



### Stories of an old Oregon Indian Fighter as Told by Himself.

This contribution is primarily for the boys. Now, if you grown up readers of the Graphic should read it, don't get uppish and say disdainfully that it belongs in the "American Boy" or "Youth's Companion." That wouldn't be fair for you have been fore warned.

Every healthy, normal boy has reveled in tales of the old Indian fighting days, replete with hair raising adventures and narrow escapes. The writer has wondered if a few really true stories which he has run across in the manuscript autobiography of an old Indian fighter would not be readable. They should certainly not be the less interesting that their scene is in Oregon and that the hero was Oregon's first territorial governor—the father of the present mayor of Portland.

Before this rugged "Son of Wars," popularly known as "Fighting Jo Lane," ever came to Oregon, he had already won his spurs in the war with Mexico. Indeed his dash and gallantry won for him the title of "the Marion of the Mexican War" and every schoolboy knows what that means. Immediately on the close of the war he was chosen by Pres. Polk to come out to Oregon and set up the new territorial government. Polk was anxious that this should be accomplished before his term of office expired on March 4, 1849. Hence, though he had been home but for a few days, Lane set out again on August 29, 1848, on the long overland journey. He had an interview with Gen. Phil Kearney at St. Louis, who tried to convince him he couldn't make the trip across the mountains in the winter. It was always a useless thing to try to convince Lane that a thing couldn't be done that he had set out to do, so with an escort of twenty men he hit the trail, arrived in Oregon in the spring, and issued at Oregon City his proclamation as territorial governor on March 2, just two days before Polk yielded the presidential chair to "Old Rough and Ready" Taylor.

Joseph Lane served the new territory as governor and delegate in Congress and later, the new state as senator. In 1860 he was the candidate for vice president on the democratic ticket with Breckenridge. But it is in his capacity as an Indian fighter that we are now concerned. With this in view we are not upholding his policy toward the Indians. In fact his attitude toward them was doubtless too harsh at times. But he could do much with the natives, who respected him even as they feared him. In the early fifties the Rogue River Indians of Southern Oregon broke out several times, and the doughty Lane was always active in quelling the disturbances. In 1878 the California historian, H. H. Bancroft, asked the old general to write an account of his career and it is from this manuscript in the Bancroft Library that I have collected the incidents which follow.

Briefly, this is the story which he tells of the outbreak of 1850. In the spring some miners were on their way home to the Willamette Valley from California, carrying with them as fruits of their toil, sacks of the precious gold dust. They were encamped one night at Rock Point, when suddenly a party of Indians swooped down upon them, grabbed their gold sacks and other booty and made their escape in the darkness. Imagine

the feelings of the poor men who saw the results of months of privation and labor, snatched from them in an instant. On arriving home they told their story to Governor Lane. In June, with only twelve or fifteen white men and as many Klicitat Indians under their chief, Quatley, who were enemies of the Rogue River, he started out to bring the culprits to time. Arriving at the Indian villages, he told the head chief, afterward known as "Jo," that he wished to have a meeting with them and arrange a peace treaty. After some parley, Jo consented to call his people in for a pow wow. But lo, when the Indians gathered for the conference, seventy-five bucks came fully armed! Lane and his little party had been trapped. But the old fighter threw his ally, Chief Quatley, a significant look and the latter took a position close to Chief Jo. Lane then addressed the Red men as if nothing was wrong, telling them they must give up what they had stolen and allow white people to go through their country without molestation. Then Chief Jo began speaking, when suddenly the armed Indians jumped up with a whoop and brought their arms to aim. But old Quatley was an Indian himself and had been on the lookout for just this thing. Quick as a flash he clutched Jo with a strangle hold, pulled his knife and held it at the throat of the deceptive Rogue River chief. The hostile Indians saw that with the first shot, the throat of their chief would be cut and they reluctantly lowered their guns. Jo made the best of an embarrassing situation and told his men to go back to their villages and return again in two days in a better humor. They did so, leaving their chief a prisoner in the hands of Lane. The latter treated the old chief honorably and won his admiration—so much so that he asked Lane to give him his name, "Jo Lane." Lane told him he could not spare all of it, but that he would give him the first half. The Indian was satisfied and was ever afterward known as "Chief Jo." The latter also had Lane name his favorite squaw and his boy and girl, Sally, Ben and Mary being the names conferred, respectively.

At the end of two days the Indians came back again and a treaty was concluded. Some of the stolen booty was returned, but not the sacks of gold dust. In regard to these the wily savages pretended dense ignorance—said they didn't know what the stuff was and threw it away!

While Lane was on this expedition he was superseded as governor by John P. Gaines, an appointee of the Whig president, Taylor. Thus, having no official duties to call him back north he dismissed his Indian allies and concluded to continue his journey southward and try his fortune in the California gold fields. And we will follow his fortunes briefly as he joins the army of gold seekers.

First let me introduce another character who plays no little part in this southern trip. Before Lane took leave of the Rogue River Indians, as a further mark of his good will Chief Jo presented him with a forlorn looking specimen of human flesh, or skin and bones more properly speaking, in the shape of a Modoc Indian boy which they had held as captive for some time. He had been abused and sadly treated generally; was dirty, naked, half starved and proved to be dumb! The desirability of such a gift was at the very least, questionable, but Lane accepted it with some misgivings. He named the boy John, but those

of you who know your Robinson Crusoe will see a little later on why the boy should have been named "Friday." John was at once cleaned up, clothed and fed, and promptly yielded to such treatment just as all dumb animals do. And quite naturally all the gratitude of his little being was paid to his benefactor. Being dumb, his senses were abnormally developed. His "instinct" was remarkable, even for an Indian. He could follow tracks over the leaves which could not ordinarily be seen at all. He detected sounds which to common ears were not discernible.

The party of which Lane was a member moved about from place to place, and was always in more or less danger from hostile savages. For awhile they were encamped on Clear Creek near the Sacramento river. In this neighborhood they were continually harrassed by the Pitt river Indians, who were not only very savage, but the slyest and most adept thieves imaginable. They would crawl up into the camp at night and steal things in the very presence of the miners. Lane records that one Indian stole a blanket from the body of a sleeping man and made his escape with it.

One day Lane, his Modoc boy John and a man named Driscoll crossed the creek and began prospecting in a rich gulch some little distance from camp. After a short time Driscoll and John went on up the gulch out of view of Lane. Pretty soon John came tearing back like a scared rabbit and made Lane understand that Driscoll was in the hands of Indians. Lane grabbed his gun and hurried to the rescue. He came suddenly upon a murderous band of a dozen or more savages who had bound Driscoll and were just dragging him off in the brush to put him to the torture. He took the Indians by surprise, and covering them with his gun, quickly cut the unfortunate man loose, who, however, was so paralyzed with fear that he couldn't move. Recovering from their start, the savages began to close in around Lane who backed up against a cliff and was desperately holding the hand at bay and protecting the body of poor Driscoll. Just at this opportune moment his companions came rushing up the gulch and put the Indians to flight. In the stress of the excitement Lane had forgotten John, who had raced on to the creek or river, crossed to the camp, given the alarm and returned with help in the nick of time to save the life of his beloved master.

The party continued to have little skirmishes with the Indians now and then. One night three sly savages tried to sneak up to camp through the tall grass and Martin Angell, one of the party who was on sentinel duty, brought one of them down with his trusty rifle. Lane here observes rather enviously that "Angell always was lucky in killing Indians." However the Indians finally brought Angell into harmony with his name, killing him near Jacksonville in the war of 1855-6.

While the miners were working at the Scott river diggings, their camp was in charge of an old Oregon City Indian and his squaw Emma, whom Lane had run across and hired, Emma to do the cooking. The dinner horn was regularly blown at noon to call in the miners. One day the signal failed to sound and Lane and John went into camp to see what was the matter. They found the camp in an uproar and in the possession of a band

of unruly Indians who had raided it and compelled old Emma to serve up dinner for them. Greatly incensed, Lane rashly tried to drive out the self-invited guests, single handed. He had miscalculated the temper of the red skins. Angry at the rude interruption they raised their guns and were on the point of terminating the career of Marion the Second when faithful Emma thrust herself in between Lane and his deadly assailants and was doing her best to keep the Indians from getting a free shot at their mark. At the beginning of the trouble, John slipped out of the camp unobserved and ran for the miners who appeared on the scene in time to save their leader. Thus a second time had the little dumb Modoc saved his white chief.

About this time, Thurston, Oregon's delegate in Congress, died and Lane determined to return home and become a candidate for the honor. So he returned to Oregon City in May, 1851, having met with indifferent success only as a miner, taking with him the old Indian and Emma and John, of course. Lane was elected, and on leaving for the East in July left his faithful John with his son Nat at Oregon City. As frequently happens, the Indian boy did not long survive being transplanted in civilization. Without anything particularly being the matter with him he faded away and died. Like a faithful dog, probably grief at the absence of his master had something to do with his death.

We think all the better of Lane, relentless Indian fighter that he was, that he takes space in his autobiography to pay a loving tribute to the faithfulness and devotion of his humble servant boy and protector. In so doing he tells a significant incident. While at Oregon City John became attached to a man engaged at the Lane mills. The man was a hard drinker and often came home at night across a narrow bridge while heavily intoxicated. John always accompanied him faithfully, watching him like a hawk. One night when sober, thinking to play a joke on the boy the man played drunk and reeled around on the bridge, his dumb friend always catching at him to keep him from falling off. All at once the ungrateful man straightened up and laughed impudently at poor John. With a look of injured innocence the boy left him, and despite the overtures which the man made to him day after day, would never again have anything to do with the one who had played him false. And this ends the story of Jo Lane's little red skin hero friend, the Modoc boy with but half a name—the beloved little disciple, John.

(To be continued.)

W. C. WOODWARD.

Berkeley, California.  
January 8, 1908.

#### Real Estate Transfers.

Reported by the Yamhill County Abstract Company, McMinnville.

Samuel C Gockley to Canfield Marsh and wf 132.44 a cl 44 t 3 sr 2 \$8000.

A P Johnson and wf to WE White and wf small tract in Newberg \$4000.

Emma G Yocom and hus to G D Carter 80 a sec 4 t 6 sr 7 \$600.

C J Kuns and wf to G L Zumbalt and wf 17 a Jos R Young d 1 c 4 sr 4 \$2200.

John L Bennett et al to James E Houk blk 19 Whiteson \$100.

John Baxter (by exr) to John W Baxter 26 a cl 59 t 5 sr 3.

E S Switzer to Theodore Weber small tract in JB Rodgers d 1 c t 3 sr 2 \$125.

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- 1/4 off on 150 pairs Boys' Knee Pants 1/4 off
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