

THE WOODSTOCK DISPATCH

AUGUST 25, 1897.

BOUND TO GO.

You must wake and call me early,
Call me early, mother dear;
At a quarter after nine the ship
Is advertised to clear.

Eleven days I've stood it off
And tried to keep it down;
But I'll be goshed if I remain—
The only man in town.

Quite long enough, I've walked the hill
To save the cable fare;
Too long the grindstone's done its worst,
My nose won't stand the wear.

The frozen North is getting warm,
With nuggets thick as flies,
A man now has a chance to win
A fortune ere he dies.

I've pan and shovel, lots of grub,
Warm clothing, rubber boots,
So wake and call me early
When the Klondike steamer toots.
—Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

THE CHAPLAIN'S RIDE.

A Tale of Courage, Fortitude, Dash and Daring.

When young Harry Weston received his appointment as chaplain at the post where the 12th cavalry was stationed, everybody wondered except the portly senator from his state and the Secretary of War, both of whom were fellow-townsmen of Weston's father, and knew what strain of blood was in the young man's veins.

Harry Weston was not long in deciding that he would accept the appointment. His taste had always been for things military, and long ago he would have received an appointment at West Point had he not been impressed with a feeling that this particular duty lay in the direction of the gospel ministry. And so he went into the latter profession instead of into the line of the army, on the principle, not that he loved Caesar less, but that he loved Rome more.

And yet young Weston should have made a good soldier, so the senator thought, if he could only have gained a little more of personal assurance. But his bashfulness was against him. And so, when one day Harry Weston tumbled out of the dusty old stage that drew up on the borders of a western post, and, with his gripsack in his hand, made off to report at headquarters, Colonel Grangely, the commanding officer, fairly frowned with surprised annoyance when he saw this smooth-faced stripling stand in an embarrassed attitude before him.

"And who are you, sir?" he thundered.
"I am Chaplain Weston!" gasped the new arrival.

"You the new chaplain? Well, have you come out here to teach us greybeards the path to glory?"

Harry Weston stammered out some respectful but only half intelligent reply, and soon after, following the guidance of an orderly, sought refuge in the narrow quarters provided for him in what was facetiously termed "Bachelors' Row."

That first night at the strange army post Weston felt undoubtedly homesick; nor did the days grow much sunnier as time went by. He had come out west full of bright anticipations of accomplishing successful work in the good cause of God and humanity. And was not that post his parish? Yet he seemed baffled at the very outset by a strange coldness which affected the feelings of others towards him. A few rather tactless efforts that he made to influence various individuals met with sharp rebuffs. Nearly everybody was courteous in a way to the new chaplain, for that was army style. But somehow there seemed to intervene a great distance between himself and his comrades—a gulf which he could not bridge. A few, however, were sincerely his friends and helpers from the start, of whom one was a grizzled old major, and another the major's sweet-faced wife who played the organ in the chapel.

Those were dark days for Weston; but his depression would have been relieved in part if he could have overheard a remark that the major (who well knew that the garrison was all the while taking measure of the new appointee) one evening made to his wife, as they were returning from a religious meeting which had been attended by hardly a dozen people:

"That chaplain will have to prove two things to the entire satisfaction of this post before he will have any influence over this garrison. He must show that he has the courage of fortitude—and also the spirit of dash and daring."

And events fulfilled themselves according to the major's word. The first lesson that the garrison learned concerning the really noble qualities of the new chaplain was the fact that he had staying courage. The story of this discovery cannot be more concisely told than in the words of first Sergt. O'Tooley:

"That there Private Higgins has allers been a gettin' into scrapes ever since he were old enough to be chased by a turkey gobbler on his widdered mither's farm. And it was just as I expected when he come down with the smallpox—for he's allers gettin' caught by somethin' or nuther. But I were a bit surprised when the young horsifer what lately joined from the East as chaplain tuk to

nursin' on him, of course, by permission of the colonel" (this with a respectful lowering of the voice)—"although that there Horse-spittle Steward Pillbox could 'a' seen to it just as well. But the chaplain he observed somethin' about hevin' known Private Higgins, when he was kneehigh to a grass-hopper, and havin' a regard for his ould mither, who had writ a letter to the chaplain askin' him to be kind to her boy, what were in the 12th cavalry. And so the chaplain, he goes into quareltine with Private Higgins, not knowin' whether either on 'em would come out alive, and cares for him tender as a woman. Well, he needn't 'a' done it. But seein' as he has done it, I don't so much mind a salutin' the chaplain now, though I admits that I didn't much relish doin' so onct, he bein not from the P'int nor even from the ranks, but jist a ci-vilum chap wearin' a blue blouse!"

And what the first sergeant said voiced the views of pretty much the whole rank and file of the garrison. Still, something was lacking yet. Weston had not won his spurs in the fullest sense. As a rough first lieutenant remarked:

"'Twas all right, that care that our girl-faced preacher took of Higgins, though I wonder that the colonel let him do so. But that's woman's courage after all. He isn't much of a rider—and he hasn't faced Injuns yet!"

It seemed, however, that after Weston emerged from quarantine—his fresh young countenance marred by no disfiguring marks of the dread disease whose touch he had fortunately escaped—that Col. Grangely began to be his friend, and that the colonel's daughter was kinder in her greetings than ever. Cecil Grangely, had always loved heroes, only she had not made up her mind which among the chivalrous young officers as the post who danced attendance upon her was really the most knightly. As for Col. Grangely, the hero of a hundred fights and skirmishes—he had long ago declared to his wife: "Cecil shall never wed a man who it not a soldier in every sense of the word."

"Pooh, pooh!" replied the lady addressed: "you may command this post, colonel, 'but there is one thing you havn't controll over, and that is a young girl's affections."

It was a balmy June day, not long after this conversation, that Weston, who had bought a beautiful grey for his personal use, was invited to go on a picnic party up to one of the gorges in the neighboring hills. Cecil Grangely was going,—so, of course, almost the entire garrison wanted to go, too. As a matter of fact, about a score of happy-hearted equestrians set out in the cool of the morning through the old sally-port, and were followed, as they disappeared on the plain, by the envious glances of the officer of the day, the assistant surgeon, the major in command of the post, and other unfortunates whose turn for duty it happened to be that day.

"Would have made it half a troop," he said to himself: "but I suppose the colonel knows what he is about."

Arrived at the gorge the party occupied itself in various pleasant ways. After lunch it happened that the colonel's daughter and the chaplain strayed off to a point just at hand, which commanded a fine view of the plain below, across which the eye could almost reach to where, some ten miles off, the low-lying walls of the old fort nestled behind a ridge of ground. Weston felt a keen delight in pointing out to Cecil Grangely this or the other flower, with whose structure he was well acquainted, and then began telling her something of the general geological formation of the country. Just as he was in the act of pointing out a shelving ledge of rock in the valley below, his face suddenly blanched. "Let's go back and join the others!" he cried.

Quickly they drew back to where the colonel and others of the party sat joking over the remnants of the lunch. The chaplain spoke a few hurried words to Col. Grangely, whose face took on instantly that stern resolute look which a soldier's face so often wears.

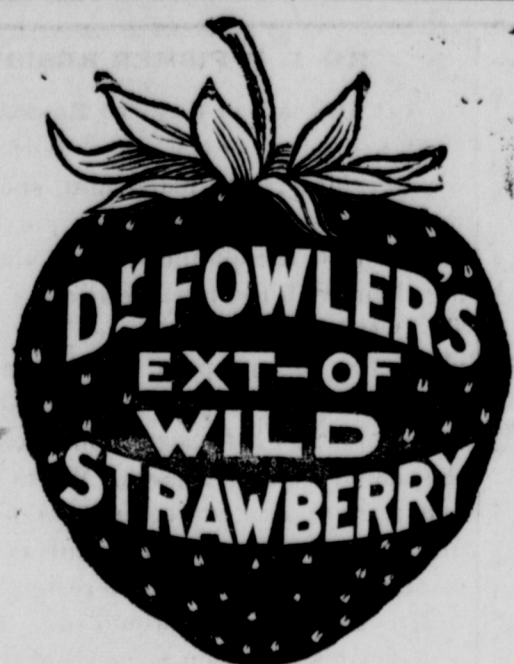
"What is the matter cried the ladies?"

"Nothing serious—we hope!" replied the colonel, in grave, decided tones. "But calm and cool, and we will see presently what is to be done."

Calling his trusted adjutant to his side the colonel sprang away to reconnoitre from the point where his daughter and Weston had just stood. The sight that met their eyes would have made two less experienced plainsmen start violently. Here and there among the rocks below were gliding, like so many reptiles, two score of Indians, all working their way stealthily toward the gorge.

Fortunately there was no high ground in the immediate rear of the scene of the picnic where any of the Indians, who were evidently members of the band that had strayed across the plain on its way southward and had chanced upon the trail of the picnickers, could effect a lodgment.

But the situation was desperate enough as it was. Even the veteran colonel felt a cold chill run through him as he realized the terrible fate which it seemed impossible to avert. There was only one thing to do, and that was to get word to the fort with all possible despatch. But to accomplish that



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feat in broad daylight, and by the one road which led down the face of the mountain at that point (up which the Indians were even then creeping), seemed simply impossible. If he had been younger, the colonel would have gone himself; as it was, how could he order another man out and away to certain death? The adjutant begged of his superior officer the favour of being allowed to carry word to the fort.

"You are a soldier," Mansfield," replied Col. Grangely. "I always knew it, and this offer of yours affords but one more proof of the fact. But I cannot let you go—at least not yet. But one thing we must do," added the colonel, "and that is to bring all the party here to the point and roll these rocks together into a miniature redoubt. At least the rascals cannot scale these precipices reaching down to the plain."

These orders were immediately carried out, and soon a fairly strong defensive barrier of rocks was thrown up, and vigorous preparations were made for a desperate resistance when the inevitable attack was finally begun by the Indians. The ladies were placed in sort of bomb-proof cairn, and the horses corralled as best could be done behind a ledge of rocks that curved around in front of the cairn, as if to protect it. The position was certainly a strong one; but what were a few men, even though they were Americans and soldiers, against at least 40 Redskins?"

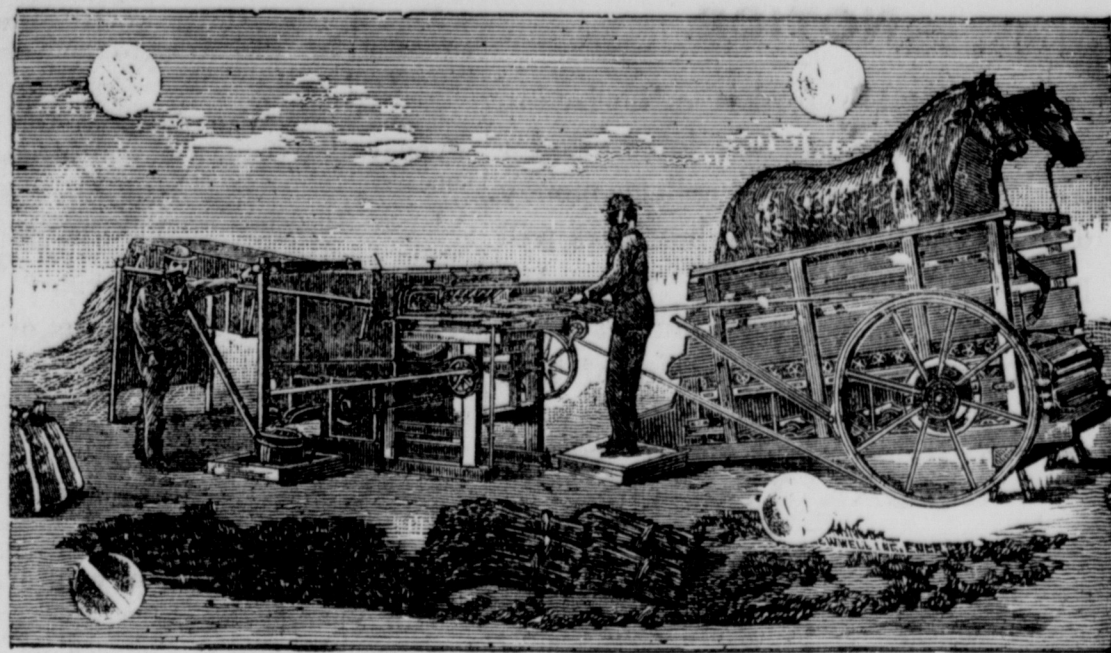
Meanwhile the colonel and two or three trusted advisers narrowly watched from the point of rocks the operations of the Indians below. While they were thus engaged suddenly a white puff of smoke was seen to issue from behind a ledge on the plain, and then another and another puff was observed, followed a few seconds later by as many sharp reports that echoed away weirdly among the rocks of the gorge, startling the group of watchers instantly into alertest attention. What could it mean? At that instant a noble grey was observed to leap away from the foot of the precipice below and shot off at a mad pace across the plain. "The chaplain! the chaplain!" cried the younger officers, while the colonel himself, with tears in his eyes that had not been there since he buried his cadet boy one day at the Point (of whom Weston had always reminded the colonel a bit) cried, hoarsely, "God bless the little fool! He rides to certain death, but he rides well."

Breathless the group on the cliffs watched the intensely exciting scene that was occurring below, where half of the Indians were in hot pursuit of the devoted Weston. The chaplain's dash for assistance had come as a complete surprise to all of the members of the picnic party, no one of whom (unless it were Cecil Grangely) had missed him from the company, so little was he to most of them.

But now all eyes save those of the vigilant sentries were centred on the gallant rider below. What riding was done that day! How disdainfully that noble grey kicked the ground behind him into little puffs of dust as he fairly shook himself into a splendid activity of gait and action, quickened to more desperate efforts by every additional report from the gun of murderous Indian! How those little Indian ponies seemed to skim the ground like so many swallows! No one of them was a match for the grey, but having started from a point further out on the plain, they were trying by a wide detour to head off the chaplain as he came dashing along. It was evident that the latter—who had by hook or by crook managed to get his horse down the mountain by some tortuous route—could not bear directly away for the fort. But how superbly he did handle that grey! Even the "Yellow Boys" on the cliff, West pointers though they were, admired his horsemanship. Not a point of advantage did he lose. Every now and then he swung himself to the off-side of the horse to escape the fire of the Indians.

But recently came the severest test of all. Almost in his very front circled three powerful Redskins who had thrown away their guns and were bound to intercept and by main force drag the chaplain from his horse.

(Continued on page 2.)



1867.

1897.

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