

Adventures of Black Sam, Oregon "Bull Puncher"

This Story of Historical Interest to Eastern Oregon, An Installment to Be Printed Weekly by The Evening Observer, Is Told by Sam Ayotte to Jack Hunter of The Park.

(By JACK HUNTER)

(Fifth Installment)

"Well, sir, very seldom do I lose my temper, but this time when I saw this poor helpless woman in the hands of that beastly fool, my anger knew no bounds. I made a mad rush at him. And I confess, I never wanted to kill a man in my life before, but this degenerate I didn't care whether I did or not."

"But he saw me just in time and the coward that he was jumped on his feet following like a mad bull at me as he ran away."

"You — I'll get even with you for this."

"He disappeared through the brush and boulders."

"I went at once to the girl and picked her up in my arms, starting towards camp. She revived in a little while but cried all the way to camp."

"When I got to the tepee the old squaw hurriedly wrapped her up with a blanket. The old couple had somewhat recovered from Spencer's maltreatment, but while they seemed pleased and grateful to me for saving their Susie, they acted as if frightfully disturbed."

"Fire Water" Fatal.
"The old Indian motioned for me to follow him outside. There, he upbraided me that young Staples had died in the night in the tepee. The old fellow was sure that he had drunk too much 'fire water.' And he was scared that the white men would believe that he had killed him."

"I at once went inside and found young Staples sure enough dead. The old Indian was right. Spencer's corn juice—home made rum had killed him."

"Back to my camp, Spencer had not returned. We buried the dead boy. A fellow named Mat Watson who insisted to be called Mr. Mason, religiously inclined, took a two inch auger and bored a hole in the bottom of Spencer's barrel of rum."

"Before starting on our way again I went over to see how the Indians and Susie were getting along."

"I found them feeling pretty good. When I bid them good-bye I noticed Susie's eyes were moistening with tears. The old Indian then told me:

"Susie is good girl. She wants white man. Now you talk to Susie."

"Saying this he and his old wife bed down face downward on the

buffalo skins. This meant that they were not there at all as far as Susie and I were concerned. The Indians way of privacy in their lodge."

"I faced Susie and we walked in to each other's arms. She spoke in very good French."

"Once I have dreamed just what happened the other morning. And from that time I have waited for my here. And now you have come. Are you going to accept my love which is the first I have ever experienced? I wait at least to kiss you good-bye. But, I will see you again if it is in my power."

"She turned and raised her face to mine and I kissed her and she kissed me back. I told her I would be sure to meet her again. I don't know, but I almost hated as much to leave her as I did my first sweetheart, Lizzie Powers."

"I finally got to Spencer's home. Mrs. Spencer told me that she had not seen him at all, but I was sure that he was hid. When I asked her for my pay, she said, 'You will have to wait for Spencer. I have no money.'

"Well, sir, I judged that woman as a good true woman, but badly treated with such a scoundrel as Spencer. So I decided to wait for my pay."

Wanted Lynching.
"Just then I was surprised and planned to see William Boyle who had just rode in. I knew him quite well in the gold fields of California. After a good shake, I told him about Alex Spencer. He was at once for a hanging. I pointed out that an account of his wife and family we better forget and let him go. But no, this old Vigilante was in an angry mood."

"Three days after, Spencer was captured and we took him at the foot of the high mountain west of La Grande. And when the rope was placed around his neck, I never heard such begging for mercy. He promised everything and tried to buy his freedom."

"I spoke to the gang a long time and in such a manner that they agreed to let him loose if he would pay me for my freight bill. We took him back to his place and he paid me in full."

"Then Boyle wanted to hire me with two yokes of my cattle to take him and three other fellows, Dobbins, Crandall and Wright, back to Umatilla where they had left their

outfits. They had been exploring around the Basin for location and their two yokes of oxen had ran away in the hills. They had the meat of one big elk and two deer. With their camping outfit it made a light load for one wagon and two yokes. They offered me a good price and I took the job."

"At Umatilla, I could not resist inquiring for Ip-nat-am-moose and Susie. I found them and I was sure well received by them."

"I stayed overnight with them and had a good visit with Susie. She accompanied me back to the Boyle camp. And there in order to break away from the girl, I had to lie. I told her that I was married. Yes, sir, I could not be untrue to the girl I left behind and was waiting for me in old York State."

"Old man Boyle told me that I was a fool for turning down a pretty girl like that in this country."

"This Boyle outfit were on their way in the spring of '61 going back east after their folks to settle in Grande Ronde Basin."

Returned To La Grande.
"When I returned to La Grande Fort, it was really too late in the fall to undertake any long trip. So I decided to wait until spring. The winter of '61 I hauled firewood and logs for building purposes. I stopped most of the time with Harvey Blanchard and his good wife with their two nice children, a boy and a girl. I always liked kids and they generally liked me for I could tell stories pretty well them days."

"In the first week of February when the snow was well packed, Harvey Blanchard, Pete Peters, Will Hazard and I went hunting elk for meat. We went east to Powder river. Coming to a place that looked to me as a regular hole in the ground, forming a level and round small valley, where Powder river flowed in between high cliffs. We had to come right on this valley before we could see it at all. (Chief valley no doubt)."

"Here we ran on tracks of about one hundred elk who had left probably the day before going north."

"They've gone to Elk Park." (The Park, southeast of Union 15 miles), said Blanchard, who knew the country. And he explained that this Elk Park was a regular home for the elk, especially in their mating time and when the cows were taking care of their little spotted baby elk."

"Here we had no hard time in spotting our game. My partners all had one elk and it remained for me to get mine. I spotted a great big bull and was ready to shoot, when Blanchard stopped me and in a whisper told me that 'His meat won't be fit to eat. Pick out a young one.'"

Kayoed by Elk.
"I soon had a young animal in line with my head and as he was looking right square at me I aimed right in the forehead between the eyes. Now I ought to know trapper who had the nicest little

better but I didn't. The bull dropped like a bear. I ran to him and started to cut his throat. And say it right, I just started to cut it, when that elk gave me the most terrible butt in the stomach that made me see forty million candle lights."

"It was a sure enough knock-out blow. I laid sprawling out on the snow and if it had not been for Crandall who planted a good shot in the animal, I wouldn't be telling it today. For that bull was rushing onto me as fast as he could and I couldn't move a muscle."

"There we were now, with the meat of four elk, and no other means to pack it down out of this snow which was about 18 inches to where we could reach with wagon or pack mules. I wasn't much of a hunter, but my father was a great moose hunter back east. I told them I knew how to get that meat out of there in one trip. They were kind e'eary of my proposition, my trick with the elk had put in their mind that I didn't know much about hunting. Well, sir, I told them to go ahead and take all winter to pack the meat out if they wanted to, but for me I was going to haul mine out in one trip."

"I at once went to work. I took the hide of 'my elk' stretched it on the hard snow half down. With two small poles about five feet long lengthwise on the fleshy part of the skin about two feet apart. On these I put two cross-pieces, one at each end lashed with back strings. The front end of the poles I turned up fastening them with strings to the fore cross-bar. Then I placed my meat on top up nicely to fit in a small bundle. Then I pulled the hide around lacing it with raw hide that I cut from the legs. This I made as tight as possible. Then I nuded two little poles into shaves with a piece of rope I had, being it at the end of the shaves and over my neck around the shoulders and under my arms. With that the hide being placed head first so it would glide with hair running back, I started my load easily on the level."

"Now boys" I said, "In the morning this will be frozen solid and it will be twice as easy to toboggan. And when going up hill we can double up and double back helping one another."

"Well by god" said Hazard who was somewhat of a sport and an educated man, "we can learn tricks from a fool." And they at once proceeded to make toboggans of their own. But I had to really do all the work. None of them seems to be very handy with a tomahawk and bowie knife when it came to woodwork."

"In the morning Blanchard lead us out by going north across to a large creek, (Catherine Creek). We followed it down until we reached the snow line. Here we came to an old French Canadian trapper who had the nicest little

cabin I ever saw. His name was Thomas Paquette. My partners stayed with him until I came back with my teams and we all went home satisfied."

"In March 1861 we had a regular burrah for our new president Lincoln. Mrs. Blanchard read the speech he made against Douglas on the Dred Scott decision and the rights of a state to keep out slavery. I believe she said that this speech was delivered in Chicago in 1858. Anyway I got plum full of anti-slavery spirit that day."

"Everything went along pretty nice. We pitched horse shoes for a game in the afternoon. Lincoln men pitched against Douglas men as we called them, but they were men for holding the slaves. Well, sir, I headed the Lincoln men and as horse shoe pitching is the only game I ever cared to play I was an expert. And we beat them also very men to a frazzle."

Along in the evening, some were pretty well ginned up on corn juice and Medford rum and the discussions of war was quite high. One old fellow, an Irishman who was trapping in the mountains, his name was Hargery and about 50 years old I believe, told to a Mr. Hall, a man not over thirty-five. I know he wasn't any older than me, anyway, this old Irishman who was a great Lincoln man told him:

"An' yia, if we got to fighting, well yez we'll larrup yez 'name ez we did with the same shoe 'tis afternoon, fer yez 'fellers have no spirit like an Irishman loller Lincoln."

"We all started to laugh, but it was of a short duration. For Hall slapped this old man right across the face knocking him down."

"I made a jump striking Hall at the same time fair one, the nose when a big fellow named Miller hit me over the head with a waxon king bolt. If his blow had been fair he would have killed me instantly, but it glanced on my thick hair and only stunned me for a second."

"My man Hall was still on the floor when I faced Miller. And I lammed into him. I am not much on science when it comes to fighting, but I was versed in Michigan lumberjack style rough and tumble. And it was the work of about four minutes when I had my man down and I was walking back on him."

"I was told later that Miller was one of Spencer's friends sent there on purpose to 'fix' me. Well, he didn't fix. In stead of that, he had to be carried away and four or five ribs he had to mend for a while."

Sure of War.
"There was some more fist fighting by others and one horse pistol cracked once in the melee. But we separated that night on fairly good terms."

"But I was sure that war was coming. So I decided to close up my business and prepare for war. I rigged up a pack outfit and started west on the Old Oregon

Trail collecting bills due me for freight some of which were over ten years old."

"In April I was on my way. I passed the old Mission at Umatilla not far from where Pendleton is situated. There I thought of Susie. But I made up my mind that it would be best not to renew any anxieties."

"I noticed that there was much activity and Indians were in a great number to compare to the previous times I had seen this Mission. You see the war with the Cayuse tribe in 1847 had almost broke up the two missions here and at Walla Walla. The Walla Walla and the Yuwattilla as we called the Cayuse and the Umatilla Indians then, were not on friendly terms. The Nez Percés (Nez Perce) tribe was all disorganized, as the rest of the American Indians at that time for a purpose no doubt. So here there seemed to be a bunch of Indians very restless. I passed unmolested."

"I made camp at the mouth of the Umatilla River on the banks of the Columbia. And that night I was awakened by being taken out of my small tent by two big black Indians. I fully expected when I saw twenty-one picked bucks had come after me. They had taken my gun, and made me prepare my outfit, which I did, and they escorted me back to the Mission."

"There, one big fellow who spoke fairly good French explained: 'My name is Lone-Lone-Webb-Yeh (Blue Bird) I am half brother to Susie. And Susie is going to have a papoose. You marry her today, right now.'

"I gave them my counterclaim and chern word, but he answered that he understood it, but as he was representing the chief, pointing to could do nothing else than to catch an eagle feather in his hair, he let the rules. I would have to marry her or be burnt, he said."

Faces Fiery Death.
"I tried to defend myself by pleading my innocence of the crime, but to no avail."

"The fire was lighted and I was bound solid with buckskin straps. And I was slowly lead to the fire."

"Then the Cayuse chief arrived on the scene. He recognized me from that time at Warm Lake. He had a talk with them and then turned to me, 'I'm sorry of this, but I can't very well save you, if you don't marry Susie Blue Bird. And Ip-nat-am-moose, her grandfather said that Susie never had lied to him. So will you marry her?' For the last time I ask you, I have said."

"I begged of him to bring the girl and Ip-nat-am-moose before me, and if the girl still persisted that I was guilty I would marry her to save my life."

"He hesitated for a moment. Then he addressed an old, old medicine man who had a head gear with two buffalo horns. He looked like a devil. The old fellow raised in a tepee. Then he soon

came out with a broad smile and jargoned to the Chief. Susie and her grandfather was sent after."

"Well, sir, that girl cried, but she persisted. So the Chief said, 'Then you will marry her?'

"I had been thinking mighty hard. And to tell you the truth while I am not so profounded religion, I always pray when in a pinch. I tell you when a man is down and out and about helpless in a fix as this, he certainly crawls back to the time when he was on his mother's knee. And while I prayed a vision of my sweetheart back home came again and I decided right there and then I would not be untrue to her. And Black Sam would die like a man before he would plead guilty to a crime he had not even thought of committing. So, I answered loud and bold:

"No! A thousand times no!"

"The Chief bit his lips hard, looked at me and then commanded to proceed with the burning."

"The fire prepared for this holocaust was built with willows that would not burn fast. The bed on which the victim is laid was made of flat lava rocks."

"They placed me on these already warm rocks and began piling smaller rocks around my body. I could feel the heat now beginning to penetrate my clothing from these hot rocks. I closed my eyes and I prayed to God, Jesus and Mary and St. Joseph the prayer my mother first taught me on her knees."

(To be Continued)

Clubs of London Decide To Offer Bed and Board

LONDON (AP) — Most of the London clubs have decided to add bedrooms to their quarters for the

convenience of their guests. This innovation has come about gradually during the last year or so, chiefly on account of the fact that the London hotels have been so crowded.

The United Universities, the United Services, Carlton, Reform and Devonshire clubs, among others, have found it necessary to add sleeping quarters to their premises and the Union club in Carlton House terrace will have its own bedrooms when it reopens next summer. The old-fashioned Athenaeum, also is on the list.

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