

SPIDER'S CHAPS.

By WOLCOTT LE CLEAR BEARD.

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CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH THE CATTLE ARE STAMPEDED BY LORENA'S GANG.

I had not an idea as to Spider's probable whereabouts. The desert was so very large and Spider so very minute a speck upon its surface that it struck me after we had started out that our quest was a singularly hopeless one. Lee, however, differed from me.

"I don't see no trouble in knowin where ter go," he said. "Pug Hollis, he'll be pritty sure ter strike terds Agua Caliente, an Spider'll sure be in his wake. All we got ter do is ter go ter Agua Caliente, too; that's all. If anything's wrong an that kid's alive, he'll be makin some noise or other ter let us know. He's a star at makin a noise, Spider is. It's right in his line."

By this time we were well away from the camp, out of sight of the fire. But for the pole star that hung burning brightly over our heads I would not have had the faintest notion of the direction in which we were going. But Lee, with the plainsman's unerring instinct, loped steadily along without ever raising his eyes. Lee was not a talkative person. The only sound that broke the oppressive stillness was the dismal yelp of a distant coyote, the smothered pad of the hoofs of our mounts as they fell on the soft sand and the regular click of the spur chains against our heavy wooden stirrups. Only once did Lee speak.

"Moon's comin up. See? That's fine. 'n tell what we're doin now." He pointed to a silvery sheen on the dark blue horizon, into which a few minutes later the full moon climbed, streaking the rolling surface of the desert with bright light and blackest shadow and silencing the stately forms of the tree cactus that studded the desert thickly. A faint white line a mile ahead marked the course of a trail, toward which, by tacit consent, we turned our horses.

Suddenly Lee held up his hand as a signal that I should listen. At first I could hear nothing. Then, sounding faint in the distance, there came three pops of a pistol.

"That's him—somebody what wants help, anyhow," called Lee. "Over beyon' the rise, thar, they are. We c'n see from the top. Le's hustle—quick!" Putting spurs to our horses, we soon were climbing a long, stony ridge that for miles divided the plain, concealing one half from the other.

Our horses stopped of their own accord as they reached the top. At first we could see nothing. Then my attention was attracted by a moving blot near the edge of the black shadow thrown by the ridge. As we looked the blot passed out of the shadow and was at once defined as a bunch of cattle driven by three horsemen toward Agua Caliente. Who these men were we could not tell at that distance, but they were not of our force, and one of them, from the peaked crown of his hat, was probably a Mexican. They were driving the cattle rapidly. One of the men stopped, and, turning, looked intently in the direction from which he had come. One of his companions came back and joined him. Then, after a moment, they both wheeled and galloped back to the herd, where the third man seemed anxiously to await them. Evidently the three were uneasy about something.

"They think somebody is a-folkin' 'em," said Lee softly in my ear. They were not far from the truth if they did think so. A horseman emerged from the shadow, and the brilliant moonlight fell on the diminutive form and bright, new chaps of Spider.

"Nope," replied the cowboy. "They can't afford ter take no chances, er they'd a' staid an fought it out. It ain't no joke fer a man ter get ketcht liftin' cattle roun here. You c'n raise the country ter go after 'im, an if he's caught he don't get ter jail alive. Them fellers was goater take these here cattle across the line into Mexico—it ain't more'n 20 miles from Agua Caliente—an sell 'em there. Better get them cattle over the divide an movin to 'rds home, though, as soon as we kin. It's mos' sun up now."

slope. Once we're on the level, then we'll rush 'em." Our horses picked their own way down the dark, boulder strewn hillside. When we reached the plain, there was an instant's pause. Lee drew his rifle from the becket that rested under his left knee.

"Ready?" he asked. I was quite as ready as I was likely to be, but he waited for no reply. Dropping the reins on the neck of his horse, he sent home his spurs and dashed out into the moonlight, yelling like an Indian and pumping his repeating rifle with both hands as he went. As we came Spider swerved his horse and drew his pistol. Then he recognized us.

"Hooray!" he yelled at the top of his shrill voice. "I knowed you'd come. We got 'em! Whoop! Yip, yip, yip! Come on! I ben a-follerin them thieves all night."

Lee and I were riding side by side. Spider was some little distance ahead, shouting these remarks over his shoulder. He intended to stay ahead, too, for, ride as we might, neither Lee nor I could catch him. The three men who were driving our cattle did not wait for us. Firing an ineffective shot or two they turned to one side and vanished in the shadow of the hill. Spider turned his horse in pursuit.

"Come back!" called Lee. "Come back here, you kid! You crazy?" Spider paid no attention whatever, but rode on at the best speed his pony could show.

"Come back, I say, or I'll rope your pony an throw him!" shouted Lee again. "Have ter get within cast first, an you can't do it," returned Spider defiantly. What he said was quite true. We were losing ground at every stride. We were well into the shadow now.

"Come back!" I called in despair. "Will you obey orders or not?" Spider stopped instantly.

"Course, if it's an order it goes," he said. "But what d'you want pull up fer when we jus' got er chance ter get them thieves?" Lee had no words to waste at the time. He took Spider by the collar of his flannel shirt, lifted him half out of his saddle, shook him soundly, cuffed his ears and then returned him, with a thump, to his seat.

"S'pose you want er hole shot in your fool little hide jus' because you think it's smart," said Lee, when he had completed these operations to his satisfaction. "You couldn't tell where them rustlers was a-waitin fer you in the dark there. Now get them cattle movin fer home er I'll take off yer chaps an spank you with 'em." To my great surprise Spider took these corrections and cantered away to obey his orders without a word. But, then, Lee had always been very good to Spider.

"S'pose I really oughter not a shook 'im so," the cowboy went on regretfully when Spider had left. "I couldn't let 'im get so uppity, though. They wouldn't be no livin in the same camp with 'im. But he scared me, that's a fact. That's really why I thumped 'im. I'd be mighty sorry if that kid got hurt, an he was fixin ter get hurt the very best he knowed. Here he comes, now, grinnin so the grin runs over his face all down his back."

sure to meet up with the boys—we're right in their track," he added, with a reassuring nod. The foreman was even better than his word. Hardly had Lee finished speaking when a cloud of dust that had been rapidly moving over the desert proved to be the wake that followed our men. Except Hollis, every one of them was there, even the Ballet Girl. He had screwed the spike that decorated the end of his artificial leg into the foot rest of his wooden stirrup and was riding straight and well, his long gray beard blowing back over his shoulder. The heavy pistol that always hung in his belt was re-enforced by another, and across his saddle a rifle was balanced.

While the boys noisily greeted Lee and Spider the foreman rode directly up to me and without preamble began to explain the suddenness of his appearance.

"You see, I didn't say I wouldn't start off before the time I set," said he. "I didn't mean ter, though, when you left but the boys they got dead anxious. Ther's been a lot er them rustlers from Agua Caliente hangin roun the place, an we all thought you might stack up agains' some trouble. So the boys got kinder scared up for you. Why, even the Ballet Girl, he starts out an gives me fits fer lettin you go without the lot of us back er you. He saddles up a horse an gets out his guns an swears he'll lead the boys himself if I don't start out. He's dead game, the Ballet Girl is, an I tell you these boys is a mighty good lot er boys."

"But I told you particularly that you weren't to attack Agua Caliente," said I reproachfully. "You weren't going to do that, were you?" The foreman looked somewhat dubious.

"Dunno," he said candidly. "The boys was kinder mad, an if we hadn't found you I reckon they'd a' give Agua Caliente a little shake up, whether I'd let 'em or not. Min'," he added, with his usual scrupulous regard for the truth. "I didn't say I wouldn't er let 'em. Where's Hollis?"

I had no idea where Hollis was; was about to ask the same question myself. The foreman went about among the men, making inquiries, but no one had seen him or apparently felt much troubled about his absence.

"He drewed all the pay that was a-comin to him, didn't he?" asked one of the men. "Well, then, he jus' took an skipped over to Lorena an his gang, where he belongs; that's all." That seemed to be the general opinion, and there was a decided feeling of relief that he was no longer with us.

The cattle moved along merrily, each man doing his best to hurry them. Never before had I imagined that a wooden leg could be used to advantage in driving cattle; but when wielded by the Ballet Girl, I found that it had a wonderfully accelerating effect.

When at last we reached the camp, I was thoroughly tired out. My ankle and wrist ached, and there was nothing I desired so much as rest. I started at once for my tent, and as I did so Spider rode up to the foreman and asked what orders there were for the day.

"Orders? Why, you little fool, your pony can't hardly stand on his legs, an you'll tumble over the saddle in a little more," replied the foreman, with a gruffness assumed to cover his approbation of the boy. "Go'n turn your pony out an turn yourself in. Quick, now, 'fore I make you."



A dozen shadowy horsemen charged down on the herd.

horse seemed to be standing still in an ungainly pose on the desert. Then everything was darker than before. Once more Spider came to the front of the herd. He had increased the speed of his horse, for in quicker time than before his song went on:

"Jus' stop drinkin whisky An save up yer rocks. Then you'll alw' have terbacker In yer ol' terbacker!"

The two storms met. For a moment there was blinding light, followed by a crash that split the sky. A dozen shadowy horsemen, that seemed to rise out of the ground, charged down on the herd, shouting and waving blankets.

I saw six flashes from the foreman's pistol. The Ballet Girl, who was standing near me, lunched toward a rifle that leaned against the wheel of the cook wagon.

The herd tossed and surged like boiling water. Spider darted forward to try and hold it. For a moment it hesitated. Then, with a roar of galloping hoofs, it broke and rushed madly away. The thieves had stamped the cattle.

The lightning gave one more vivid flash and ceased. The crash of thunder that followed seemed to tear open the sky, for the rain descended like a liquid curtain that concealed everything.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

RAILROADS AGAINST BILL.

Opposed to Proposed Legislation In Greene-Gaynor Case. WASHINGTON, May 5.—The house judiciary committee gave a hearing on the bill introduced at the suggestion of Attorney General Griggs to provide for the removal to the proper district for trial of persons, indicted for offenses against the United States. The bill was prepared to cover the cases of Benjamin D. Greene, John F. William T. and Edward H. Gaynor and Michael A. Connelly, who were indicted by the grand jury in the southern district of Georgia for conspiracy to defraud the United States in the contracts for the improvements at Savannah and Cumberland sound. The indicted persons were arrested in New York, but Judge Brown refused to allow their extradition to Georgia on technical grounds pertaining to procedure in New York. Colonel W. W. Daily was the first speaker.

BILL TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY OF ARMY

Measure Providing For Its Reorganization.

A LIEUTENANT GENERAL

Bill Confers the Rank Upon General Miles—Mr. Tillman's Amendment. Several Additional Batteries of Coast and Field Artillery Authorized.

WASHINGTON, May 5.—Mr. Walcott, chairman of the postoffice and postroads committee, today reported the postoffice appropriation bill. He gave notice he would call it up for consideration on May 16.

The resolution offered by Mr. Teller of Colorado expressed sympathy for the Boers at the request of the author was laid over until tomorrow.

Mr. Teller gave notice that he would then call it up immediately after routine business.

The following bills were passed: To establish a branch soldiers' home at or near Denver; to provide for the holding of a term of circuit and district courts of the United States at Superior, Wis.

The bill to increase the efficiency of the military establishment of the United States, better known as the army reorganization bill, was called up by Mr. Proctor, in charge of the measure. The bill proposes to change the method of staff appointments by detailing officers from the line for departments of the adjutant general, inspector general, quartermaster general and commissary general. It also increases the rank of Gen. Miles to lieutenant general and General Corbin to major general. One hundred and twenty-six batteries of coast artillery and 188 batteries of field artillery are provided for.

After one or two amendments to the phraseology of the bill had been made Mr. Tillman of South Carolina moved that the fifteenth section of the measure be amended so as to read as follows: "That the senior major general commanding the army shall have the rank, pay and allowances of a lieutenant general and his personal staff shall have the rank, pay and allowances authorized for the staff of a lieutenant general."

The amendment proposed by Mr. Tillman had the effect of striking out the provision making the section apply only to General Miles, the present commander of the army. It was agreed to.

Mr. Berry moved to strike out the provision in the army reorganization bill for lieutenant general. It was lost, 8 to 44.

APPROVED BY GOVERNOR.

Captain Crossland Is Found Guilty and Sentenced by Courtmartial. MONTGOMERY, Ala., May 5.—The courtmartial convened by the governor to hear the charges and countercharges resulting from the Paver-Crossland difficulty on Military day of the Street Fair last October, recently made its findings and submitted them to the governor.

Captain Crossland is suspended for four months from rank and pay, while the charges against Lieutenants Paver and Garside are dismissed.

These findings have been approved by Governor Johnston.

Governor Leary's Report. WASHINGTON, May 5.—Governor Leary has sent to the navy department another of his characteristic official reports about affairs in Guam, including the results of a census taken under his direction and a financial statement of the first six months of his administration, which shows a gratifying and growing surplus of Mexican dollars in the island treasury.

Largest Tool Plant in World. PITTSBURGH, May 5.—The American Ax and Tool company has purchased 33 acres of river frontage at Glassport, near here, and will erect thereon a \$500,000 plant, the largest of its kind ever built. It is intended to centralize the plants of the combine at this point. One hundred men will be employed.

Merged Into National Bank. PHILADELPHIA, May 5.—The City National bank, one of the oldest and best known financial institutions in this city, has decided to merge with the Philadelphia National bank and all accounts incident to the City National bank will be transferred to the Philadelphia National bank.

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Schedule No 4—In effect 12 01 a. m., Sunday, December 24, 1899.

Table with columns WEST and EAST, listing stations and times for Camden S. C. and Blacksburg, S. C.

Between Blacksburg, S. C., and Marion, N. C.

Table with columns WEST and EAST, listing stations and times for Blacksburg, S. C., and Marion, N. C.

West. Gaffney Division. East

Table with columns WEST and EAST, listing stations and times for Gaffney Division.

*Daily except Sunday. Train No 32 leaving Marion, N. C., at 5 a. m., making close connection at Blacksburg, S. C., with the Southern's train No 36 for Charlotte, N. C., and all points East and connecting with the Southern's vestibule going to Atlanta, Ga., and all points West, and will receive passengers going East from train No 10, at 2:30 p. m., at Yorkville, S. C., at 8:45 a. m., and N. W. R., at Yorkville, S. C., with the Southern's connects at Camden, S. C., with the Southern's train No 73, arriving in Charleston, S. C., at 11 p. m., train No 34 with passenger coach attached leaving Blacksburg at 5:30 a. m., and connecting at Rock Hill with the Southern's Florida train for all points South.

Train No 33 leaving Camden, S. C., at 12:50 p. m., after the arrival of the Southern's Charleston train connects at Lancaster, S. C., with the L. & C. R. R., at Catawba Junction with the S. A. L. going East, at Rock Hill, S. C., with the Southern's train No 34, for Charlotte, N. C., and all points East. Connects at Yorkville, S. C., with train No 9 on the C. & N. W. R. for Chester, S. C., at Blacksburg with the Southern's vestibule going East, and the Southern's train No 35 going West, and connecting at Marion N. C. with the Southern both East and West.

SAMUEL HUNT, President. A. TRIPP, Superintendent. S. B. LUMPKIN, Gen'l Passenger Agent.