

The Claim on Deer Creek.

By A. H. GIBSON.

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CHAPTER II.



Nancy had flung her strong young arms around her father's neck.

generous in its dimensions, but their household goods were not very numerous...

Before night Hamlet had his shed completed, even to covering one side and the end and top with brush and dead sunflower stalks...

She bent her head in a listening attitude, for she was certain that she had heard one of them laugh in a gruff voice...

"What does it mean? Who kin it be cavortin' round over the prairies?" she asked herself.

Suddenly she remembered Dick Hines' unpleasur visit of the evening before, and leaving her bucket, she ran swiftly up the grass grown path to the dugout...

He pulled Nancy into the dugout and closed and bolted the big rough door, which was composed of two large, heavy oak boards nailed together.

"Hello in there!" yelled Dick Hines, halting with his gang, a half dozen rough looking fellows, all heavily armed, before the dugout.

"Hello yerself!" Hamlet called back from a hole beside the door.

"Come out o' thar, an' let this hyer committee show yer how we do up a claim jumper in Kansas."

"I'm bliged ter yer fur the invitation, but I'd rather be excused from takin' any lessons from sich er pack o' bushwhackers as yer," Adam Hamlet answered.

"Ef yer don't come out peaceable-like we uns will bust in an' fetch yer out," threatened Hines, while poor Nancy stood shuddering with the wildest apprehensions...

"Bust away! I've got somethin' hyer in my hand thet kin bust, too, when I'm er mind ter pull the trigger."

"Look hyer, ole chap! This is Dick Hines' claim, and we uns aim ter help him hold it," said one of the uncouth horsemen.

"It's Adam Hamlet's claim, got in a fair and squar' swap from Ik Pender, back in Illinoy, an' I aim ter hold it."

"Ain't yer goin' ter open thet door?" demanded Hines impatiently.

a clear, manly voice, as a newcomer dashed upon the scene, and did not pause till he had spurred his pony between the gang and the door of the dugout.

"Yer didn't expect Tom Byers hyer ter take a hand in yer little game?" said the young fellow, speaking sternly.

It was with feelings of real gratitude that the trembling girl in the dugout recognized the voice of the young ranchman who had taken supper with them at their camp two nights ago.

"It's him—Mr. Byers, pap!" she whispered.

"Yes, it's him, Nancy. Aint he spunky? Jest listen ter him, will yer?" he chuckled.

And he was, indeed. Tom Byers was well known on those wild prairies as a man of dauntless courage and decided character...

"What are yer up to, disturbin' Mr. Hamlet this way?" he demanded.

"I was jest a makin' er sort o' call on him, an' tellin' him I held er right ter yer claim, thet's all," answered Hines, hoping to lower Tom Byers' wrath against him.

"Well, Mr. Hamlet give yer a very open reception, I judge, seein' as yer all out hyer in yer saddles yit," laughed Byers with contempt.

"But I'd like ter know by what right yer assert a claim ter this stranger's land?" he asked.

"Waal, yer see Ik Pender bought my mules, an' never paid fur 'em, an' when he left ther country I was ter hev his claim," explained Hines.

"Stick ter facts, ef yer please," cried Byers. "I know more erbout thet mule trade than yer think. Ik an' me was good friends, an' I know his side o' ther story won't tally with yer'n; besides, I happen ter know what become o' them mules!"

"Thet dicens yer do?" "Yer sold Ik er span a mules on er year's time. Ik hedn't owned ther critters two weeks till they was stole. Yes, sir, stole! Ik was down with ther ager at ther time, so couldn't track ther thieves, an' yer come over hyer ter this yer dugout, Dick Hines, an' told Ik as yer'd be willin' ter let him hev his note of hed' fork over fifty dollars in greenbacks, seein' hed' hed sich bad luck in gittin' ther critters stole. Well, Ik didn't hev ther money ter redeem his note from yer clutches, so I loaned it to him. That's how I know so much erbout ther mule business. Yer shelled over ther note ter Ik, fur I seen it arterward in his own hands. So yer hev no more right ter Ik Pender's claim than I hev— an' not as much when it comes down ter ther pint o' ther matter."

"Waal, I don't b'lieve this humpy backed stranger has got any right on Ik's claim," Hines declared. "He deserves ter be punished fur claim jumpin', an' I fur one favor puttin' him—"

"Shut up yer hourn!" interrupted Byers. "My hyer ter see fair play, an' I'll see it too."

"Why, Tom," remarked one of Hines' followers, "I thought nobody on the whole Neutral Lands was more 'posed ter claim jumpin' than you."

"An' so I am," returned Byers firmly; "I'm powerful opposed ter claim jumpin' an' all sich low down, lawless doin's thet thar's no manhood in. Ef I know anything erbout ther way ther wind lies, I'm thinkin' Dick Hines is mad because he ain't able ter git ther stranger on an' jump the claim himself."

"Thet's it! Thet's it!" agreed Adam Hamlet, speaking from the door, which he held slightly ajar. "Yer driv' therse nail home thet time, Mr. Byers. Hines wants ther claim, an' is tryin' ter scare me out. Thet's ther shape o' ther hull business."

"Let's settle this dispute hyer an' now," said Tom Byers in a decided tone.

laid carelessly across the saddle. "I'm plumb glad yer rid up jest when yer did, Mr. Byers," Hamlet remarked.

"I was jest gittin' back from Fort Scott, and thought I'd ride past an' see how yer was makin' it," Byers explained.

"I wasn't countin' on findin' Hines an' his gang hyer. But yer seemed ter take ther visit mighty composed like."

"Waal, it's no good gittin' flustered, I never think; besides I was mixed up in too many hot spurs with ther enemy durin' ther late war ter be scared out easy now. It's been a kind o' trainin' ter me ter bridle up ter every situation of danger thet may rise up in my path," said Hamlet, puffing away placidly at his pipe.

"So yer was in the war jest closed?" Tom Byers asked a little curiously.

"Not as a reg'lar soldier. They wouldn't take me on 'count o' my back, though I plead fur 'em to. But I was in ther Union army, connected with ther commissary department, an' was a nuss in ther hospital camp; on the Ohio river fur erbout eight months. I never seen actual service on the battlefield but once, an' thet was when I hed a hand to hand struggle with a Confederate soldier, tripped him up an' captured thet ole musket yonder," and he pointed with pride to the trophy which his muscular force had wrested from the hands of a foe.

Tom Byers examined the old musket with interest, listened while Hamlet related two or three war adventures, then mounted restive Popcorn to ride on to his ranch.

"I don't think Dick Hines will be apt ter bother yer any more, Mr. Hamlet," he said before starting. "He'er coward an' won't do yer no open hurt, an' ther fact thet I've got out his game ter get yer off o' ther claim will tend to keep him scarce. Yer heard what I told him erbout thet mule business? I kin tell yer more yit. Arter sellin' ther mules ter Ik he hired two o' his gang ter run ther critters off inter Missoury an' sell 'em, when Pender was down sick with the shakin' ager an' couldn't help himself. It's a plain case, an' all I'm watchin' fur is a little more clear proof, an' I'll fix his cake fur him. He lives over on Lightnin' creek with a brother-in-law o' his who ain't no better'n Dick."

"But Hines ain't goin' ter molest yer," he said, with a swift, admiring look directed toward the girl, "fur I aim ter keep an eye on his cavortin's. Good night!" and waving his hand he galloped rapidly away over the prairie.

Adam Hamlet began improvements on his place at once. He broke up the soil, which was soon planted in corn, beans, sorghum and pumpkins. Byers let him have a good milk cow and a fine little riding pony for Nancy, while one of the neighbors spared them some chickens, and Joe Dugan a pig. So the new settlers had fairly started their life on the prairies.

Adam Hamlet wished to secure a legal title to his land on Deer creek. But some of his best neighbors, who were ardent supporters of the "land leaguers," just then vastly stirred up over the disposition which congress had made of the Neutral Lands on which they lived, had repeatedly requested him not to contract with Joy's agents. Hamlet was not in particular sympathy with the "leaguers," being a firm believer in the power and wisdom of the United States government to adjust all land disputes, but the settlers had treated him kindly, and he did not care to anger them. He could wait for the excitement over the land question to subside.

In August, when the sun scorched the prairies with almost torrid breath, Hamlet became a victim to chills and fever, and much of the time was too poorly to leave the dugout.

Added to her customary duties, Nancy had to be her father's nurse and look after the stock.

One evening as darkness was falling over the hot prairie she went down the creek to drive the cow home.

She had proceeded a half of a mile, and was just crossing a wild plum thicket when voices arrested her attention.

Peering through the branches she could just make out two men engaged in earnest conversation. One she instantly recognized as Dick Hines.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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AT OREGON CITY OFFICE, OR ON ROBERT L. TAFT, at Portland Office, No. 50 Stark St., PORTLAND.

Cash for county warrants. C. H. Dye over Oregon City bank. NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION. Land Office at Oregon City, Oregon, Jan. 14, 1892.

Notice is hereby given that the following named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim, and that said proof will be made before the Register and Receiver of the U. S. Land Office at Oregon City, Oregon, on March 3, 1892, viz: O. J. Hoel, homestead entry No. 9911 for the sec 28, T. 4 S., R. 5 E.

He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz: J. F. Olson, Wm. C. Bushner, Tom Martin, Tom Grece, all of Clarks P. O., Clackamas Co., Oregon. J. T. APPERSON, Register. 1-22-92

Notice of Application for Liquor License. To All whom it May Concern: Take notice that the undersigned will apply to the county court of Clackamas county, state of Oregon, on Wednesday, the 4th day of February, 1892, for a license to sell spirituous, malt and vinous liquors in less quantities than one gallon in Canby precinct in said county of Clackamas, for the period of one year, and hereunto annexes his petition, which he will present to the court, at said time. GEORGE SUBRAUER.

PETITION FOR LIQUOR LICENSE. To the Honorable County Court of the County of Clackamas, state of Oregon: I, B. L. Underwood, being a resident and legal voter of Canby precinct, in said county and state, hereby respectfully petition that a license may be granted to George Subrauer to sell spirituous, malt and vinous liquors in less quantities than one gallon within Canby precinct for the term of one year. W. S. Kellogg, Chris Ziegler, J. F. Yost, Geo. Siegler, H. H. Sutherland, Solomon Miller, Isidor Isaacson, David A. Kleinbach, M. Barchert, Tom Pomeroy, D. H. Wolfner, David Barchert, Christian Koehler, H. W. Will, C. M. Van Buren, Joseph Huiras, G. Riggs, S. M. Adkins, E. T. Pembroke, F. M. Walling, H. A. Vorpahl, Wm. N. Brown, Lewis Rogers, F. Hampton, C. W. Armstrong, John Piening, C. Hildebrand, Wm. Laen, Geo. Hoyt, A. H. Knight, R. D. Stone, J. Van Deventer, G. A. Gurley, L. A. Adkins, P. Haynds, J. H. Jesse, F. O'Neil, N. Doucet, John Elliott, H. Brown, Will Twobig, S. A. Stearns, Clarence Wilson, J. W. Jones, A. J. Hartle, J. E. Patton, G. L. Cauley, C. L. Cauley, G. Wilson, H. P. Sager, James Adkins, Jesse Adams, Wm. McCausland, H. H. Wheeler, John L. Thomas, T. C. Pembroke, P. Sushauer, Ole Anderson, Chas. T. Pembroke, W. A. Casaday, Harvey Ball, John Moizan, Joseph Peninger, J. F. Rooy, Neil Jackson, H. W. Holt 1-11-1892

Notice of Appointment of Administrator. Notice is hereby given that I have been appointed administrator of the estate of Gottlieb Jacob, deceased. All persons having claims against said estate are notified to present to me, duly verified at my home in Oswego, Oregon, within six months from the date of this notice. J. C. HAINES, Administrator. 1-15-12

Notice of Sale of Real Estate. Notice is hereby given that in pursuance of an order of the County Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Clackamas, has heretofore duly made and entered in the matter of the estate of Peter Steele, deceased, the undersigned, the executor of the said estate, will sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, for cash, gold coin of the United States, and subject to confirmation by said County Court, on Saturday, the 27th day of February, 1892 at 10 o'clock a. m., at the Court House door, in Oregon City in said County and State, all the right title, interest and estate of the said Peter Steele, and all the right title and interest that said estate has, by operation of law or otherwise, acquired other than or in addition to that of the said Peter Steele at the time of his death in and to the certain parcel of real estate situated in the County of Clackamas, State of Oregon, and particularly described as follows: West half of the northwest quarter of section twenty-two (22), in township 10, (21) south, range 4 east of the Willamette meridian, containing 160 acres, more or less, in the Northwest Territory of the United States, ten per cent of the purchase money to be paid upon the day of sale, balance on or before the 1st day of March, 1892. Deed expense of purchaser. J. C. McCREW, Executor of the estate of Peter Steele, deceased. Dated Portland, Oregon, January 22nd, 1892. 1-22-92