spurs of the mountains along the river, and in most places the dust was so dense that it was with great difficulty that I could see the team, and after suffering all day in the dust, we stopped, only to be eaten and tormented by the mosquitoes. On the fourth we made an early start and was soon in the midst of snow. It was a lovely morning and all nature seemed calm and quiet. As I passed along I imagined I could hear the church bells in Springfield ringing and I thought I could see the streets thronged; but alas, will you listen to the Selkirk story, one verse anyhow?

But the sound of the Church going Bell,
These valleys and rocks never heard;
Never sighed at the sound of a knell,
Nor smiled when the Sabbath appeared.

Now don't laugh at these old lines being revived, for they were so appropriate I could not refrain inserting them. So the day passed off and the evening came with strong head winds and the dust rose in immense clouds. Late in the afternoon we left the valley and ascended a spur of the mountain. As we began to ascend the rain began to descend in a manner which was by no means pleasant. When we reached the summit we found it all covered with snow and still coming down without mercy. I had on two coats, 2 pair of gloves and was thickly clad in other respects, but I can assure you that I never suffered more with cold in all my life when we stopped to camp. The boys both lay sick in the wagon, so I took the axe and went out to an aspen grove after some wood. As I was looking for something dry I heard a voice nearby which resembled a half grown gosling. I turned to see who it was, when through the bushes which were half covered with the snowy mantle, I saw a person, but knew him not. I listened to him, for he had commenced to address me, and heard him say, "Hallow, this is a fine day for the fourth of July, ain't it my friend." "It may be for a man from Pike County, Missouri," said I to him, "but it don't look like the fourth of July does in Illinois." "Well," continued he, "I have always noticed one thing, that is, it is one of the laws of nature for something to turn up so as to make us reflect on the past, and it seems naturally designed to cause us to set an estimate on our many past favors which has been bestowed upon us by the author of nature, now don't it?" I had been standing silent in the storm, listening to this long speech, and had become somewhat interested in it by the mode of delivery and the important topic, and by the time he concluded the last sentence I had come to the conclusion that he had something else in his head beside Jerusalem travellers, and then I turned and said, "You have read Professor Larrabee's evidences, have you not?" "Yes, I am from the State of Indiana, and not from Pike County, Missouri." "What are we standing here for,"

said I, "this is a poor place to discuss so important a topic as that you have advanced. Let us return to the camp." "Have you anything to drink?" he inquired. "Yes, plenty of water." "No whiskey, have you?" "No sir, we don't deal in the article." On further enquiry found he was a student from old Asbury¹⁰ University. I wonder if he has any forget-me-nots. We passed a very disagreeable night in the rain and snow. On this afternoon about four o'clock we passed the famous Soda Springs. These are situated on a small eminence to the right of the road. The mountain which they are located on is composed of a species of decayed granite. On this mountain the springs boil up in six different places. Some taste like copperas, others like saleratus and soda. A short distance below these on the bank of the Bear River belches forth the Steamboat Spring, a natural curiosity. The water of this spring spouts up at irregular intervals, 3 or 4 feet high, though the water is more or less agitated all the time. A few feet from the spring is an aperture in the stone, through which a hissing noise proceeds. This is called the Safety Valve of the Steamboat Spring. The water has a sharp, biting taste and leaves a sort of metallic taste in the mouth. The earth around it for miles is the color of ochre and has every appearance of there having been a volcanic eruption. We are now camped at the forks of the Oregon and California roads. The one to the right leads by Fort Hall and the left goes through Myer's Cut Off. We intend taking it.

Sunday, July 11th, '52. We are laying by today on a small stream called Raft River. It is the head waters of the Columbia River. Jack is still very unwell and has something like the flux. I called in a physician this morning to see him. He is badly scared. On the morning of the 6th we started on a 16 mile stretch without water. Most of the road was level until we came to the divide between the waters of the Columbia and those of the Great Basin. After making the ascent we had to descend through a very narrow and crooked canyon to a small stream called Denison River. Here we camped for the night. On the day following I left the train and went down the river I named above something like 12 miles. There is more scenery along this river than any I have yet seen. There was quite a number of falls along the river; some of them had a fall of 30 feet perpendicular. I got lost from the train and did not find them till half past ten P. M. The next day we were on the road by sunrise and after coming a few miles met Preston Hampton. I did not have an opportunity of saying much to him as the teams were going on. In the afternoon we ascended a mountain some 9 miles up a canyon, a part of the way so steep that it was as much as our team could do to pull up. Then we had to descend one mile of the steepest road I ever saw. We took our cattle loose from wagon, locked both wheels and then let it down with ropes attached to the hind part. We came down without accident and camped without water, for we were on a desert of 27 miles. On the next day we came on to the springs, a distance of 17 miles. Here we watered our stock, rested an hour and resumed our march until night, when we camped in a long, deep canyon in the mountains. Early on yesterday morning we hitched up and rolled off. For about 20 miles we were travelling through the canyon I spoke of above, and about 4 o'clock we came into the valley of Raft River, which is about 10 miles wide. We continued our march on to the river, when we arrived at our present station about 9 o'clock last night. We intend going about 8 miles up on the west fork of the river this evening.

Sunday, July the 18th. We are at this time camped on the Head of St. Mary's or the Humboldt River. On the 12th we came about 23 miles from Raft River, across a beautiful valley called The Pyramid Valley, and camped at a place called the Steeple

¹⁰ Now DePauw.

THE FRONTIER

Rocks, or are sometimes called the City Rocks. These are said by some to resemble the City of Havana in Cuba. Some are of one shape and some another. Those handy to the road are covered with names, some carved and others painted. On Tuesday we arrived at the junction of the Salt Lake and Fort Hall roads early in the morning, and came on about 15 miles when my attention was drawn by a notice printed in large letters on a cedar tree. On reading it it proved to be a warning to the emigrants against camping near bushes where the Indians could creep up on them. It was signed by his Majesty, Brigham Young, Governor of Utah Territory. This was about 100 miles northwest of Salt Lake City. In the evening we met a large train of Packers returning from California. As we had turned our cows loose on account of one being lame, we had to drive them loose. One of the men came up to us and said, "Ah, boys, you ought to have women in the place of cows, for they are the scarcest article in California." That night we reached Goose Creek and there camped. On the next day we came up the stream above mentioned about 17 miles, when we entered a very deep, rocky canyon and came up it some distance to where the road turned off to the south leading to the Thousand Spring Valley. Here we camped again. Soon after stopping a young man came up on a mule and spoke to us. He was from the city of Memphis, Tenn., and had come up on the same boat that we did to Independence and had got pretty well acquainted. His name is William W. Johnson. He stated that he left the Mo. line on the 10 of May and passed Biddle, Constant and Dr. Henry at Kaw River. He told us that Mr. B. had lost one of his children, and also that one of the men had lost his wife. From the description he gave of her it must have been Mrs. Merryman. On the next morning we were off soon after daylight, having to travel 17 miles to water and 25 to grass. Wm. Johnson passed us before we got to Thousand Spring Valley, bid me goodbye and said he would be in Sacramento City in fifteen days. In the evening we found some good grass for our cattle, also a well of water and went to camp and about three o'clock on the next day we arrived at the Warm Springs. This is one of the most singular places I have yet seen. The earth for some distance around is covered with an incrustation of an alkaline nature and the water boils up in several places, which was so warm that I could not bear my hand in it. There is a bold stream running off from it called the Fountain. The waters of it are also very warm, but what is the most singular is that about 70 yards above the warm springs there is another spring of excellent cold water. There is an immense cloud of vapor or gas always rising off the warm spring, which fills the atmosphere with a very disagreeable odor resembling that of tan vats. Yesterday we came from the warm spring valley to the south fork of the Humboldt, a distance of 30 miles, where we arrived about dark. There was no water in the Stream where we struck it, but after coming down a short distance came to where the water rises out of the ground, and there camped. We traveled down the river about 17 miles this morning, crossed the east fork and now encamped in the finest grass I ever saw. It beats any meadow I ever was in.

Wednesday, July 21st. We are laying by this afternoon in the valley of the Humboldt, having come down it about 75 miles and crossed a desert of 20 miles. This is the hardest looking country I ever saw. The principle vegetation is wild sage and greese wood, and from the country where they grow I believe they would grow on the great desert in Africa.

Sunday, August the 1st, '52. Our trip down the Humboldt has been the hardest portion of the road so far, but we are pretty near through with it. There is such a sameness about it I thought I would omit giving the proceedings of each day. The

most of the way is crossing deserts from 15 to 20 miles in length. Last night about dark we came to a ford of the river where there was a fine spring of water, and whilst we were filling our vessels with water a company of packers came up. One of the men I recognized as having seen him in company with Mr. Johnson. I went up and inquired where he was and also how they came to be behind us. He told me that on arriving at the head of the Humboldt one of their men was sick and they laid by for him to get well and whilst they were laying by Mr. Johnson was taken with the cholera and after an illness of only 13 hours, died. Thus it seems like a man has no assurance of his life, for only three days before his death I saw him and he told me he was in better health than he had been for years. We are at the meadow, 20 miles from the sink, and during the day have cut and cured enough hay to last us across the desert between this and Trucky River, as we intend going in that road to Nevada City. There has been a good deal of splitting up among companies for the last few days, some going to the Southern and some to the Northern mines. Nine men left our company with their bundles on their backs a few days since, and I have seen quite a number today. There was a young man left a company from Cincinnati, Ohio, by the name of Isaac Knight. When he sold out his interest in his team he swore by his maker he would not drive another ox as long as he lived, and he did not, for I passed him this morning, a corpse, and some of his company digging his grave. He died of cholera.

Monday, August 2nd. Today we came from the meadows down to where the Humboldt expands into a lake. It is something near seven miles broad in the widest place, and is surrounded with low, marshy bottoms with large canebrakes. The water is so strongly impregnated with common salt that it cannot be used. We bought out Jack's share in the team and paid him off and let him go. It amounted to fifty-eight dollars and a few cents. I will now give you a statement of our difficulty with him. On coming onto the plains I said in his presence that I intended crossing without having any trouble with any one, without I was a good deal imposed on, and he took advantage of what I said. So on the 8th of June, whilst James was not expected to live, he shewed his cloven foot. I had been up every night from 6 to a dozen times for 3 or 4 nights, and him laying in bed, so that morning I asked him to make a fire in the stove and I would get breakfast. He said he would do no such thing and that he would be imposed upon by no one, and began to cuss and abuse me; so, rather than have a fuss with him then, I let it pass. So after I got breakfast ready I called him to eat, and he came and commenced to swear again. I told him it was an improper place to use such language and then James spoke and told him not to swear in his presence. He said he would talk as long as he pleased. I told him to talk on, he should not be noticed, though at the same time it was as much as I could do to keep my fingers off of him, and had it not been for the situation James was in I would not have taken the half of it, but I had enough wit to know that that was no time to settle it, so I let it pass. He took up an idea that I was afraid of him, then, because I did not show any resistance and thought he would keep us both under his thumb, but he missed it; so on the morning of the 6th of July he commenced on James, who was at that time laying in the wagon shaking with a chill, but I did not find it out for more than a week, for I was not present and James said nothing about it for some time, for we wanted to get through without any more trouble with him than was possible, but he had entirely outgrown his breeches. So on the evening of the 29th of July he was making up the bread and something I done did not please him and he began to curse me again, so I told him to stop it, which only made him go on

THE FRONTIER

worse and made a threat in which he insinuated he would give me a drubbing. I could take no more off the Jack, so I give him as good a talking to as he ever had. I told him how ungentlymanly he had treated me on the Platte and then stepped out and told him if he wanted anything more to come on, for I would rather thrash him than eat my supper, but he knew better than to come out. So today he made a proposition to James to sell out his portion of all the outfit. I told James to buy it and I would come in for half, and we would let slide. We got all of it into our possession this evening, so I hope we are done with him forever. He told James in his conversation that if he had not have had his hands in the dough, he would have struck me, if he had got whipped. James in responding told him it was a fine thing for him, for he would have been sure of that for I was in the right mood for giving it to him. We are camped on a small byo running out of the Lake Mary, or what is more commonly called the Sink of the Humboldt. We came by several trading posts during the day, and on arriving at the Government Station we found Martin Gard, a young man from Sangamon Co. who left our company a few days since upon the Humboldt, laying wounded from the accidental discharge of a pistol. He told me that he started about sunset yesterday evening across the desert with four others in a light wagon drawn by four mules, and he was driving and after coming out something like ten miles they saw eight Indians near the road, for the moon was shining, and on seeing them he started to drive faster for fear they intended to attack them, and as he started, shot himself in drawing out his pistol. He is in a bad fix, but if taken care of I think will recover. Our cattle have stood the trip well so far and are the greatest travellers between Springfield and the Sierra Nevadas. We hope to start across the desert tomorrow.

Thursday, August 5th. We are all across the much dreaded desert and have been laying by resting since yesterday about noon. On Tuesday morning we run the Humboldt into the ground and rolled out across the desert. The day was cloudy and we had occasional showers. Towards evening we came in sight of a lofty column of smoke indicating the presence of hot springs, and after a travel of 30 miles reached the place about dark. This is the most extraordinary locality of hot springs I have ever seen. They have a circumference of several hundred feet, but there was at one extremity a circular space of about fifteen feet in diameter entirely occupied by the boiling water. It boils up at irregular intervals and with much noise. The water is clear and the spring deep, but we had no means of ascertaining the depth. The temperature of the water was about 210 degrees. There is several other places where smoke or gas escape, which would require a long description. The water is impregnated with common salt, but not so much so as to render it unfit for cooking purposes, and by taking a portion from the spring and adding a sufficient quantity of tea, it is as good as if it was boiled over the fire. At one place the boiling water spouts up from 8 to 10 feet (latitude 40° 39' 46"). After taking supper here and resting 2½ hours we started again and traveled till one o'clock, and then stopped to let our cattle eat some hay and rest a while, and all fell asleep and did not wake up till just as the day began to dawn, when we again started, as our cattle had been without water about 24 hours. So we came on and every few hundred yards would lay an ox in the sand completely give out till we reached the river, about 12 o'clock M. There was 9 head of cattle out of our company give out, but none were ours. When we came within about 2 miles of the river our cattle walked so fast that I could hardly keep up with them. It appeared like they knew that water was handy and when we reached the stream I thought they would kill themselves drinking, but they knew when they

had enough. We were on the desert about 32 hours. On reaching the river we found it to be a beautiful mountain stream about as large as the Sangamon, thought the strongest current I ever saw. James undertook to wade across, but had to back out. Just then a large Indian came up and took him by the hand and led him across. We found here several small trading establishments. Some have flour, which they sell at \$25.00 per hundred pounds, but the principle articles is whiskey and brandy, and since we came here most all of the company have got more or less "Alkali." This river sinks about 15 miles below here or empties into a large lake the same as the Humboldt. The name of the river is Truckee and that of the lake is called the Pyramid Lake. It took its name from a large stone standing in it. I found a steel plate of it the other day and will enclose it to you in this to let you have a view of the country at the mouth of this river, which is about 15 miles distant from this place.

Monday, August the 9th, '52. We are laying by this afternoon in a small and beautiful valley covered with fine grass and surrounded by mountains, which are dressed in the most beautiful robes of evergreen I have yet seen. We came through some of the finest timber today I ever saw. The forest is composed of sugar and spruce pine, red wood and cedar. On Thursday evening last we pitched tents about 10 miles further up the river, and on arriving where we camped found Samuel Garvey and brother from Owen County, Ky. They asked a great many questions with regard to the connections in old Sangamon. During the night there was a horse stolen from our company, supposed to have been taken by Indians. No traces of him could be found. The next day we traveled about 18 miles further up this stream and over the worst road we have seen on the whole route. On Saturday we traveled about 20 miles and camped where the Beckwith route leaves this and goes in north by Downieville, and on to Marysville. There was a great many took that route. On yesterday we came a Sabbath day's journey towards the land of Gold, and after a drive of eight miles this morning came to our present encampment. Mr. Jack, I think is a little sick of his bargain. He supposed he could get through without much cost or trouble, but he missed it. We gave him \$10.00 per cwt. for his share of the flour and he has been buying for 25 and 30 cents per pound. He also gave a man \$10.00 to haul his clothes through and he walks. But I have said nothing of the way the government officers have been treating the emigrants. There is at this side of the desert a relief train (so called) but it is only to relieve the emigrants of what loose cash they may have, and if they have not money they take stock in exchange for their provisions. Governor John Bigler, the present executive, appointed an old snub-nosed Pennsylvania dutchman to take charge of the station and also gave instructions with regard to disposing of the provisions. Now this relief train was made up by subscription of the residents of California, to be appropriated to the relief of the suffering emigrants who may have fell short of provisions on the plains, but instead of being appropriated in this way, it is a plan of the Governors to strip and huckster the emigrants out of their last shilling and then get the remainder of their stock for a trifle. Such is the state of democracy in California. The Governor is speculating on the funds contributed by the citizens to the relief of those who may be in a suffering condition. But enough on political matters, for I have said more than I intended when I began.

Sunday, August the 15th. We are now in the mining region, after a long and tiresome journey across the plains, having been just 100 days from Independence. I will give some of the proceedings of the past week as near as I can recollect. On Tuesday we made a drive of about twenty-five miles through dense forests of pine and redwood and small valleys, which in beauty could be described by nothing less

THE FRONTIER

than a Saddler Jim, and about sunrise I arose to get breakfast and found the water which I had brought up on the previous evening hard frozen in our buckets. Cold weather for the 10th of August. About 8 o'clock on the morning of the 11th we came past where Domar and Reeds company nearly all perished in '45. The houses are all standing yet and pine stumps which is said to have been cut off at the top of the snow, are standing yet, about fifteen feet high. Tis a desolate looking place. So at noon we came near to the foot of the great Sierra Nevada, where we nooned, and in the afternoon crossed the summit. This was the hardest hill to come up we have had yet. It required 8 yoke of cattle to draw an empty wagon up and was with great difficulty we came up that way. On descending four miles to a small valley, we for the first time camped in the State of Cal. The valley is located on the head waters of the South Yuba, and whilst here we had five head of cattle stolen by the Indians. On Thursday myself with six others, armed and equipped as the law directs, started in pursuit. The seven of us had 49 shots for them; so after following them for 5 miles across a spur of the mountain, found two of the cattle which they had left, but they had taken the three best on. We followed them about 15 miles further but could not get in gunshot, and as we were all on foot and had nothing to eat, we had to abandon the chase and return to camp, which we reached after a hard day's travel of nearly 40 miles through chaperall and over rocks, through deep ravines and dark pine forests. Three of the cattle belonged to an old gentleman from Miss., and two we got was his, so he only lost one. When we returned he called us up and paid us many compliments for our services and came to me and said my name should go back to Mississippi, as he was keeping a journal. I expect my name will stand about as high as the young man's who gave the forgetmenots to the Bellesletters Society. Baa, it makes me sick to think of it. I hate to make sport of the old man's dose of flumery, but I can't help it. On the 13th and 14th we came over the roughest country I ever saw. One place we had to unyoke our cattle and drive them down and then let our wagons down with ropes. I thought this was coming pretty close on to the Elephant, so after crossing the South Yuba twice we came to a small valley yesterday evening and camped. This morning we made another start and came two miles when we overtook the Elephant coming down the hill to this valley. For more than a mile the road was so steep that we locked both wheels and one drove whilst two of us held on to the hind part to keep it from tipping over on the team. The hind wheels were off the ground several times. We are in Bear Valley, 25 miles from Nevada City. We want to go down tomorrow. This morning, being the Sabbath, we intend to lay by till morning.

Tuesday, August the 17th. James went in to town today. Yesterday we left our camp in Bear Valley and came about 12 miles, when we stopped to get dinner and let our cattle rest and bed a while, for there was no grass. After remaining two hours we resumed our march, but towards night they all began to vomit and we had to stop and camp again. They were all badly poisoned but are getting better. We are now camped on a small bunch of grass between the South Yuba River and a noted trading post called the Blue Tent, which is about 7 miles northeast of the city. As I am through with my journey across the plains, I don't want to send this home till I shall have looked around and visited the valley, for there is no place here that looks like living; so goodbye till I look around a little more.

South Yuba, November the 2nd. As you have followed me from home to California, will you go down on the river to see the mines? When I first came down I was astonished at the many different implements used in extracting the precious Aurum from the earth. There is flumes, sluices, long-tom's, cradles, picks, pans and

shovels, and as many other things as you could imagine, but enough about the implements used in mining. Let us talk about the Gold a little. Well it is scarce enough, though at the same time there is plenty. It is scattered over a large territory, though found in small quantities. The largest day's work I have done was \$29.75. I will enclose a piece which I took out that day. The weight of it is about \$4.00. This piece I wish you to have a pin fixed to and wear it for a breastpin in remembrance of your far off and wandering son Dick, who still feels an interest in your welfare and happiness. I was 21 years old yesterday and this morning cast my vote for Scott and Graham, at the first presidential election ever held in California. I intend to go down to the valley next week and after returning I will close up my epistle and send it home, not because I am anxious about sending it, but to fulfill my promise. The young man I spoke of as getting wounded at the Sink of the Humboldt has about recovered. He arrived here some days since. He told me that Mr. Coleman came to the sink about 2 weeks after we passed and stated that he had a hard time of it getting through to the sink, and had packed all he had on it for more than one thousand miles. He said that he inquired after us and said he would like to see us. He also said that the reason Mr. C. was so far behind us was that some one of the men in his company died of cholera and he had to take his family back about 200 miles. Mr. Gard also told me that James Short of Petersburg was at least two weeks behind us. This shows that we done about as good travelling as any other company on the plains. I have seen a letter from Mr. Short to Mr. Wm. Richards of Nevada. He states that he is very much displeased with California and that he has been sick ever since arriving. He is at Butte City, about 70 miles south of this place. Mr. Richards expects to take leave for home about the 1st of December.

Woods Ravine, December the 17th, '52. It would no doubt become me to make some apologies for not closing this sooner, but if I were to attempt it I would be apt to put my foot in it, so I'll not try this time, but try to tell you something relative to the great Sacramento Valley. On the 18th of November I was at the Sacramento City. I found it all in ashes and mud. The principle part of the city was destroyed in the late fire and most of the inhabitants as well as the merchants were in cloth tents. The rainy season set in the week of the fire; consequently the people did not have time to fix any other than temporary shanties. It is situated on the east bank of the Sacramento River, and just below the mouth of the American River on a level piece of bottom land. The mud was at least knee deep in many places in the streets. On the following day I took my leave of the city, and started on my return to Nevada. After coming out some distance the fog cleared off, so that I had a pretty good view of the surrounding country. As I came along up the valley, I could see the whole coast range of mountains, both the Sierra Nevadas and the coast range, all of which were covered with snow, and immediately before me to the north stood an interesting looking group of mountains, which were all situated between the Feather and Sacramento Rivers. They were rather a singular looking group. These are the Butte Mountains, which are sometimes called the Sutters Butte. I must acknowledge I was badly deceived in the valley. It is so far behind the prairies of Illinois, that it would never have been thought of if the mining region had not have been so close. It all overflows and there is but a small portion of it fit for cultivation. The wharf at the city, I forgot to mention was filled with a great many schooners and boats, and some too of the most beautiful vessels I ever saw. I have no anxiety to settle in California at present, but I would like to explore some of the country before I take my leave for the far off land, Sweet Home.

RICHARD O. HICKMAN, Nevada City, Cal.

TO MRS. ELIZABETH HICKMAN, Springfield, Illinois

BOOK SHELF

A-Raftin' on the Mississipp'. Charles Edward Russell. (Century Company. 1928. \$4.00.)

Three noteworthy books inspired by "the father of waters" have appeared in as many years, 1926-28: the late Herbert Quick's *Mississippi Steam-boatin'*, Lyle Saxon's *Father Mississippi*, and Charles Edward Russell's *A-Raftin' on the Mississipp'*. If I say that I have found the last named the most interesting reading of the three, it is in large part owing to its author having chosen for his theme the, to me, most interesting aspect of the great river's history. The first of these works preserves, as its title implies, some of the more lively annals of the Mississippi as a highway of commerce; the second confines itself in the main to a consideration of the problems raised by the river's vagaries in times of flood and low water; the third recounts the epic deeds of a hardy succession of raftsmen and tow-boat crews in the drama of American lumbering enacted about the headwaters, along the banks, and on the surface of this our most capricious navigable stream.

Mr. Russell's book, however, is more than a compilation of anecdotes and yarns of adventure. It is an authoritative record built from the results of tireless research and a prolonged acquaintance with its subject. If it affords plentiful ephemera concerning such matters as the hair-raising rivalries of river-boat racing, or the blood-curdling outrages of the prairie banditti, or the scalp-lifting mint-juleps and cocktails served at the bars of the inland steamers, it also contains in damning detail the story of the timber thieves of the northern pine woods, one of the most barefaced of the many raids that have been made on our basic natural resources, and an exposure of the squandering of our public funds in the placing of beacons and the dredging of channels where they were least needed under the pretense that they were to make the Mississippi "safe." And if, perhaps, overmuch space is devoted to freight and sailing records of once famous but now forgotten steamboats, one would have to turn many pages before finding equally accurate and equally entertaining accounts of such worthily memorable figures as those, for instance, of Stephen Beck Hanks, the river pilot cousin of Abe Lin-

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coln, and the two Van Sants, father and son, pioneer raft-boat builders, with a reputation for business honesty that eventually carried the younger of the pair into the governorship of Minnesota despite the money-weighted opposition of Jim Hill himself.

The one serious fault I can point to in Mr. Russell's book is no more serious than a fault of omission. After dispelling his readers' fears of the "Bad Men from Black River" by assuring us that they were not so bad after all, he should have satisfied our expectation of the delights of a genuine scare by giving us some account of those river characters about whose unqualified wickedness there can be no doubt whatever, the Mississippi "roarers," "half hoss, half alligator, with a cross of the airtquake," who used to whoop it up all the way from their winter quarters at Le Claire and points north to the peanut galleries of the theatres in New Orleans. I mean there's got to be another book written about the Mississippi!

Portland

V. L. O. Chittick

John Brown's Body. Stephen Vincent Benet. (Doubleday, Doran. 1928. \$2.50.)

Stephen Vincent Benet has in this one volume epitomized the Civil War. Here in ringing verse he has woven a rich fabric from the social, political, and military life of the period, has peopled the War with living characters—both real and imaginary—brilliantly etched against this background, and has filled his poem with episodes which provide a dramatic and significant cross-section of the war. But it is not the traditional Civil War of our school histories. The reader is conscious that the World War has intervened, that here is a newer interpretation, a newer psychology of war than that given by earlier writers. They failed to see—what Benet records—the blind bravery, the pathetic bravado, the conscious and unconscious brutality, the uncomprehending obedience of these human counters moved back and forth in all the hopeless futility of war by leaders often as helpless, sometimes as blind as they.

Perhaps the book is too long. Perhaps at times the machinery of the epic is too evident. But it is always readable, and, page after page, the reader yearns for a listener with whom to share his enjoyment. One charm of the book lies in Benet's unusual combination of classical epic tradition with modern, romantic treatment. The skeleton is clothed in blank verse, but bits of prose, whimsical chymed measures, lyrics of haunting love-

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iness add variety, poignancy, and emotional intensity.

John Brown himself, scarcely a live man but always a vital symbol, dominates the epic. The poem ends with a magnificent lyric tribute to him, for he symbolizes the spirit of progress that demanded slavery's end, that demanded equal rights, that goes marching on in his powerful, mechanical age of ours to —we know not what.

Missoula Lucia B. Mirrielees

The Hell-roarin' Forty-Niners. Robert Wells Ritchie. (J. H. Sears & Co., 1928. \$3.00.)

Here is the story of a young and wicked California in the days when first citizens demolished mountains and moralities with an unashamed gusto happily lacking to a Golden State of concrete roads, lady evangelists, movie stars and district attorneys. The account of it is all very colorful and interesting to casual readers; but it must be a little distressing to native sons, this looking back to earlier Californians who were primarily concerned with the quest for gold and excitement.

But there is more of beauty and reality to this book than the title promises. Mr. Ritchie gives us the to-be-expected riotous scenes. Red-eye and red ladies and they hangings they engendered. The boys of Downies Flat gather in Bill McGhie's tent saloon to partake of Bill's special, raw corn meal, brandy and water, served not in a pan at a gold ounce the pan. Juanita, the Sonora girl, red silk stockings and flower-sprigged bodice, tosses her gay Panama to a friend in the crowd a moment before the indignant citizens dangle her into eternity, from a strut of Downieville's new bridge. Highwaymen ride on their midnight villainies and judges of robust humor find murderers not guilty because they are needed in the camp and suggest that unnecessary Chinamen be brought in to satisfy legal machinery. He gives us this tragedy and humor of American folk lore, its heroes and villains that we have come to expect.

And he does more. He takes us with him, away from the broad inter-urban highways, away from the barbecue sandwich and the gasoline stands, up narrow trails into the mountains where the old gold camps sit quiet in the windy California sunshine. In the sagging, unpainted shacks life wakes again. Water flows again in the rotted sluice boxes. Thirsty and nervous drummers clamber out of dusty stages to seek solace in bars long empty of laughter and the rattle of dice. And the still, forest-smelling air comes

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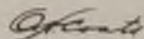
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In short, Mr. Ritchie can write. Any one could have collected the old tales from the old timers and the yellowing newspapers. Not any one could have written his book. It took creative imagination and the gift of words for that.

Brassil Fitzgerald

Wide Fields. Paul Green. Robert M. McBride & Company, 1928. 52.50.)

This is a book of short stories by the author of *Lonesome Road*. The stories are all of the Little Bethel neighborhood in eastern North Carolina. Most of the characters are queer people, some black, some white, and some are so mixed that no one is ever quite sure which they are.

The loveliest story is *The Humble Ones*. The humble ones were Ollie and Lettie. On their wedding night they could not see that "the ominous years were bringing their march on them, bringing for their defenseless heads frosts and black disasters, yea, poverty and sweat, toil and disease, and processions in the graveyard. These being prepared for their great suffering,—and yet blessed be the name of the Lord!—all shall not be lost to the ways of evil. For it is recorded that these two continued gentle with each other to the end."

A few of the stories are for the main part uproariously funny, yet the situations are so hard and some of the complications so sordid one knows not whether to read on or close the book. It is better to read on. Tragedy, however sordid, has its element of beauty. *The Woods Colt* and *Fare Thee Well* are built on old and simple plots, but one is sure they must have happened just as they are told here. Spoon River was no better provider of material than little Bethel; but Paul Green loved the people of Little Bethel. *Missoula*

Mary Brennan Clapp

Hill Country. Ramsey Benson. (Fredrick A. Stokes Co. 1928. \$2.50.)

This novel won the \$7,500 prize offered by Stokes and *The Forum* magazine for an American biographical novel. It is a good sincere piece of work but viewed as a large prize winner, it is a little disappointing. In spite of the fact that the author knows his people and his background, and had in the story of J. J. Hill and the awakening West a large and vital theme, he does not quite succeed.

He attempts to picture the pioneer days on the Minnesota prairie, the conflict between the Yankees and the Swedes, the developing communities and the bitter

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fight between farmers and railroad interests. While doing this, he tries to carry along the story of a young Swede, who rises to fame and power, and of course the young Swede loves and is loved. Behind all this and greater than it, looms the figure of J. J. Hill, not seen but talked about. A load that one writer can carry, another will break under. Mr. Benson grows a little weary and disconcerted towards the end.

For the reader, Hill remains too shadowy, too much out of the picture. Young Sven, the hero, and his loving Weese, at times get lost, as it were, in the whole state of Minnesota. And the reader each time finds them again with decreasing interest. Minnesota is there all right; prairie and mud and railroad track. The Yankees and Swedes are there, hating each other and learning politics. But, one suspects, the love story is only obediently there, because after all, one knows what the public wants. Or does one?

Does not the success of honest biographies and of the many unfictionized books about the old West indicate a growing weariness with the inevitable and conventionalized love interest with which American novelists have so long and so obediently sweetened their chronicles?

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Before me, a notary public in and for the state and county aforesaid, personally appeared Harold G. Merriam, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the editor, publisher and owner of The Frontier, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to-wit:

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H. G. MERRIAM,

Editor and Publisher.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 31st day of January, 1929.

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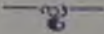
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