

# A Tale of Old Weston, Given in Verse

(Under the name of David Popumoxon, a Seattle resident, evidently a pioneer of Umatilla county, has submitted to the East Oregonian the following verses which, thinly disguised, tell of the historic gun fight which Hank Vaughan had with a man named Long.)

**AT OLD WESTON TOWN.**  
 Three old fellers was a gallopin' down  
 The dusty trail to old Weston town,  
 One rode a 'pinto,' eyes and all;  
 One rode a Spanish 'hoss,' rawboned  
 and tall;  
 The other rode an Arabian steed,  
 Known in Siwash as 'Appaloosa'  
 breed;  
 And the three of 'em galloped along  
 the road  
 Unconscious of how their riders  
 "blowed."

It was three miles from the "Wild-  
 horse brink"  
 To where these fellers could get a  
 drink,  
 For Weston town was known near  
 and far  
 As the home of Barney Prone's "Flo-  
 neer Bar."  
 And "Barney" kept "Polson," both  
 cool and hot,  
 And was always ready for a hand at  
 "Jack-pot."  
 So the trio rode like "Broncho Kids"  
 Over the hills on their foaming steeds.  
 Along the trail the sunflowers grew;  
 Along the trail the curlews flew;  
 And the sun was hot that August  
 morn  
 In the land where the first coyote was  
 born.  
 The mouths of the riders cotton spit  
 Until they was choking—chock full  
 of it;  
 From the top of the hill the three  
 looked down  
 On the shady streets of "Old Weston

Town."

Hay-inkum-da; Old Davy yelled  
 As the fumes from Barney's his smell-  
 er smelled;  
 I golly-livin' And old Dock Scott  
 Found a "Royal Flush" in a big Jack-  
 pot";  
 For afar in advance the game he play-  
 ed.

Where the stakes were high and the  
 boys all "stayed."  
 But old Louie was mum, and, with a  
 frown  
 He ventured again into Weston  
 town.

They rode to the creek where their  
 steeds could drink,  
 Then looked about, heard the glasses  
 clink;  
 It was "Barney's Bar" and soon was  
 tied

Three sweat covered "kuitans," side  
 by side,  
 And the riders strode into the room  
 With jangling spurs and roseate  
 bloom.  
 The smell of the liquor was something  
 fine,  
 And old Davy "bellered" "Git up in  
 in line."

They looked about to see who was  
 there;  
 Old Tom and old Ben, and a quartet  
 fair  
 Who sat at a table rattling chips  
 And never a smile played about their  
 lips;

They were shuffling the cards in  
 professional style,  
 And time was so precious they cared  
 not to "amile."  
 "Excuse me," says Barney, "but isn't  
 it tough  
 To have you old fellers destroyin' my  
 roof?"

Then the feller who wore the gray  
 coat buttoned tight



Allowed to his "pardners" "It isn't  
 quite right  
 To sit idly by and see "beer" go to  
 waste."  
 We'd better join in, and take a small  
 taste."  
 Allow me, Hank, this is Uncle Dave  
 Strong;  
 Dave, this is Hank King, and this is  
 John Long.  
 These other two fellows is strangers.  
 I see;  
 What'll you have, boys? This one's  
 on me.

I'd heard of Hank King, but never  
 divined  
 That he was a gentleman, smooth and  
 refined;  
 But somehow I fell to the cut of his  
 jib—  
 The style of his hat and the dash of  
 his  
 But John Long was a stranger, having  
 no "rep."  
 And the other two fellers hadn't  
 learned to "set up";  
 So we all took the drinks about sev-  
 en times round  
 To celebrate rightly the new friends  
 we'd found.

Ha-inkum-da; I was spolling for fun,  
 And soon we got busy and long stor-  
 ies spun;  
 But it wasn't for stories or things of  
 that sort  
 We was out looking after; we wanted  
 swit sport;  
 And there's nothing so enticing as  
 holding the mane  
 Of a "Hucking Pinto" in a big poker  
 game.  
 So chips, cards and table were  
 quickly shook down  
 In Barney's back room, in "Old West-  
 on Town."

Say, fellers, I never played poker be-  
 fore?  
 Why Hank King would raise us  
 "clean out of the door;  
 And the way that we "tin horns"  
 would bet and "lay down."  
 Will be long remembered in Old West-  
 on Town.  
 We hadn't the nerve to call a big  
 raise,  
 And was learning to smile at Hank's  
 elegant plays.  
 When an incident happened that  
 "tore off the roof."  
 John Long had called Hank—and  
 found it a bluff."

You ought to have seen Hank's eyes  
 catch on fire;  
 But never a word, as he lit his old  
 brier;  
 He sat there and looked at his cards,  
 and kept mum,  
 Till he picked up four diamonds.  
 Then some  
 Betting commenced, and it went all  
 around,  
 For each "inkum-poop" had got in  
 on the ground,  
 When it come to "discarding" Hank  
 only took one,  
 And that was the signal that a bluff  
 had begun.

I had two old queens, and the cards  
 that I drew  
 Made my heart feel like quitting—it  
 froze and it thawed;  
 For as shore as shootin' two more  
 queens and a king  
 Looked up blandly at me. I had quite  
 a sure thing.  
 Well, four of us stayed in that pot till  
 the "show."  
 I'd staked all I had and so had Depoe;  
 And John Long and Hank King was  
 betting like—well  
 Old Barney said things was "hotter'n  
 hell."

Such games are worth seeing; but I  
 felt I was out,  
 For surely them two knew what they  
 were about;  
 But not till John's money was all in  
 the pot  
 Did any one blip, whether playing or  
 not.  
 Old Barney and all of the rest of the  
 gang  
 Stood up on their toes and watched  
 the "Shebang."  
 "I guess you three fellers can show  
 for the "slide,"  
 And I showed my four queens with a  
 good bit of pride.

When I showed down four queens  
 Dock tore up his "papes,"  
 And cussed at himself for a damned  
 jackanapes;  
 Then John Long calmly turned his  
 five little cards—  
 Four aces, a deuce. Guess I've won  
 it "pardner."  
 He waited for Hank. He turned over  
 a "tray"  
 The three spot of diamonds. A bluff,  
 did you say?  
 Then slowly he turned the four, five  
 and six—  
 All diamonds. (My little old queens  
 seemed to mix).  
 You could hear Angels breathing  
 when Hank turned the last,

The little deuce of diamonds. Well,  
 I'll just be dod' ghaat—  
 And that was the card he had draw-  
 ed, Jiminy!  
 A straight diamond flush: Delightful  
 to see,  
 There was "fix" in the air, for John  
 Long was hard hit,  
 And he sat at the table for quite a  
 long bit;  
 Then suddenly rising he flashed a  
 big bun  
 And the "popping" commenced; we  
 other guys run.

They had the house clear, and I  
 counted the shots—  
 They had emptied their guns—exactly  
 ten shots—  
 A minute of silence, and then once  
 again  
 The pop of the pistols made every-  
 thing plain,  
 They had each reloaded their guns  
 and once more  
 Were shooting away as they were be-  
 fore.  
 Ten more shots we counted, and then  
 all was still,  
 But none of us cared to go into that  
 "mill."

Ten minutes passed by before we  
 went in  
 To see what was done and gin up  
 up again,  
 Hank and John were stretched full  
 length on the floor—  
 John at the back—Hank near the  
 front door;  
 They were covered with blood, and  
 each of them grim  
 With reckless 'don't care,' knew their  
 chances were slim;  
 For their bodies were riddled with  
 bullets. And then  
 We learned what it cost to be desper-  
 ate men.

But Hank King got well, and so did  
 John Long;  
 You see Hank said right, "My time  
 hasn't come."  
 And many the dare-devil prank he yet  
 played;  
 But between him and Long enough  
 had been said.  
 They avoided each other, and after  
 a time  
 Hank figured that John was a gen-  
 tleman prime  
 Who could reign down at Prineville  
 in glory serene;

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