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DAD'S STORY

Agnes Redfeather became famous as a motion picture actress. Whether it was the same Agnes Redfeather I met at the dance at the Needinghouse ranch I never learned though she resembled in her pictures the image in my mind of the dusky Indian maiden who graced the floor of that ranch that evening back in 1912.

I have not been much of a hand to attend dances in late years. True when a lad I could trip the light fantastic but perhaps it was more fantastic than I knew. Later years it has rather seemed that it might have been.

But Alma has always been something of a society woman, likes to go places, to dance, to entertain, to enjoy the company of the crowd. So one Friday evening she joyously announced there was going to be a dance at the Needinghouse ranch across the river. And she also told me that there would be a crowd stop for us a little later. I donned my best suit, one of corduroy such as the boys now call cords. We left the school before dark, but it was quite a way and we had only a team to take us. A team and a lumber wagon.

The ranch was opposite Oswego which was about eight miles east of Frazer. The river had rather low banks there and we drove right close to the banks but it was dark before we arrived. Some of the men yelled for a boat to come and get us. No answer. They yelled again. Again no answer. It began to look as though we were not going to get to the dance after all.

Finally I suggested that all yell at the same time, that the number of voices would increase the volume of sound and perhaps we might rouse some of the people at the ranch which we learned, by that time, lay some mile or more from the river bank! We all yelled. There seemed to be a faint halloo but we were not sure. We all yelled in unison again. This time we were sure that we heard a faint answer. In about fifteen or twenty minutes we heard a wagon on the other side of the river. They were coming after us.

There was one boat, rather a big, awkward flat-bottomed sort of scow affair rowed by one man. He came across all right but when all of our crowd loaded into the thing only a couple of inches on the sides were above water. We let the experienced ranch hand handle the thing because none of us were used to rowing and few if any of us had crossed at that place before.

The Missouri is very treacherous. The Indians fear it as they do a pestilence. Seldom will one of them brave its waters except to swim across. They seem less afraid to swim than to get into a boat and attempt to row across. They say, "River spirit no like boats."

We were getting on famously. Nearly half way across we struck a sand bar. It had not been there when the boatman came across, he insisted. But it was there and the boat stuck fast on it. It may have been the increased draught of the loaded boat, or it may have been the shifting of a bar, that brought this one there. They shift with amazing rapidity at times.

By sitting quiet we kept the water from coming over the edge of the boat. When someone made a little, sudden movement the water would slop over the side. What were we going to do? We thought of calling for help but the ranch hand said that the music was just about to start and there would be little chance that anyone would hear us. Some of the women began to get frightened. The boatman directed the shifting of the load and he got to the front end and stuck his ear down into the bar and heaved. Quite a little water slopped over into the rear end but the thing was loose and began to drift downstream which was quite swift at the place. We finally shifted back to our original positions and one fellow dipped water out. We were again on our way.

Arrived at the other bank, we loaded into a wagon and made the trip to the ranch without further mishap. If any sophisticated citizen wants to find extremes, let him visit one of the better ranch residences that are scattered over the plains. It is too much for my poor vocabulary to attempt to describe the scene. Mohogany sits quietly beside plain, old-fashioned scoured pine. German silver mingles with pure sterling and fine gold.

The Needinghouse ranch was said to be the summer home of an im-

The SNAPSHOT GUILD KNOW YOUR CAMERA



The amateur who took this prize-winning picture had mastered his camera

CAMERA manufacturers spend thousands of dollars each year in preparing and printing instruction books which are enclosed with each camera. These booklets give valuable information on the use and care of the camera but the average person looks only far enough into the instructions to find out how to insert the film and right there they stop.

From the mechanical viewpoint the box type camera gives us just about the acme of simplicity. It usually has two "stops" for snapshots and one for "time exposures." However, the manual accompanying it is worth a careful reading.

With certain types of folding cameras, you have more to consider if you are to expect good, clear, sharp pictures and the manual should be studied by all means.

You may have from three to nine apertures to choose from and shutter speeds ranging from one-half to 1/500 second, depending on the type of camera. In addition to these split second shutter speeds the camera is probably equipped for time exposures.

Before loading your camera with film consult the manual so that you will understand just what is happening when you do certain things—and why.

In a recent snapshot contest conducted by sixty-four leading newspapers scattered throughout the

United States, the picture shown above was awarded one of the major prizes in the national awards. The snapshotter who took the picture was far from being old in experience but it is quite evident that he had made a study of his hobby and knew what he was doing and what could be expected of his camera.

Study the composition of your pictures, that is, "compose" your picture in your viewfinder before clicking the shutter. Perhaps by stepping forward a few feet you can eliminate some inconspicuous object—something that may really detract from the point of interest in the picture. Try viewing a scene or subject from different angles, then choose the one you think the most attractive.

Too many snapshotters, when taking pictures of their friends, have them stand as straight as a ramrod and look directly at the camera. That may be all right for a record picture but the snap would be much more interesting if people in it were doing something.

If you will give just a little serious thought to your snapshotting and thoroughly know the limitations or versatility of your camera you will be well rewarded with interesting, artistic or story-telling pictures which you will be proud to show your friends and which will win their admiration.

JOHN VAN GULDER

mensely rich St. Louis family who had big factories making granite-ware. I never learned the truth but tall stories were told of the doings when the owner and his company held sway, but there was no owner there that night, only the cow hands, the boys who kept house, looked after the stock, and did the farm work, for the Needinghouses were playing at farming.

There were four or five buildings in sight though it was quite dark. There was no moon and a person coming from a lighted room could hardly see his hands. One building was where the dance was going on. Another we visited was the cook house. I did not learn to what purpose the other places were put though I suppose one of the buildings was the family residence, this is when they came to the ranch in summer.

The dancing was nothing out of the ordinary, such as one sees any time. They danced the old-fashioned dances, for at that time they had not learned the Charleston, the tango, the rhumba, or others of more modern times. The only outstanding feature was the absolute order, the politeness displayed by those rough folks of the plains, and the very courteous treatment afforded to all women. Though there was swearing and rough talk aplenty outside the building where they were dancing, there was no loud voice raised inside, or if there was, plenty of fellows cautioned the noisy one to be still for the "ladies present". "Ladies present", I learned, had a wonderful influence on those rough characters.

One of the cowboys called Kansas was particularly noisy. In a friendly, joking way, but he others kept him quiet while inside. No drinking, no loud talk, no swear-

ing, everything as mannerly and subdued as one would find in the quietest family party. It really surprised me. I had read plenty of times of the reverence the cow hands showed women but it certainly made an impression on me to see one of those chapped dressed riders, "Sh-h, ladies present!"

It was the midnight supper that was most amazing. I hardly know what I had expected but certainly not what I found. For the first time in my life I partook of a sumptuous repast a la round-up. Today the phrase has somewhat of a vogue and such style servings are not at all uncommon, as witness the cafeterias of the cities, the serve-self lunch rooms.

I suppose there must have been eighty or a hundred present at the dance. The bunk house where they danced was always full and there were plenty outside all the time for, although it was dark, it was pleasant, and if one danced one perspired and was glad to get outside to cool off. You know, those buildings were made to withstand severe cold. Sixty below was not uncommon although that was a little lower than I experienced during my stay. Fifty-six below was the lowest I got during the winters of 1912-13 or 1913-14. In the buildings heavy timbers were laid, one on top of the other. Some of the walls were eighteen inches and some even two feet thick. The logs were heavily coated with gumbo. Not a breath can penetrate through these walls and the windows were small and double. That is one wash was set into the jamb near the outside with a duplicate set set into the same jamb nearer the room. With only the door open at one end of the room and sixty or seventy persons dancing, the room soon became heated and there was

no means of cooling off except to go outside and so everybody went outside at times.

But to get back to that supper! Such an abundance of food I never saw in one place before. The ranch must have employed fifteen or twenty hands. These could comfortably have set down at the tables which stood in the middle of the dining room floor. The guests formed a line at one side of the door and began to march in. I joined then, near the end of the line for my simple soul had never guessed we could be served supper without the hosts bringing in plates with food for the guests. When most of the crowd had got in the line I followed suit thinking I could stand it once if these folks were used to it right along. Stand it? Well, I should say I could right now!

Alma, who was just ahead of me, possessed just as much ignorance as I did but we watched the others in front and so when our time came both of us took a plate, a knife, a fork and spoon and followed along. There was meat, steaming hot and three or four who did nothing but carve just the piece each guest wanted. Stacks of bread, butter, potatoes, hot too—everything one could think of. And pie, cake, cookies, fried cakes, oranges, bananas, apples, you never saw a greater profusion or variety. But the dish that capped the climax for me was a fruit salad. Alma insisted that I take some. It was strange to me and I did not feel like loading up but at her insistence I took a goodly portion.

To my dying day I do not believe I'll ever taste a better dish. I can't describe it. I've eaten many fruit salads since but none which

had the exquisite flavor of that one served a la round-up in that rough cook house on the Needinghouse ranch, "The Lazy N ranch" as it was called. You old westerners will know what that means.

Way back in the days when the girls did not like to dance with me for, oh, various reasons—size, ineptness, clumsiness, probably a lot more reasons but I know I had trouble getting dancing partners—in those days they used to sing. "We'll dance all night until broad day light and go home with the girls in the morning." Verily that night we danced all night! We learned it was quite the custom in those parts after we'd lived there awhile, but then I thought we should think of going home a least soon after midnight. But when I mentioned the matter to one of the men of our party he inquired if I wanted to try crossing "that river again in the dark?" That put a stop to my suggestions. And we stayed on and danced and

danced. As day began to break the Needinghouse hands began to make preparations to go to work. Some one of them sort of inquired if we were ready to start back for as said he "had to bring the boss back and get out to look after his stock." We loaded into the wagon again and like wilted lilies, we started back. The return was without mishap. Sleepy, I can still see my head lopping from side to side. (Continued on Next Page)

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AFTER THE HONEYMOON



By Geoff Hayes