

FACTS ABOUT SCOUTS.

Not as Portrayed in Dime Novels, But as They Are Found in Reality.

The scout of the novel and the show, writes Con. A. Mahony, in the Philadelphia Press, is a very picturesque, kind fellow, thoroughly reckless, a dead shot, the proprietor of a varied selection of scalp and showing in his moral character that combination of "half angel and half Lucifer" of which Joaquin Miller deliriously sings. Like Samson of old, his strength is in his hair, and his long-flowing locks are the admiration of frontier women and the envy of frontier men. He is always clad in buckskin, fringed and stamped with grotesque designs, while his flowing locks are surmounted with a sombrero that it would take three days to walk round the brim. Such is the Eastern conception; now for the Southwestern reality.

The United States scout in active service wears his hair cut short, in soldier fashion, because he has to sleep on the ground for weeks at a time, and if he wore long and flowing locks they would give him considerable trouble by affording a choice variety of insects a refuge and a dwelling-place. Then again, outside of some town in which they wanted with a pardonable vanity to show off, I never saw one of them in a buckskin suit. It is too warm in summer and not warm enough in winter. The scout is a good shot, but that is a virtue he shares in common with nearly every man and boy on the frontier.

There is very little romance, but plenty of hardship about the life of a scout. He is not selected for his dashing air and reckless bravery, but for the only quality in demand with army officers, his thorough knowledge of the country, in which the troops are to operate, and especially of the best camping grounds, the distance from water to water (a point on which the lives of the command often depend) and his power to shorten marches by his acquaintance with short cuts through mountains and over morasses. If he knows the Spanish language so much the better and if he can speak a little Apache better still, but these latter accomplishments are of minor importance to a thorough knowledge of the country.

United States army scouts may be divided into two classes—white men, who rank as chiefs of scouts, and Indian scouts, who are organized as military companies. The white scouts are usually men who have been employees of the San Carlos and Mesquero Apache Reservations or Indian agencies. They are, from constant association with the Indians, well acquainted with their character and habits and frequently speak a little Apache. The Apaches, with few exceptions, speak Spanish, and it is usually the language they use in communicating with the Indian agent and the employees of the agency. A white man who makes himself useful to the Indians by doing them little favors is, in time, taught "to read sign."

A scout who can read "sign" can tell you by examining a trail over which horses have passed if they were ridden or led, and if both the number ridden and the number led. Even when shot he can tell whether the horses were American or Mexican. If the trail be made by men on foot he can tell if it be an Indian trail or simply the trail of Mexicans wearing moccasins. In a hostile party he can tell by the trail how many are bucks and how many are women and children, and so on over a field of observation as extensive as interesting.

The scout thus qualified finds no difficulty in obtaining employment in the Southwest, where Apache outbreaks are of almost yearly occurrence. He is engaged, subject to the approval of the commander of the district or department—New Mexico is a military district, while Arizona is a military department—at a salary of \$120 a month and a ration for his horse. He provides his own arms and ammunition, and ignores the Government Springfield rifle for the improved Winchester, 45 caliber repeating rifle. From his pay he has to provide for his rations, and he messes with the officers when in post, or when outside with the command.

The Indian scout companies are enlisted from the "good" Indians on the reservations. About thirty men form a company which is placed under the command of a Lieutenant of the regular army with whom is associated a chief of scouts who acts as the medium of communication between the officer and his command. About six soldiers, as a measure of precaution against mutiny, are attached to each company of scouts. The period of service of an Indian scout is only six months, "unless sooner discharged," and he is paid thirty dollars a month. His rifle generally provides his ration, as the Apache detests army bacon, preferring even the abandoned carcasses of an army mule.

The Indian scout companies are not popular on the frontier. They are considered to be only training schools for the hostiles, and as some of the most desperate of the Apaches have been scouts, such as Bonita and Chato, the antipathy of the frontiersmen is not altogether without reason. The fact that the Indian scouts of the Government are without uniform adds to the annoyance of the people of the frontier who, except they see the Indians accompanied by a white man, can not tell them from hostiles. The only thing distinctively worn by the Indian scout outside the Government belt that carries his ammunition to distinguish him, is a red handkerchief bound around his head. The frontiersmen argue that red handkerchiefs are so common that no Indian, hostile or otherwise, need be without one. It is well-known that the lack of uniform of the Indian scout is a source of perpetual danger on the border to Americans and Mexicans alike, and has cost the sacrifice of many lives.

The Mouth of the Horse.
Be careful of the horse's mouth. Men who jerk the reins because they are too mad to be sensible and humane, should have it bit placed in their own mouths and have it jerked by some brutal fellow who would enjoy giving pain. In breaking colts, be very careful about the mouth, and never use a bit on a horse that has a sore mouth while it continues sore. The mouth of the horse should be more frequently examined than it usually is. Sometimes there is an inflammation that needs attention. Sometimes the teeth need attention, and occasionally it may even be necessary to draw a tooth. It is by no means uncommon that the poor condition of a horse can be traced to some ailment of the mouth which prevents the proper mastication of the food. It is not much trouble to open the mouth and look into it, and it will often prevent trouble.

The Sun as a Curative Agent.
Court the sun, if you are one of the unhappy ones who lie awake at night. The very worst scrofula is leprosy, and the very best sunshine. Therefore it is very plain that poor sleepers should pass as many hours as possible in the shade, and as few as possible in the sunshine. Many women are martyrs, and yet they do not know it. They shut the shades out of their houses and their beds, they wear veils, they carry parasols, they wear long coats and keep off the subject and yet most potent influence which is intended to give them strength and beauty and cheerfulness. It is not time to change this, but to get color and roses in their pale cheeks, strength in their weak bodies and courage in their timid souls.

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