

Stevens

B. E. S., '99

Stevens was my brother Fred's partner; that is, he and Fred together owned and worked a placer mine in the gold region of Baker county. Fred came across the old miner in the summer of '98, while out on a prospecting tour in the Blue mountains. The two men made friends, and after much talk about "the lay of the land," the soil, and the "colors," and after a great deal of digging, they staked out a joint claim, laid the foundation of a log cabin, and from that on shared the same lodge, and added to their miner's fare the relish of each other's company.

It was late in September when the cabin was finished. We were expecting Fred home to take up his work as book keeper for the Lewis Implement Company, but a letter came saying he had decided to stay with the mining business a while longer. Some ditching had to be done. Perhaps he would come out later. He was getting along all right with the old man.

We were all glad Fred had discovered this old man. Half the hidden gold of the Robin Hood was not too much to pay for the satisfaction of feeling that our own bruspue Fred was not alone; and, after the manner of those who give what is not their own, we paid the price willingly; that is, we went as far as we could toward paying for it, we parted with it mentally. We thought of Stevens as of one who had done us a kindness, and our gratitude awakened an interest in the man himself. From the brief comments of Fred's short letters we got our first clue to his character; he was a staunch democrat, had had considerable experience as a "digger," but was not one of the "cussing sort."

About the second week in November Fred wrote for some books, and some heavy winter clothing. Enough snow had fallen, he said, to make good sledding; he had rigged up a hand-sled and had been over to the postoffice, a distance of four miles. If we would send the things in a box so as to catch the Saturday's stage from Baker, he would have them brought out to L—, and from there he could land them safely in camp on his sled.