

# VELDT RIDERS MEET MANY DANGERS

**T**HOUGH South Africa is steadily becoming covered with a network of railroads, there are still great stretches of country that are not yet linked up. In these parts the ox wagon is the only means of transportation.

West of Mafeking, right to the seaboard, there is one unbroken stretch of veldt; and to reach the Atlantic coast there is only one way to travel, namely, trek it by ox wagon.

Fate once sent me on a trading trek up to Lake Ngami, says a writer in London Answers.

Well, Lake Ngami is about a thousand miles from nowhere. To be a little more accurate, however, the lake lies in the northwestern part of the Bechuanaland protectorate, and to reach the little trading center up there, one has to cross the northern part of the dreaded Kalahari—a waterless desert.

My wagon had 18 oxen to pull it, and the load on it was 5,000 pounds. But it took me over two months to cover the five or so hundred miles that lay between the small native capital of Serowe and Tsau, the capital of Ngamiland.

Half of the distance was over sandy, waterless deserts, and the rest through fever and lion infested veldt.

After a Twelve-Day Trek, "We'll outspan here, Natal," I cried to my native driver.

It was just an hour before dawn, and the African sky was lit with a myriad of stars. The oxen were quickly unyoked, but were not allowed to graze, as we would be on the move again in an hour.

We were half way in the desert. We had been on trek 12 days. The oxen were used to "thirst," but the ceaseless strain of the sandy desert was making itself felt. The beasts were already looking worn and shrunken. I sat down by the small fire we had kindled and smoked. Everything was very quiet. The sleeping veldt was hushed. Around us were miles of flat, sparsely vegetated country, every mile the same. Not a drop of water had we seen for two days since we had left the last well; and there lay 99 miles of waterless veldt before the next well would be reached.

The saffron hue of breaking day is now tinting the eastern sky. It is time to inspan again.

Soon the oxen are all in their yokes, and the signal to start is given.

The sun has now risen. It is growing hotter. The oxen are becoming distressed. The merciless whip descends—and again. It is no time for pity. Water must be reached! On and on the wretched animals pull their load. The sun is now high in the heavens. We outspan.

The weary oxen lie under the scanty shade of stunted bushes. We lie

We are outspanned at a well. Large, shady trees encircle our camp. The sun is sinking behind the trees and night is approaching. The oxen have drunk their fill, and are now wrapped in slumber—poor, patient beasts of burden, that have done their work so faithfully and well!

In the Lion Country. We are now out of the desert and by the river. Large, leafy trees overshadow the wagon where we are outspanned. Monkeys in little bands clamber over the branches and utter shrill cries. Behind us flows the deep Botletie, its banks thick with reeds, amid which lie sneaking crocodiles.

The road is still heavy, but we have water in plenty; so the oxen pull well in the yokes. Tomorrow we shall outspan by a trader's store, and I am glad at the thought, for it is now a good many days since I have spoken to a white man.

The hospitable trader is now left behind, and half the journey is done



A Native Porter.

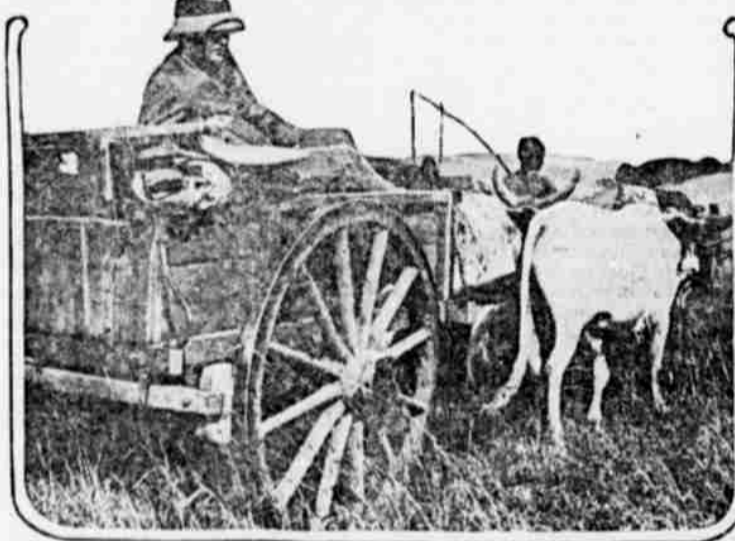
But we are now in lion veldt! And fever is with us.

I take quinine that night, as I feel the first approach of that dread enemy—malaria.

Big fires also are lit beside the line of sleeping oxen.

Faintly, in the distance, comes the roar of the marauder, out on his nightly prow. The oxen stir uneasily. An extra log is thrown on the fires and the flames throw queer shadows on our leafy bower.

My sleepy eyes open at dawn. I notice the fire is almost out. There is a chill in the air, and a ghostly stillness about everything. I stir the dying embers with my foot and throw on a few



A BULLOCK WAGON

under the wagon, and doze in the heat of the day. Everything is parched and dry. Everywhere around us is the sandy desert.

It is nearly sundown. Inspan again. Once again on trek over the same unending spoor. It's now dark, and night brings some relief. The stars come out in all their brilliancy, and the moon throws ghostly shadows over the sleeping veldt.

"Whoop! Whoop!" sounds in the clear night air. A short outspan. A little fire glows, and we drink a hasty cup of coffee. The oxen lie exhausted. No necessity to tie them to their yokes; they are now too tired to move!

Another dawn is breaking. It grows lighter. We inspan again.

A startled stembuck darts through the bush at the sound of the approaching wagon. The oxen plod wearily over the heavy sand. The axes of the wagon sink; the wagon sticks fast. The merciless whip descends. An ox falls at the yoke, but is flogged into obedience again. No time for pity! Water must be reached.

Whoop! Whoop! On and on. One mile an hour—that is all we can travel. The sand is so heavy!

## HARD WORK SELDOM FATAL

Nervous Prostration and Its Attendant Ills Generally Derived From Other Sources.

We hear a great deal today about excessive brainwork, and we read in the newspapers of frequent breakdowns from that cause. Every week or oftener we are told of some clergyman, leading merchant or other business man who collapses and has to quit work—perhaps take a trip to Europe and reside for months or a year—for that reason. College students are reported from time to time as damaging or killing themselves by hard study. We doubt the truth of most of these statements. A knowledge of the facts would show, we believe, that in nine-tenths of these cases the cause of the breakdown was not an excess of brainwork, but the lack of something else, such as nutritious food, sleep, bodily exercise, and a cheerful temper. The truth is, no organ of the body is tougher than the brain. Hard work alone, pure and simple—apart from anxieties and fear, from forced or voluntary stinting of the body's needed supply of food or sleep and the mind's need of social intercourse—does far more to invigorate the brain than to lessen its strength; does more to prolong life than to cut or fray its thread.

It is the rarest thing in the world for a man to think himself to death, unless his thoughts run for many years in a monotonous rut—which is as detrimental to vigor as a monotonous diet to the digestive functions—or unless his thoughts relate to something very painful, irritating, or distressing. It has been justly said that thought is to the brain what exercise is to the physical organism. It keeps the channels of life clear, the blood vessels unobstructed, so that the vital fluids course along them distributing newness of life and vigor of action to the latest hour of existence. On the other hand, the want of thought starves the circulation, and causes men to drivel and sleep in old age—dead to everything but eating and drowsing in the chimney corner.

So untrue is it that college students break down from the stress of study on the brain that, other things being equal, the hardest students enjoy the best health. Where one young man, if any, ruins his health by wrestling with mathematical and psychological problems or with the enigmas of Greek and Latin syntax, bad habits, the strain, and excitement of athletic contests, cigars, wine-drinking and other forms of dissipation, and heavy eating at late hours, undermine the health of hundreds. The two little fingers of dissipation are often heavier than the lines of Euclid.

### Long and Distinguished Life.

Charles A. Peabody, distinguished as a lawyer and jurist, was born in Sandwich, N. H., 109 years ago. He studied law at Baltimore and at the Harvard law school and after being admitted to the bar, began the practice of his profession in New York in 1839. He was a member of the convention that organized the Republican party in New York in 1855 and was a justice of the supreme court of New York from 1855 to 1857. During the period of the Civil war he was a judge of the United States provisional court of Louisiana, and also served as chief justice of the supreme court of that state. After the war he returned to the practice of law in New York city. In 1885 Mr. Peabody represented the government of the United States at the international congress of commercial law. He died in New York city July 3, 1901.

### Longevity in County Antrim.

During the course of a local government board inquiry held at Ballyclare, Ireland, before the local government board inspector, relative to making a closing order for Rashee graveyard, a great many claims for the right of interment were made on behalf of a large number of people aged over ninety years, and one person aged one hundred and four years, all residents in the locality. In one case a man made a claim for himself and two sisters, all aged over ninety years, and for a third sister, whom he described as the "young one," whose age he gave as seventy-four. In many cases evidence was given of four generations alive in the same family, and evidence of interment in the graveyard about sixteen years ago of a person who had reached the great age of one hundred and eleven years.

### Insect Menagerie.

What Professor Habitte calls his insect menagerie is installed at one of the laboratories of the Jardin des Plantes establishment, and he now has upward of 50 well-arranged boxes or cages, where he observes insect life. He thinks that this should be enlarged into an "insectarian," or extensive menagerie, to which the public should be admitted. This is already done in some countries, and their usefulness is recognized. No great expense is needed, all that is required being a hall with large tables, on which the insect cages are placed in good view, with glass or wire gauze covers. The insect world is of greater interest than may perhaps be imagined, and no doubt such an enterprise would be much appreciated by the public.

### A Hard Knock.

"I understand Mamie told Jim she wouldn't marry him if he were the last man on earth."  
"She made it even stronger than that. She said she wouldn't marry him if he were worth a million dollars."

# ONLY ACTIVE VOLCANO IN U.S.

**L**ASSEN PEAK in eruption is the most unique natural feature in the United States today. Its present outburst constitutes the only volcanic activity ever seen by the eyes of white folks within the borders of the United States outside of Alaska. It gives this country the last physical phenomenon needed to make it possible to say that everything that can be seen anywhere in the world can be seen here, writes Frederick Faulkner in the San Francisco Chronicle.

Lassen was the one place in the United States where such an outburst might reasonably have been expected. Geologically it is the youngest and latest of all the great series of volcanoes which in days gone by poured out their lavas over the plains and valleys of the West. Shasta was long dead and cold when Lassen was born, and the enormous lava fields of eastern Oregon and Washington had long since been cut down by the streams.

More than that, the Lassen region has poured out glowing lavas within the century. There was no one to see it at the time, but from the Cinder Cone, ten miles northeast of Lassen peak, there flowed a field of lava two miles long and four miles wide so recently that the burned trees still stick out of the edges of the flow. The lava lies there as new as though it was poured out of the bowels of the earth yesterday. Neither tree nor shrub has yet had time to find a footing on it.

**Fires Still Smolder.** Then all over the south side of Lassen are numerous evidences of the lingering fires. Pungent sulphur

railroad 60 miles away. Three peaks in a rough circle on the summit mark the broken-down walls of the ancient crater. Between them is a hollow 500 feet deep, the filled-up mouth of the subterranean passage to the fires below. Until this summer this hollow has always been filled with snow, but the reopening of the crater near the lowest point of the depression and the violent eruptions of steam have melted away this healing covering over the ancient scar.

### Geysers Fill Old Crater.

Lassen peak may be approached from any one of three sides, from Manzanita lake on the northwest, from the head of King's creek on the east, and from Battle creek meadows on the south. The best of all the routes is from the south because that way leads through the remarkable collection of active volcanic phenomena spread over the entire south slope of the mountain.

Beside the geysers of Iceland and the Yellowstone it would be idle to place the steam vents and boiling lakes of Bumpass' hell, but as an example of present-day volcanic activity in California, and a spectacle not only of wonder, but of beauty, the place is one of the most interesting on the Pacific coast.

High on the southwest flank of the old fire mountain it lies, a steaming bowl of geysers, smoking sulphur vents, and bizarre lakes of many colored boiling waters, the whole sunk 500 feet deep in the mountain side and a third of a mile across. From the evidences which surround the place, the masses of distorted lava and the



MT LASSEN IN ERUPTION

smoke strikes the nostrils everywhere. Steam vents and boiling springs keep the ground bare in the midst of 15-foot snowbanks. Solid sulphur boils out of the springs. One ancient crater is full of solfataras and fumaroles of the type common on Vesuvius and Aetna.

So with all these evidences that the old fire mountain was not entirely dead, it is not at all remarkable that Lassen peak or some one of the many craters around it should burst into eruption. I find in my notes of a trip to the Lassen region 14 years ago, written at the time, the following sentence: "Few of those who shudder at the convulsions in the West Indian world have ever dreamed that California holds a mountain which has within the lifetime of man, and may again, parallel the titanic forces of the Caribbean volcanoes."

Up to a very late day in geological history, the sea occupied what is now the Lassen region and extended far into Oregon. About the close of what is known as the lone epoch that territory was uplifted, and there began a long period of volcanic activity extending down to the present day. From a multitude of vents lava was poured out upon the earth. The more liquid lavas flowed far and wide to form plains.

The thicker lava accumulated around the vents and built up the great volcanic mountains, Lassen peak, Burney butte, Prospect peak, Mount Harkness, Magee peak, Crater peak and hundreds of others. Lassen stands 10,487 feet above the sea, its snow-capped peak conspicuous from the

courses of the former volcanic streams, the hell was once a crater of the old volcano and its smoke of today is from the smoldering embers of its bygone fires.

When I first visited the place I had just dragged my pack horses around the old trappers' trail on the face of the cliff at the head of Mill Creek canyon, where the melting snow water tumbles over from Lake Helen above, and had camped in a clump of snow-banked hemlocks a few hundred feet below the top of the eastern ridge. I was unaware of the close proximity of the way, I climbed the remaining snowbanks to the pass, and suddenly, so suddenly that I stepped back instinctively to avoid plunging into the boiling pit below, the hell appeared below me.

A dull roar rose from the crater, a sulphurous steam stung my nostrils. I looked out from the snowbank on which I stood and saw a deep bowl in the mountain, a third of a mile across, ringed with twisted and broken lava rock. Hemlock clung to the crags and in their shade lay mocking snowbanks. The bottom and walls of the great bowl were stained a dirty yellow with sulphur. Steam rose everywhere. The growling of the crater rose, it gumbled hoarsely, hissed and screamed.

When I saw the new crater on Lassen on June 4 and 5 the vent, by an engineer's tape, measured 275 feet long. Since then it has grown in size until it is 450 feet long and 150 feet wide.

## FOUND BY "MOVIES"

Parents Recognized Face of Wandering Son in Film.

Actual Recorded Fact, and Not a Matter of Invention or Imagination—Proves Photoplay Field a Field of Romance.

All of us have read fiction stories that recorded the recognition of the features of some long-lost son or other missing and highly interesting person in chance-found photograph or moving-picture film. Most of us also have regarded these stories as highly creditable from the viewpoint of invention and imagination, but here is a story from the realm of fact:

"Pana, Ill.—A naval picture of men loading rifles on the battleship Florida at Vera Cruz, Mexico, which was published in a newspaper, has resulted in the location of a son of wealthy parents, for many years residents of Raymond, west of Pana, after he had been missing five years.

"The parents recognized in the picture a striking resemblance of their son, who disappeared from his home when he was seventeen years old, and they sent for the picture as originally made and then took up correspondence with the navy department, learning from the officials that a young man of the description given by them of their son had enlisted five years ago.

"The navy department is now in correspondence with officers of the Florida in Vera Cruz harbor in an effort to bring parents and son together once more. When he enlisted in the navy the young man gave an assumed name."

With great effort we force back the comment that "fact is stranger than fiction," but it is, nevertheless, when you come to think of it. The moving-picture field is a field of romance, where anything is possible and where everything that is possible sometimes is true.—Pittsburgh Dispatch.

## ILLUSIONS CONTINUE TO GO

Leading Theatrical Paper Now Calmly Announces That Ben Wilson is a Married Man.

This week we shatter a whole cluster of illusions and also take from Uncle Sam much valuable coin of the realm in postage. No more shall the fair Varena write in and ask, timidly but hopefully, "Is Ben Wilson married?" The secret is out. The only Ben Wilson who is not married is only seven months old, so give him a chance.



Ben Wilson.

"Cleck," who is also coming into prominence as a director of pictures, is rather proud of Benjamin F. Jr., and we dare say the feeling is reciprocated.—New York Dramatic Mirror.

### Less Crime, Please.

The underworld is usurping too strong a place on the picture screen. There is no excuse in the conditions of actual life for bestowing so prominent a position in the photoplay world on the sordid struggles of social outcasts. There is too much of sorrow in the lives of many of us to magnify a pessimistic view of the world by an overabundance of wrong and misery on the screen.

"Less crime, please," should be the request of many manufacturers to their authors. An occasional feature picture treated by a careful hand, like an occasional reading of Poe, may well serve its purpose, but the regular run of pictures should seek a closer relation to the ordinary stations of life. Step up a notch in the scale and shake the acquaintance of social lepers. Honest, we could manage to squeeze through this existence without an introduction to Gyp, the Plug, Second Store Steve, or even Dress-Suit Baffles. We'd much rather improve our acquaintance with John Jones, Sally Smith and Bill Brown.—Dramatic Mirror.

### To Feature Baggot.

Broughton Brandenburg has contracted for the photoplay rights to his well-known series of detective stories, telling of the adventures of Lawrence Rand, and King Baggot, player and director, will be featured as the detective.

"The House of Doors," the first of the series to be published, appeared ten years ago in the Metropolitan Magazine. That story has been reprinted eight times in America, and its sequel, "The Mystery of the Steel Disc," was chosen by Collier's as the best detective story ever written in America. In book form over eight hundred thousand copies are out. There are 40 stories in the series.

### Has His Own Company.

Harry Carey is among the most experienced and better known of motion picture actors, having appeared for years with prominent companies. He is well remembered by his good work in many pictures and is now heading his own company and producing "The Master Crackman."