

"Life of Frank Tweedy: Confessions of a Tenderfoot" is an autobiography written by Frank during his retirement in Washington, DC, in June of 1926. This typed copy was provided by his great grand niece, Kate Tweedy, kctweedy22@gmail.com

*Frank Tweedy
Washington
DC
June 1926*

F r a n k T w e e d y

Frank Tweedy was born June 12, 1854.

Entered Union College, Schenectady, New York, in 1875, (sophomore year), and graduated in June, 1875, with degree of Civil Engineer, C.E.

Was captain and stroke of college boat crew and rowed in the intercollegiate regatta on Saratoga Lake (New York).

1876 – 1879 was connected with the Adirondack State Survey during the summers.

1880 – 1881 with George E. Waring, Jr., Sanitary Engineer at Newport, Rhode Island.

1882 – 1883 was on the Northern Transcontinental Survey, working along the Columbia River and in the Cascade Mountains.

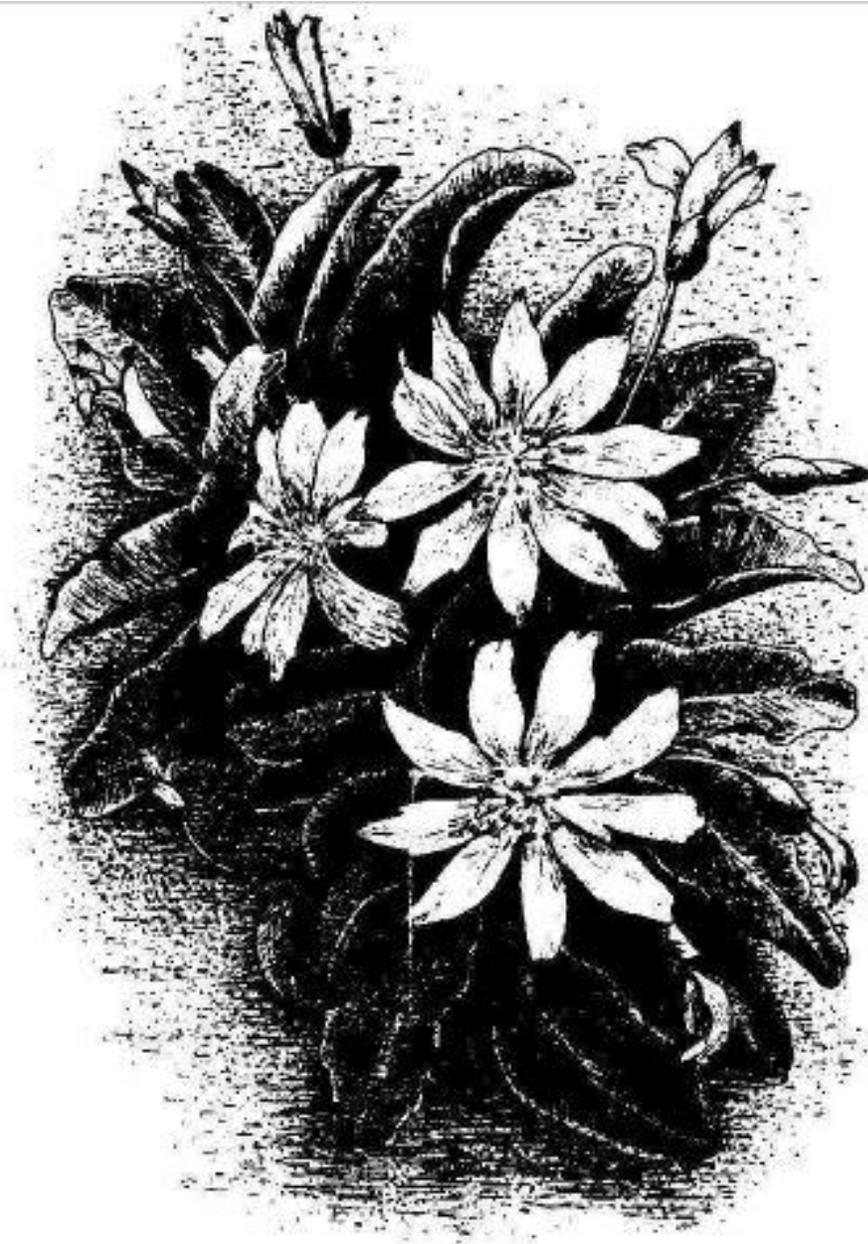
1884 Passed a Civil Service examination for an assistant on the United States Geological Survey, became an assistant topographer, then topographer, and finally Topographic Engineer.

1884 – 1885 worked in the Yellowstone Park, following with map work in Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico. The work was mainly along the Rocky Mountains.

1828 Retired from the United States Geological Survey after forty-three years of service.

A botanist of distinction, Made a fine herbarium of the flora of Montana, which he presented to Yale University.

Member Society of Colonial Wars, of the Washington Academy of Sciences, and of the Cosmos Club of Washington, D.C.



LEWISIA TWEEDYI

Lewisia tweedyi is without question the most beautiful of the lewisias and would rank near the top of any list of the best alpines of the world. From a heavy carrot-root come numerous rosettes of broad, fleshy leaves, among which in May rise numerous 4- to 6-inch stems, each bearing 2 or 3 large flowers of pale apricot-pink, shimmering with pearly opalescence. A single established plant may carry more than 50 blooms, which open over a long period. — from *Rock Gardening*

1

The Confessions of a Tenderfoot.

One – Anticipation.

I introduce myself. Pick up advance information on route. Arrive at “Woolly” early on a Sunday morning.

The dictionary defines a tenderfoot:

“A newcomer in a rough or newly settled region, especially when not inured to hardship; a colloquial or slang term originating in the Western United States.”

I was not a tenderfoot as regards not being inured to hardship, having spent many summers of my boyhood and young manhood in what was then called “The Adirondack Wilderness of New York State.” It was a wilderness then and not as now – crisscrossed by wagon roads and railroads.

I slept on the ground beside a camp fire, with no shelter and often no blankets, doing my own cooking and axwork.

But in one way I was a tenderfoot, never having been in touch with the social aspect of the Far West.

I was not inclined toward anything of the “Wild and Woolly” type, but still I wanted to see it. Then again, I liked the “Wild of Nature” and exploration.

I had read the records of Lewis and Clark. That memorable expedition across the Northern United States from St. Louis to the mouth of the Columbia and their return in 1804-06, and Hayden’s report of the wonders of the Yellowstone.

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I was prepared. Did I not know that the white, red and blue chips were not after dinner mints. Did I not know the difference between ?? and tea at noon. They were alike in color. Did I not know that all of the fair sex were not angels [added by hand].

I said confidently "I thought so", when in 1882 I received an appointment on a survey that would follow the path cut out by Lewis and Clark in 1804-06.

The survey, topographic and economic, was organized by the Northern Pacific Railroad.

The Northern Pacific was the pioneer line westward from St. Paul, Minn. to the Columbia River and in 1882 was completed from the east a little beyond the west boundary of Dakota Territory, and from the west to near the east boundary of Washington Territory.

Washington, Idaho and Dakota did not become states until 1898.

I had never been west of Chicago so I was going to have my horizon and knowledge decidedly extended – the great treeless plains, the eternal springs of two great rivers, the Missouri and Columbia, and the Rocky Mountains of Lewis and Clark clothed in their dark green verdure of virgin forests.

Before Lewis and Clark made their memorable trip in 1804-06 no one knew at least map makers, the location of the "Rock Mountains" or in which region the Missouri and Columbia had their sources.

It was a beautiful day in May when we left Minneapolis. There were six in the party to be finally divided into three units each unit to have a chief and assistant. One unit to work in Montana, one in east Washington and one in Western Washington – the Cascade Mountains. I would be the assistant of the part in western Washington.

There was one assistant who attracted my attention from the beginning and I will tag him "Jones". His family had been with Noah on the waste of waters and perhaps for that very reason his tales of ancestral grandeur were fishy.

In his own mind he would soon become the head of all the parties. His father owned blooded horses and he, Jones, was going to show the westerners how to ride.

Another assistant, Smith, was quiet. He did not boast of his lares and penates.

Of course I must hold up my end against Jones and told him that I had seen the whole affair in the Garden of Eden and that I thought Adam a piker and no gentleman to shift all the blame on the woman.

Several hours out from Minneapolis the pines became scattering and finally disappeared.

In the afternoon we passed Fargo on the Red River of the North, the dividing line between Minnesota and North Dakota.

I began to view the great treeless plains extending to the horizon in all directions and often without a habitation in sight. Lonely it was but bred a feeling of solemnity. I saw myself in mental vision dropped down upon this lonely waste. I would stand in the center of a plane, its limits the equidistant unbroken circular horizon and blue dome above. It would be a silent world, no sound of human industries.

At Bismarck, the capital of North Dakota we crossed the Upper Missouri River to Mandan on the west bank.

Close by Mandan Lewis and Clark passed the winter of 1804-05 and here were the ruins of Fort Lincoln where General Custer and the Seventh Cavalry

in 1876 started out for the Little Big Horn to meet the Sioux and never returned.

At Medora, hardly more than a railroad station we were in the center of the Bad Lands. The soft rocks and clays had been eroded into spires, pinnacles and all manner of fantastic shapes – the stratas of many colors. Treeless and with but little vegetation but eons before there had been forests of great trees as indicated by the fossilized trunks.

I must introduce a note here. Two years after in 1884 Theodore Roosevelt came to Medora to regain his health and settled on a cattle ranch. I can't remember that in 1882 I had ever heard of a Theodore Roosevelt. It seems to me now that there must have been a chronological mix-up, that I should have antedated Theodore Roosevelt at Medora.

West of Medora we came into a region of curious cone-shaped hills called buttes. There was no vegetation except a very short matlike grass.

We were approaching the Dakota-Montana boundary line and I wanted information. When would the train dump me off into the "Wild and Woolly" and the conductor gave me the information.

"'Bout on the line now and down hill about fifty miles to the Yellowstone."

I pricked up my ears at the word "Yellowstone" and said eagerly, "oh Lewis and Clark country."

"Who is Lewis and Clark," he questioned.

I was disgusted at this ignorance but started to explain politely when he cut me off with "What are you going to do when you get there?" accompanied with a look of suspicion.

In the light of later information he evidently thought I was a three card monte exponent or shell game artist.

When I explained my reason for being on the Yellowstone he said, "You jumped the wrong choo choo wagon. You should have taken the Union Pacific

then up to Portland by steamer.”

I explained more definitely and he remarked carelessly, “If a fellow wants to get into trouble just to view the scenery that’s his funeral.”

The term “funeral” was not heartening but in the light of what occurred was not so very far wrong.

For convenience of reference I shall call the place on the Yellowstone where we finally left the train “Woolly”. It was not far from where the town of Glendine now stands.

From the conductor I obtained much advance information. That the railroad was graded sixty miles beyond Woolly. That most of the thousand or so workmen on the grade returned to Woolly at the week-end to spend their money. That fifty-seven different varieties of men and women in Woolly helped the graders to lighten their pockets. That the limit at Woolly was the starry heavens. That there was no coroner at Woolly and no questions as to how anyone was bumped off. That all bullets were of forty-five caliber. That all entertainments were free as air but no guarantee that the patron would leave by the door he entered. There was a back door that opened on a small fenced plot. Was this an improvised grave yard? I did not ask.

I saw that I was going to add many new terms to my vocabulary and most were self explanatory.

Of course I was not such a dunce as to believe all the conductor said but there was enough to indicate that “Woolly” was not a Sunday school picnic.

The train was well filled and I walked through it to observe the people. From what the conductor said the majority were not going to Woolly with any altruistic motive.

I had invitations from both sexes to sit down and have a little talk, and two women were very pressing but I did not attribute this to my charming

personality. When I returned I saw two women standing in the aisle. When they made little attempt to open a space for me I brushed rather rudely, I will admit, between them, and returned to my car and seat.

A little later I found that my watch and stick pin were gone. The watch was of little value but I was humiliated as the conductor would have said "Easy pickin's".

As we filed out of the car the conductor remarked, "Better look after your trinkets as it will be dark," but I had no trinkets now except a penknife.

It was 12:30 A.M. on a Sunday morning when we planted our feet on the soil of "Woolly" and even so early, truthfully late, the place was gay.

Our party of six could not find quarters together so it became everyone for himself. I secured a place over a saloon which had evidently been a stable.

My bedroom was the old hayloft and occupied by others. Two drunks were sleeping audibly. There were a lot of dirty mattresses and coverlets scattered about. They were odorful and no doubt inhabited so I folded up my coat, placed it on the floor at the bottom of the wall and sat down upon it, the wall making a good back rest through which the air poured in through the two inch cracks between the boards.

I had been in bed (?) perhaps an hour when I was awakened by several detonations in quick succession from the barroom below which I recognized was from a firearm. I drew up my feet hoping that the fusillade would not penetrate the board ceiling of the barroom which was coexistent with the floor of my bedroom and I thought of an appropriate to the occasion:

"As I sat by myself
and talked to myself
Myself said to me
Look to thyself

Take care of thyself
For nobody cares for thee.”

The two inebriate gentlemen in the corner were also awakened and they conversed”

“Shay, Jim, git up! I guess it be For’ July,” and the reply,

“Sush up, yer lyin’, I reckon ‘Bout Crismus!”

I gleaned from the remarks that one was a Ynakee and the other of the Sunny South.

When dawn came through the cracks in my bedroom I arose, put on my coat and climbed down the ladder stairs to the barroom.

The room was silent except for two gentlemen (?) in the corner sleeping audibly. A man in a dirty white suit on a cot was evidently the bar-keeper.

The detonations of a few hours back were explained by the broken bottles and glasses on the shelf above the bar. Some one had used them as a target.

It was glorious morning. The air was chilly, but in it was an invigoration that gave me the inclination to run. Woolly was a tent town, augmented by several frame buildings, one a store.

The street was deserted but gave evidence that there had been a sound of revelry by night for several of the revelers had forgotten to go to bed and had fallen by the wayside. Altogether it was not as it should be on a Sunday morning.

I hurried down to the river and sitting down on the bank gazed at the rushing waters of the Yellowstone. Here in August 1806 had passed Clark going down the river to join Lewis at the Missouri. The Yellowstone was

at flood stage from the melting snow in the mountains, but hardly muddy, rather a dark blue green and yet its source was four hundred miles to the west.

I kneeled down and lifting the water in my cupped hands, drank. I was drinking water that had fallen on the summits of the Rocky Mountains far far to the west. Then I washed my face and hands. I felt rejuvenated. I was Ponce de Leon and had found the spring of "Perpetual Youth."

I wanted to look over the country of Lewis and Clark. I could not cross the river so turned back through the town. I entered a flat covered with little mounds of dirt and wondered what these might be when I was enlightened for each sound was suddenly capped by a small creature uttering a barking cry. I was in a prairie dog town.

Captain Merriwether Lewis was not only a diplomat as evidenced by the way he made friends of the Indians but was a man of great scientific attainments. His acquaintance with Nature was extensive. His diction was decidedly Addisonian and his description of the "barking squirrel" was scientifically exact but amusing.

"They often occupy several hundred acres of ground. They sit with much confidence on their rump by the hole and bark at the intruder with fitful and harmless intrepidity as if determined to sally forth in defense of their freehold. The flesh of this charming animal is not unpleasant to the taste."

And of the horses he finally bought from the Indians at the source of the Missouri he said:

"To enjoy the benefit of that docile, noble, generous animal."

But he had to eat that "docile, noble, generous animal" shortly afterwards or starve.

From the bluffs south east of Woolly I saw numerous grass ridges sloping gently toward the Yellowstone.

When I returned to Woolly it has awakened. The majority were railroad workers I assumed by the brown mud on their clothes, ranchmen and cowboys. The last I recognized by their costumes, the hat, the leather pants, the high heeled boots, the wooden stirrups, the rope hanging from the saddle horn and other details.

After all, I saw in the cowboy, a copy cat. Almost everything about him comes from the Spanish through the Mexicans. The names are Spanish or corrupted Spanish.

Every cowboy had a big revolver hanging from a belt and many of the others had the same ornament.

I picked up my companions one by one and they all reported a loss of sleep – the beds were inhabited – so perhaps I had not been the goat after all.

As I viewed the crowd I had to say as Captain Lewis would have said, “Not of that superior intelligence and charming personality that entrances, and commands respect.”

The big chief of our party was an old campaigner in the southwest. He had been a stage driver and finally worked up to be the Chief Topographer of a government survey and knew the ropes. He had buttonholed a railroad engineer and obtained much valuable information which he gave to us.

From Woolly to Boseman, Montana it was by the railroad survey about three hundred miles, but somewhat farther by stage road which often left the Yellowstone.

The stage covered the distance in two and one half days only stopping for meals and changing horses which were according to the character of the road, often at intervals of but ten miles. That the road was sometimes

dangerous and the stage driver often drunk, but the horses know the way.

That stewed prunes were the principal diet at the eating stations.

When I remarked "I like stewed prunes" the Big Chief beamed on me.

I had made the remark innocently but I think that I gained a place in the Big Chief's heart for from that time on he acted that way. Anyhow I proposed to keep a stiff upper lip when I found myself in a tight place. I may not have been overburdened with brains, but I did have a sand, I thought.

Smith of our party kept on the outskirts of events but Jones was more aggressive and, walking up to a cowboy, said, "We don't ride that way in the East. Your stirrups are too long for one thing and why such a heavy saddle?"

The cowboy gazed at Jones appraisingly, then blowing out a cloud of cigarette smoke remarked ... : "Oh hell! Go home and ask ma-ma!" and Jones lost his aplomb for a few moments.

I did not propose to ask questions and expose my ignorance but I would use my eyes and ears. So I mingle with the crowd.

A big six-foot or more cowboy with a correspondently large firearm on his hip was standing in front of me and stepping backward planted his boot heel on my toe, then quickly turning said, "I beg your pardon, sir, did I hurt you, eh! What!"

This oasis of politeness and consideration in the Sahara about me, so astonished that I could only stammer out, "Not-at-all, sir."

The man's speech indicated an educated Englishman, an younger son, perhaps a lord, and I was on the point of saying, "No, my lord, you have honored my toe, eh! What!"

A man evidently under the influence of something more potent than tea began a dance on the roadway at the same time blazing away with his revolver

at the earth about him and the heavens above. Then from somewhere a cowboy dashed up whirling his lariat. The loop settled gracefully over the dancer, then dropped to the ground. A little jerk and the noose was about the man's ankles, he was tripped up and fell sprawling on the ground. The last thing I saw was the cowboy and his horse disappearing around the corner dragging the one-time dancing gunman by his heels.

This time I must ask a question and the reply was careless, "Oh that's th' sheriff takin' 'im t' th' calaboose."

How unique and practical I thought. Our eastern cities should use that method of arresting a disorderly. No personal conflict with the disorderly, no asking of help, and by the time the culprit arrived at the jail he would have no fight left in him and probably sobered.

I was jostled about in the crowd but did not mind for I was rubbing elbows with a new species to me of homo sapiens. A man not under the restraints of inheritance, education, and customs, living his life as it pleased him.

The crowd was generally good natured but the diction was not of Addison, nor the manners of the "400".

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The Confessions of a Tenderfoot.

Two - - Realization

Wherein I am introduced to the "Wild and Woolly".
Escape being brained by a bottle in a dance hall.
Rub elbows with "57" varieties of homo sapiens,
and experience the vagaries of a Concord Coach and
its charioteer.

I was finding the Montana town of "Woolly" very interesting.
The social atmosphere was so very different from anything I had experi-
enced before.

When ahead in the roadway I saw a commotion and heard angry
voices I scented possible trouble for me, for Woolly appeared to have a
fancy, when a little excited to shoot in any direction and I might be in
the line of that any direction.

But I was helpless for the man behind pushed me forward.

What I saw was a boy, hardly more than ten standing in the roadway
crying, blood on his face. A big cowboy had removed his own neck hand-
kerchief and was wiping off the blood from the boy's face.

Then the cowboy, looking about him said grimly, "That's me kid
brother, who done that?"

Following the pointing of several men I saw another man, and he was of a brutal type, who said, "Th' ---- little runt got m' cigarettes."

"I ain't seed 'is cigarettes," the boy replied.

The big cowboy brother walked forward and said to the accuser, his voice shaking with anger, "Don't I tell yer that last time t' git out o' town, yer damn lowdown dirty skunk!"

The man addressed began blaspheming horribly, foully and drew his revolver but it was torn from his hand before he could use it by a man near him.

The cowboy, removing his cartridge belt and revolver, handed it to a man beside him, then turning to his antagonist said, grimly, "I'm gonna put m' brand on yer—Dick's two bar bran—ev'buddy knows yer—a damn low down dirty skunk—yer ruined that girl!"

The cowboy avenger was far the better man and soon his antagonist was lying on the ground bloody and inert. Then something occurred that shocked me. The cowboy dragged the heel of his boot twice across the fallen man's face the spur cutting two deep gashes and the wounded man screamed with the pain.

But the cowboy was not through.

"That's Dicks brand an' ye'll allus hev it. Sum day sumbuddy'll find a feller on th' range an' his face next th' ground. He'll tur 'im over an' see Dicks brand an' say "Thet's a damn low down dirty skunk' an' leave 'im to rot an' th' crows'll pick his eyes out."

It was a brutal exhibition, but at the same time I saw in it a re-tributive justice. Who knows what the girl mentioned was to the cowboy? There are incidents where the law has no penalty to fit the crime in the eyes of some one person. Personal vengeance is often laudable from my

point of view It is a primitive instinct and not to be gainsaid.

I had seen enough of the outdoor codes of Woolly, so must now take a look inside.

A rather good sized building of unpainted boards attracted me for on the front was pointed roughly in black:

“THREE IN ONE”

“Shuffle the Deck—Thirst Parlor—Shake a Leg.”

I could guess at the first two but “Shake a Leg” puzzled me and I entered.

My experience and hearsay told me at a glance that I was in a combined gambling house and bar, and besides bar maids who danced. I had read about bar maids in English stories but these did not somehow fit in with my idea of an English barmaid.

The men were about as outside and all had their revolvers.

The women when not dancing were carrying bottles—contents unknown—to the various tables where men were sitting.

One of the women looked mighty like one of the two who had separated me from my watch and stick pin on the train. I was not going to accuse her, Oh, no indeed—I had some gray matter, for none of these dancing barmaids looked “Mighty lak a rose”.

A fiddle—not a violin—and an out of tune piano furnished the music, or rather the noise of dancing.

The dancing rules were very democratic, no introductions were evidently necessary.

A cowboy walked up to one of the young women and said, “Cum on, Beaut, let’s shaker leg?”

Pointing to the man's spurs, she said, "Take them damn things off; I ain't goin' t' hev m' clo'se tore off" and the man replied with, "Then take yer clo'se off, Beaut; it ain't goin' t' hurt yer good looks."

What the woman said I did not hear but she danced with the cowboy.

I had been conscious for some time that there was a young woman watching me. She had a bottle in her hand evidently an order for one of the tables.

Is she a spotter of some kind or was it that seeing me not entering into any of the festivities that she was curious for the reason.

Whatever it was I felt uncomfortable, besides I had seen enough.

As I started to go she walked up to me and asked, "Don' yer play th' chips?"

"No, I don't gamble," I replied

"Don' yer likker?"

"No, I don't drink," I said.

"Don't yer dance?"

"No, I don't dance."

I saw the girl's hands tighten on the bottle and leaning toward me, she declared, more than coldly, "Then what in hell da yer do for a livin'?"

Before I could reply one of two men drinking at a nearby table, said good naturedly, "Oh leave 'im along, Sadie, cain't yer see that he's a person getting' stuff fer his next sermon."

The girl turned on the speaker and said viciously, "Yer big stiff, shut up that big hole in yer ugly face, or I'll break yer head with a bottle an' let out th' little brains yer got!"

Outside I viewed the situation. I had no anger toward the man or woman, only sympathy for the woman living as she did under that unjust code

where a man may rise from the gutter but a woman must remain in the gutter.

I had seen enough of the “wild and woolly” so I walked down to the river and sat down on the bank and viewed the rushing waters thoughtfully.

My life somehow had been a sheltered one or was it that I had been seeing the world through the eyes of faith. Must I go back and remodel my little world? Must I remodel my old friends? No I could not! I would not! The thought was deadening!

To me just then a life without faith was a life without sunshine. The life of a blind man.

The crowd thinned out during the later afternoon.

So I would have no bed for the next three days, being on the stage en route, I wanted one good sleep in advance and I found one on the upper floor of the “General Merchandise” store which sold everything from a pin to a piano. My bedroom was the whole upper floor but the bed space was restricted by the piled up merchandise and I must stand upon the bed in order to get under the covers but then there was no space for drunks.

My charming personality must have attracted the wife of the storekeeper for she said, “I only keep the alights an’ I guess yer won’t steal nothin’.”

So far so good. I am a person and belong to the elite, and there was revolving in my mind “What next?”

I was up early for the rats were noisy. Not the brown rats of the East, imported from Europe, vicious bloodthirsty and germ carrying but the native wood rat—the “Trader Rat” with a busy tail and of an intriguing personality. He will carry away your toothbrush, table cutlery and all small items and replace them with sticks, stones, bits of wood and dry hard lumps of anything that suits his fancy. But I do not think it a fair trade, so replace your toothbrush with a hard dry bit of stable manure.

Evidently he has a fund of humor but his scamperings back and forth to accomplish all those changes of location is annoying especially if he makes your head his pathway.

It was seven A. M. when a fine Concord stage drawn by six prancing horse, the driver cracking his long lashed whip, dashed up to the General Store and stopped with a jerk.

Besides our own party of six there were several others and it was a tight fit but I round afterwards that this had its benefits, for a few would be rattled around inside the stage like dried peas in a pod.

The body of a Concord stage, resting on fore and aft heavy leather straps, allows of a great swaying motion in four directions, and gives to the occupant the immediate idea in succession that the stage will upset on the right, then on to the left, a somersault forward, then a somersault backward. The combination of four different movements well simulates the motion of a vessel in a choppy sea.

I left in Woolly my watch and stick pin but no regrets. To be brained by a bottle in a dance hall is not a situation that I would care to have advertised. It would have lowered my social batting average.

As to the "Wild and Woolly" I don't care for the combination of those two terms, "Wild" by itself I like but must be the wild of nature and not the wild of humans.

As to the "Woolly", no! My education has been neglected. I never learned to dance, drink or gamble and it is not too late to learn to do those things gracefully. I would be called a tenderfoot sure enough.

About thirty-five miles out we stopped for dinner and I had three helpings of stewed prunes and enjoyed them. I felt exhilarated and wondered why until the Big Chief said they were a little on the turn, fermented. That was

the cause of my exhilaration, incipient alcoholism, but it was too late.

I had the prunes stowed away. I told myself, “You must be careful about stewed prunes after this, for you might become “Wild and Woolly”.

The day was beautiful, the air bracing, and the prairie dogs greeted us with their fretful barkings.

Two cowboys raced past us, one on each side of the stage saluting heaven and earth with their revolvers, and one forty-five caliber bullet cut a wheel spoke half off.

Very careless and a waste of good ammunition, besides I did not like the idea of dodging forty-five caliber bullets at every turn.

We traveled fast on the level ground and sometimes on the run down the hills, the stage lurching from side to side, on the big leather bands as if it might turn over. Thirty miles more and supper. A “hash party” the driver said. The prunes were not alcoholized this time.

Here we changed drivers and the new one was drunk, but this had been anticipated.

With the setting of the sun, which in our high latitude was nearly eight P. M. the air became decidedly chilly. It was about midnight when the stage stopped and after waiting a few moments and hearing no sound the Big Chief asked me to get out and investigate. I was very proud that he should pick out me and I had the idea that he wanted to find out if I could do more than eat prunes.

The horses whinnied when I got out of the stage at the same time looking back at me. I sensed that it was a change of horses and they knew it. Then I had jolt—the driver was not in his seat.

it was very dark and I could see but a few yards. I heard a whinny to my left and waling that way saw dimly what appeared to be a log house.

The door was partly open and I peered in. I could see nothing but felt animal warmth and smelled horse so I ventured, "Hey there!"

"What in hell d' year want?" came sleepily and gruffly.

"Is this a stage station? I asked.

"What in hell d'ye think it be, if it ain't?"

I considered the remark an affirmative reply so said "The driver was drunk and fell off the stage somewhere, we want horses."

"Hell ain't yer got no driver?"

"No, we ran over something soft back a way, perhaps that was the driver," I informed.

My information was followed by a volley of oaths and the information that the driver could go to a place where blankets are not needed and that the stage carried the U.S. Mail and must go forward. So it appeared that the pinions of the American Eagle shadowed even in the land of the "Wild and Woolly".

The Big Chief now came forward and said, "I'm an old stage driver and will drive."

The station man informed us that the six new horses were broncos and only half broken to harness and we found them so.

The hostler held the leaders until the Big Chief and I were seated then he jumped aside. All six horses stood on their hind legs waving their front legs in the air then plunged forward.

The last thing the hostler said was, "Just keep 'em in th' road an' yer'll git thar."

The broncos ran for a mile, then quieted down, for a Concord stage, loaded with humans and their belongings and uphill as it was will eliminate from the broncho a lot of the branch.

I had taken my seat beside the Big Chief because three of the passengers had dropped off and inside the stage I rattled about, striking bottom, top and all four sides in the short space of a minutes and had black and blud marks all over my body.

About dawn we passed a one room log cabin and were halted by a “Hey there”. Looking back we saw a person in very decimate ?, dragging a mail sack. We had almost accomplished a very treasonable offense—passed a U.S. Post Office.

At six A. M. we had breakfast and the new driver was sober, besides he was a very fine gentleman of parts.

A woman at the station wanted to go on about ten miles, and was afraid there would not be room but the gallant driver came to her rescue.

“Hell, leddy, if yer want t’ go by yer lonesome, I’ll fire th’ hull damn buck bunch!”

The “leddy” found a place inside and I rode on top with the driver.

It was very evident that the “leddy” did not mind “Th’ hull damn buck bunch” inside the stage and what I could hear of her conversation I judged her not to be of the “alight”, and when we reached her destination she expressed her feelings in the remark:

“Yer a damn find bunch o’ gasooks.”

Later in the day one of the party found that he had lost a ten dollar gold piece.

I am making no accusation, but the “leddy” did not look “Mighty lak a rose” to me. She looked might “lak” the leddy who got my watch and stick pin.

Was she following me, thinking I was an easy mark No use she has all I had, and after this when any leddy says her hands ae cold I will tell her

politely, "Hell leddy, put yer knockers in yer own pocket."

The country we were passing over looked very charming in its new dress of spring greenery. I counted over a hundred buffalo skulls in a distance of less than a mile, telling the story of what had once been and the work of the hide hunters who had followed.

On the flats I saw a small bush with gray green leaves, and at a change station I investigated. The leaves had a strong odor of turpentine that to me was very pleasing.

It was the "sage brush", a characteristic plant of the west of many varieties, sometimes forming thickets often over six feet high.

In the far distance toward the south I saw scattering trees, but otherwise the country appeared to be grassy ridges sloping gently down to the Yellowstone.

I saw several bands of antelope. They did not run like a deer, in a stiff legged jumps, but close to the ground their white rumps very conspicuous. But antelope have a bump of curiosity highly developed. They remained not far from the stage in front for twenty miles.

When they thought we were too near they would wheel and run ahead and wait, then wheel and run again.

One band circled us, gradually contracting the circle and finally dashed across the road hardly more than fifty yards ahead going at a furious pace.

It reminded me of chickens crossing in front of a vehicle, with a fluttering of wings and cackles of fear, when they would have been perfectly safe had they not moved.

But chickens are not noted for their brains, while antelope are decidedly intelligent, but with them it was the curiosity that one time killed the cat.

All the larger streams had cottonwoods along the bank, so it was easy

to pick out a stream course in the grassy country at a great distance by the line of green.

From the high land north of the Yellowstone I could see the course of the Big Horn River and the glistening of the water in the sun as it flowed north to the Yellowstone.

It was at the junction of these two streams where General Gibbon and his troops crossed only six years before but he was too late for General Custer and his troopers had been wiped out by the Sioux on the Little Big Horn.

I saw far to the south west a great snow-covered isolated mass of mountains. It was the first really high mountains that I had ever seen, and they held my gaze for a long time.

The driver did not know the name but expressed his opinion:

“No good, nuthin’ but damn rocks. Yer cain’t git near ‘em with a critter.”

On this point the driver and I differed materially. With him if one could not reach a point on horse back it was not worth the candle. With me it was a delectable spot, unspoiled by human hands.

I found afterwards that this mountain mass was Granite Peak with an elevation of about thirteen thousand feet—the highest land in Montana.

I would have liked to secure some of the flowers that we passed, and put my desire in a general question: “Do persons on the stage ever stop to any of the flowers along the road?”

The driver’s reply was to the point and forcible: “We don’ step fer any damn fool crazy weed snatchers”

The distinction between a “weed” and a flower, with many, is merely a matter of location, outside the fence or inside the fence.

“Once in a golden hour...I cast outside a seed.
Up there came a flower...The people said a weed.”

The stage driver was a Yankee, I think, and inquisitive as to my antecedents and finding that I came from New York, remarked as he removed his gauntleted glove and held out his hand, "Shake, pardner, dams I seed you at Dannemora up state."

I clasped his hand but said rather stiffly, "I don't think you ever saw me at Dannemora."

At Dannemora as a big federal prison.

Perhaps the driver noticed my hauteur for he said genially, "No 'fence, pardner, praps jest a kin thet fav'ord yer."

My personal nomenclature so far is becoming confusing—"person," "alite," "convict," and "damn fool crazy weed snatcher."

I have noticed one point of Montana etiquette. The man removes his glove before shaking hands.

From my point of view I thought it would be better to keep the glove on and moderate the latitude of his diction.

THE CONFESSIONS OF A TENDERFOOT

Three – Adjustment

My demise predicted – I fall on my feet and am
revenged – Beautiful Gallatin Valley – A new
monetary system – A June day lie – My first
booze fight – I meet a dear hot friend in a
Helena saloon.

The nights were cold and after but a catnap on the stage,
when the sun came out hot in the daytime I became fearfully drowsy
and would have given most anything had I been able to drop down
anywhere along the roadside and let the stage and the world go by.

Again prunes for supper and I do like prunes. They are in-
vigorating. Will I have another label attached to me, “The Prune”
and will my diction savor of “Pa-pa, Prisas, Prunes”?

The new driver was not exactly drunk, but he had that happy
disposition that goes with a stimulant of some kind and the odor
was more of alcohol than onions, but I preferred a top seat with him
for we had picked up a “leddy” to be “totd t’ Bud Shindy’s cabin”
and as the sriver said, “She’s cute an’ cunnin’ an’ gives yer th’
glad eye” and I did not want that kind to snuggle up to me inside the
stage.

The sun was setting in the west behind what appeared to be a low lying cloud but elsewhere the horizon was clear. I noticed that the big red orb was cut off sharply as the sun sank. Just as the red ball disappeared a jagged line of white was silhouetted against the far distant sky beyond.

There had been no cloud and what I saw now was the crest of a high snowy mountain range far to the west.

I asked the driver and he said carelessly, "If th' goin' be good you'll get thar t'morrer, 'bout hundred miles an' then sum I reckon."

I did not believe that anywhere in the East one could see a hundred miles and then some.

The night came on and I remembered:

"I heard the trailing garments of the night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw here sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!"

Was it mental telepathy? Was the driver inspired by my thoughts to poetese as far as he was able, for he hummed"

"Oh dum a diddle! Oh dum a diddle!
Hell's a poppin! Hell's a poppin"
Sairy's mad as 'er cold wet hen."

This became decidedly monotonous after a hundred repetitions so I began to study the starry heaven above me thinking that a slight crick in the neck would prove a counter irritant and this brought to me an incident in my life of long long before, in my late teens.

"I stood upon the bridge at midnight
And the clock was striking the hour (8 PM)

When she said, "Oh look at those stars reflected in the water!"

"No," I said, "the reflection of your starry eyes."

Then we parted and I never know why, perhaps to tell her ma-ma, she was thirteen.

The same age but present day style and fashion would not have told ma-ma but would have awaited developments.

My musings on the past were interrupted by the present. The stage ran over a mephites mephitica, vulgarly speaking, a pole cat and the inmates of the stage emitted sounds as of a sea sick mariner.

The stage driver and myself had the advantage of being outside and higher up.

The impression of the mephitis remained with us for many miles until we forded a stream and washed it off the stage wheels.

Morning began its glimmerings in the east and just above the horizon was a big star.

I must express my feelings and not being in my own words must borrow:

“Now the bright morning star, day’s harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east and leads with her
The flowering May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.”

Cowslips and primroses do not grow in Montana, but poets are not held down to facts.

As it grew lighter I gazed about me in surprise. We had passed from the great open area of the Yellowstone Valley and before us on the right and left ahead were hells with scattering timber.

I was finding that travelling during the night time when the country could not be viewed was breaking up the continuity of the topography along the route.

We had travelled up a large stream for a long way during the night but it was not the Yellowstone, I am sure, and I seem to remember that the driver called it the Musselshell River. There is a Musselshell River but north of where I thought our route lay. I am not going to commit myself either way, just

say “Westward Ho!” and let it go at that. Why not? To now know where you are in an unmapped region always adds glamour to your surroundings. You may stumble across something that is not in books or is common hearsay.

Then the sun rose in all of its majesty behind the purple earth and the snow capped range to the west became clothed in its morning dress of pink.

The driver became decidedly inquisitive regarding my private affairs.

“Where be yer layout when you’re t’ hum?”

“In the eat,” I replied.

“Yer talk just like one of ‘em fool dudes, I carried two weeks back.”

“All persons from the east are not dudes,” I essayed.

“Ain’t seen any that hain’t an’ where be yer goin’?”

I told him and he replied, “Yer goin’ t’ hev a merry hell over time.

I knowed sum fellers that started ‘cross an’ never showed up.”

“No trace?” I asked.

“Nope, but they got sum bones that ‘bout sized up t’ th’ fellers.”

All this was very sad on the face of it, but then, I was not believing everything told me.

When I saw a high cone-like peak ahead and to the right about fifty miles I inquired about it.

The drier’s oe word “crazy” did not enlighten me for I did not know whether he referred to the questioner or the mountain, so I ventured, “Why crazy?” for this would have covered either case.

“Th’ crazy fool clum it, an’ broke ‘is damn neck.”

It was not quite clear to me if the gentleman broke his neck before he reached the summit or afterwards but I did not ask for a clearing up of the question

Breakfast at 6 AM and a new driver. I sized him up a potentially drunk

for he only lacked the opportunity and I was right for just before we started I saw him secrete a bottle of "opportunity" under his seat.

The high range that I had seen the night before as the sun set was now clear and distinct and I was finding now that it was composed of several parallel ranges the highest forming the sky line.

At Livingston—a few houses—we had dinner and were in the mountains. Here we would leave the Yellowstone, but continue west over a divide. At Livingston the Yellowstone makes a broad sweeping curve, changing its course from north to nearly east. A mile or so south of Livingston, the river debouches from a canyon which continues south for sixty miles to the north boundary of the areas called Yellowstone Park.

Some day I thought there will be a branch from the main line of the completed Northern Pacific Railroad at Livingston to the Park. The Park will have roads, hotels and all sorts of human creature comforts and the once garden spot of Nature's handiwork will be denaturalized and thronged by a lot of piker nature lovers, sitting in comfort on a stage seat.

Yes, we were in the mountains now and would stay in them until we reached the open areas of Washington—about four hundred miles.

Was I "goin' t' hev a merry hell over tune" as one stage driver predicted, and would there be "sum bones that 'bout sized up t' th' fellers" and would I be a relic like one of "them fellers"? and would some modern anthropologist with more "imagination than brains" find in that relic a new "Missing Link". And would this wiseacre of science, describe the animal world as it was some ten million years before.

After dinner we continued west, climbing up to the divide between the waters of the Yellowstone and Missouri at an elevation of six thousand feet.

Clark passed over this divide in 1806 on his return from the Pacific.

The Northern Pacific Railroad would finally sometime pass under the divide by a mile tunnel.

We could see far to the west a great range of snowy mountains—the Continental Divide—the dividing line between the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

As I could not see over the snowy range I naturally wondered how it looked on the other side. What was hidden? and I proposed:

“Something hidden. Go and find it.
Go and look behind the Ranges,
Something lost behind the Ranges
Lost and waiting for you. Go!”

From where we stood we looked over the wide expanse of the beautiful Valley and saw Boseman in the distance.

The driver brought forth from under his seat the bottle of “opportunity” saying with a comprehensive flourish, “Cum on, boys, and hev a nip ‘fore yer slide down t’ Boseman!”

I don’t remember that our bunch were enthusiastic, certainly not one but the driver appeared to enjoy the “opportunity”. He emptied the bottle and was in no condition to handle six horses on a mountain road.

I am not in fear of what nature may do to me but I am of an alcoholized human and of that creature “cute an’ cunnin’ thet gives yer th’ glad eye” for it has human intelligence combined with animal cunning.

Yes Kipling put it right:

“A fool there was and he made his prayer
To a rag and a bone and hand of hair.”

Then we started down the descent. From my high seat I could look down and as we swept around a curve, saw the wheel a few inches from the outer edge of the roadway and a drop below. I did not look down again.

At the bottom I gave a sigh of relief, but at the same time anathemized

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the charioteer in my mind. That drunken fool on such a dangerous roadway.

We were bowling along in the Gallatin Valley along a level road on a low embankment, a ditch at the foot, when ahead I saw a sharp turn and wondered just how near the outer edge of the road curve the wheels would go. At the middle of the curve I felt my seat tipping then decidedly more. The boozy driver fell off his high perch and sliding into the vacated seat, I jumped, and landed on the driver in the ditch.

I had killed two birds with one stone, did not get my feet wet and had knocked out the driver. I will confess, hoped that I had killed him, as an animal who was a menace to the community.

The stage had turned over and was lying on one side half way down the slope. Fortunately the driver's pull on the reins as he fell had stopped the horses.

Those inside the stage were scrambled about but finally managed to get out from the upper side of the stage.

The Big Chief viewing the situation finally remarked to me—I was standing on the far side of the ditch, "How did you det there?" and I replied cheerfully, "I don't exactly know. I jumped and landed on something soft."

The driver was lying in the shallow ditch gasping and I did not offer him a helping hand. When he finally rose to his feet he was a sorry object plastered all over with mud.

When he viewed the overturned stage he remarked plaintively, "I reckon sumthin' happen'd ain't it?"

And the ordinarily reticent Big Chief said forcefully, "You're a common drunk and not fit to drive hogs!"

With the help of a ranchman, his team and a chain, the stage was pulled up to the road and righted.

The driver was not himself. "Th' hull damn outfit fell on me chest."

I did not explain that "th' hull dam outfit" was his companion of the seat beside him and had done it with malice aforethought, and I told myself, "This time, young feller, you fell on your feet and not on your head."

The driver being incapacitated the Big Chief drove to Boseman where we arrived three hours late.

We all went to bed with our boots on. As for myself I calculate that the accumulation of nods in two and one half days amounted to about two hours of sleep.

"So said I and so said Sancho Panza. God belss the man who first invented sleep."

The Big Chief and his helper would leave us at Boseman.

Beautifl Gallatin Valley! But hardly a valley, rather a gently sloping plain, surrounded by mountains.

The grain was several inches high and a vivid green, the first cultivation since leaving Dakota.

Boseman was a pretty little town, and old as towns go in the region. It was settled in 1864 when the gold rush came to Virginia City nearby. It was the end of the Boseman Trail which had branched off from the Oregon Trail far to the southeast.

Boseman had its high lights but were kept under cover. Figuratively speaking the shades were pulled down a little.

I did not peak under the shade, no indeed. I was a youth with experience. Once is enough of some things, and to be brained with a bottle in a dance hall would have been a bar sinister on my hitherto unblemished family escutcheon.

Boseman, central and western Montana and beyond receives its supplies from Fort Benton on the Missouri River. Fort Benton is 150 miles north of Boseman and perhaps 200 miles by the wagon trails. Small flat-bottomed and stern paddle wheel steamers of the Mississippi River type can reach Fort Benton from St. Louis during high water in the spring, but not later on account of the sand bars and snags.

One round trip is generally the limit.

From Fort Benton the freight is transported by heavy wagons with trailers drawn by a dozen to twenty oxen or mules. I saw some of these coming into Boseman.

The driver walks and his whip last may be 50 feet long which he can crack like the report of a pistol shot, and I have heard can flip a penny at that distance.

It has occurred in early days when the steamers could not reach Fort Benton and the people of Montana suffered.

A sack of flour might cost 100 dollars and bacon be 5 dollars a pound.

Boseman has its elite, the old families, dating from 1864. What they were before that did not count and why should it? – a new life in a new country. Go back, not so very far into the family history of the “400”, and hangings were not infrequent, and deserved.

At Boseman I found a monetary system new to me – the “bit”, twelve and one-half cents; two bits, 25 cents; four bits, 50 cents; six bits, 75 cents, and above that silver and gold. Cash a large check at a bank and your suspenders would hardly support the weight of the gold double eagles.

There were no pennies or nickels and but few dimes. Postage stamps were used in place of the small change of the East. There was] no paper money of any kind.

A paper of pins cost nothing or two “bits, twenty-five cents. To ask to have a twenty-five cent piece changed stamped you as a simon pure tenderfoot and a cheap skate. I had been tagged with enough appellations so did not want “cheap skate” added.

When I did purchase a paper of pins I threw down a silver dollar and walked out, for “millionaire” was preferable to “chinch bug” or “cheap skate.”

A day’s rest then Westward Ho! to Helena—about one hundred miles.

It was a beautiful day in June when the stage drawn by six prancing bay steeds drew up before the door of the little hotel. I climbed up to the seat beside the driver and inhaled a long, deep breath of the ozone, for Boseman was nearly a mile up in the air from sea level and with three helpings of prunes for breakfast, a clear conscience and a sober drier I was constrained to remark, “What is so rare as a day in June?” But alas, that will be confessed anon.

We bowled merrily along down the gentle slope, the chains of the harness clanking, then crossing the Gallatin River down that stream to the junction of the Madison and Jefferson Rivers. Here was the headwaters of the Missouri, the “Three Forks of Lewis and Clarke where they camped in July 1905.

Then turning north after crossing the Madison and Jefferson Rivers we climbed a high ridge and down on the other side, with the Missouri a few miles to the east.

We were not in an open grassy country, the range of many thousand cattle, not the gentled kind of the far East, but half wild, living out in the open, summer and winter and grazing over the hills and valleys.

It had clouded up before and now it began to snow and gloom settled down over the landscape. Faster and faster the big flakes fell until there was a foot.

I was clad for a June day—thin underclothes and no overcoat or gloves.

It was pitiful to see the mother cow breaking a path for the little new born calf, who staggered after her. The mother instinct told the cow that her calf would freeze if not kept moving. Sometimes the calf was down in the snow, and the mother standing over it dejectedly for she was helpless to save her offspring.

How many have poetized on “The snow, beautiful snow!” but they were in a warm room looking out of the window or full of dope as was Coleridge:

“And through the drifts the snowy cliffs
Did send a dismal sheen
Now shapes of men or beasts we ken
The snow was all between.”

That is more like it, I think, for this person was supposed to be outside as I was.

I was cold, awful cold, so cold that it was with difficulty that I climbed down from my high perch at the dinner station.

I figuratively clasped the red hot stove in the barroom as a long lost friend. I felt no warmth but smelled my clothes scorching. Not even the odor of stewed prunes from the dining room allured me. Oh how I hated to part from my red hot friend when it was time to leave!

My chief offered to take my place but I sand No! I am so cold that I can't get any colder. The stove did not help so how can the inside of the stage. What is the use of freezing two persona to death? One corpse is enough.

My argument was unanswerable.

So I climbed up o my high perch again.

I shivered so hard that I shivered off my hat.

The driver looked about to locate the loose bolt. There was no loose bold. It was my teeth rattling.

The driver finally saw the situation and asked briefly, "Cold?"

"N-n-n-not v-v-v-very," I said,

"Yer don' look very—damn h-h-h-hot," he mimicked.

"yer ain't got 'nough clos' fer a pee-wee bird."

I agreed with him, so nodded.

"Better hev er nip, I got sum,"

I shook my head.

"Look-a-hear I ain't goin' t' hev any stiff long side me agin. Last winter feller froze t' death 'side me. Numony mighty bad in dese diggings an' yer beginnin' t' favor thet stiff. I got sum dope doc give me fer numony."

From under the seat he brought forth a bottle and held it out.

If I were looking like that fellow who froze to death beside the driver the winter before it was time I did something. The contents of the bottle

would certainly not make me any colder.

I gulped down three mouthfuls before my organs of taste thawed out.

On the fourth I gagged. It was certainly not tea although it has the color.

The driver was a good sort and I had seen that from the first.

Then he asked, "How go?" and I noted an anxious tone in his voice.

"H-h-h-hot in-s-s-side," I replied.

He grinned as he said, "Jest think it be med'ci an' let her go at thet, if yer don' want t' call it sumthin' else."

I had not been fooled. I was in a sullen mood over that outrageous life of the morning, that it would be a rare June day and I was thinking, "Don't sing before breakfast or you will surely cry before night."

It was so still. The snow on the ground and in the air was a sound absorber. The wheels made no noise, the stage did not creak as it has a little at first. I looked down, there was no sign of a wheel, just a big flat revolving snow ball. The hordes were walking now, then were tired. There were no signs of a road but instinct led them on.

I said, as if to myself, "W-w-w-what a-b-b-b-beau-t-t-tiful d-d-day." and the driver responded with "Yes, pardner, if yer don' mind tellin' a damn lie, it's a hell ov'er beaut'ful day!"

I was wondering when the stupor that precedes freezing would come over me when the driver said, "See them lights 'head: thet's Helena."

I looked down and counted a thousand then looked up, the lights did not appear any nearer.

At Helena I was helped down from my seat on the stage for my muscles would not obey the nerve impulses of the brain.

There was a red hot stove I the barroom of the hotel and nothing mattered now.

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That barroom was a palace de luxe. The clinking of the glasses was sweet music. The odor of the vintage was of a new blown rose. The ribald jokes fell on empty ears.

I never know before how warmth to a freezing man could so change his mental and moral attitude. Creature comfort became paramount. I had become a subline egoist.

Looking back over what happened, I find that I am adjusting myself to my surroundings.

THE CONFESSIONS OF A TENDERFOOT

Four -- Vicissitudes.

Wherein I buck the snow on the Continental Divide, and slide down to Pacific waters. Episode with a drunken cowboy. Meet two fat lady friends. Introduced to the "pack saddle" and "diamond hitch". Become a cook. A watery bod. Swim Clarks Fork.

About midnight I left my dear hot friend in the Helena saloon and went to bed. I was warm but still shivering, a reflex action; my nerves had been keyed up and continued to play the same tune.

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I dreamed all night that I was the “Ancient Mariner” who had killed the albatross and suffered in consequence. There was nothing about the host, but only the cold:

“And now there came both mist and snow
And it grew monstrous cold
And low mast high came floating by
As green as emerald.

“The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around
It cracked and growled and roared and howled
Like noises in a swound!”

Yes, I had a mighty chilly dream, but how could it have been otherwise? The cold had been impressed upon my brain submerging all else.

I woke in the morning—warm, no shivers but I was sore all over. In my shiverings the muscles had been working overtime, but I had no “numony” not even the sniffles, and why? The contents of that bottle, yes, but also my good physical condition. Now here for an argument. If I had been an addict the contents of that bottle would not have been so effective and my physical condition, my endurance, should not have been so great.

Moral: Don’t be a booze fighter.

I immediately sent out and purchased more clothing for the pee-wee. Coverings that would mitigate any “Winter lingering in the lap of Spring.”

Helena was built along Last Chance Gulch where \$40,000,000 in placer gold had been washed out in the sixties. Of course it had its Vigilantes bad?

Virginia City was really the pioneer in that sort of justice.

In Virginia City murders were common. The stages were held up and placer gold taken. If the owners resisted they were killed.

No man's life was safe. The officials were with the bad element. Those not in sympathy were afraid, but finally half a dozen met in secret and organized.

A cold blooded murder occurred and this little band found the murderer in a saloon and hung him in spite of the threats of his armed friends. Here was where moral courage overawed.

It was now or never with the Vigilantes so that night they started out to clean up the town. Two more were hung and the next day a judge and the sheriff. Some fled but were caught and hung and Virginia City became a model mining town.

It was not as today where criminal lawyers and the technicalities of the law govern. Where "John Smith—murdering" goes free because the dot over the letter "i" in "Smith" is omitted in the indictment.

We remained in Helena one day for no stage had come in from the west, heavy snow on the mountain divides was reported.

The next morning we started out from Helena. Missoula one hundred and ten miles or so was the objective point and almost immediately we began to climb and near the summit stuck fast in a snow drift, followed by the driver's cheerful communication, "All out an' buck snow!" Some were reluctant to step into the three feet of snow but the "pee-wee" was prepared for eventualities, and picked up one of the shovels that the driver had thrown out.

Jones remained in the stage thinking it a fine point of vantage from which to observe the others, but the driver called out, "Hey there yer darn cross-eyed loafer git out an' earn yer grub. We ain't pullin' any stiffs t'day!"

And Jones climbed out.

Perhaps I did not add to Jones' mental comfort when I said, "Say, Jones, how about that thing in the fourth reader:

"Is not true leisure
One with true toil?"

Jones does not like me, I am sure, and the affection is reciprocated.

We were a tired lot when we finally reached the top of Mullen Pass and the driver passed around a bottle of iced tea. I don't like iced tea when standing in a snow drift, so declined. Perhaps it was not tea, but it did have the color.

We were standing on the backbone of the continent. Behind us were the waters flowing to the Atlantic. Before us were the waters flowing to the Pacific. To the west we saw high snow covered mountains.

From this point I am not going to commit myself as to our route. After forty and odd years it is dim in my memory except that it was all down stream flowing westward.

We drove or rather slid down the mountain to a good sized stream and down this to a much larger stream. I looked about me with great interest for we were on the waters of the Clarke Fork of the Columbia, which the author of *Thanatopsis* had poetized:

"Where rolls the Oregon and hears no sound but its own dashings."

No signs of man's work except a one-room deserted log cabin having the ambitious name of New Chicago but I think it was the original site of The Deserted Village, that had fired Goldsmith's poetic fancy:

"Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn
Thy sports are fled and all thy charms withdrawn
Amidst thy bowers the tyrants hand is seen
And desolation saddens all thy green.

The near freezing has not chilled the tenderfoot's poetic fire.

The driver interrupted my flow of poesy with, "Ain't this hell ov'er layout, buckin' snow in summer!"

I assured him that it was but not in poetical terms for I was confident that he would have sid, "Hit th' liar!" and not "Strike the lyre!"

About one hundred miles and a big stream came in on our right or was it on the left, anyhow it was the Big Blackfoot River that Lewis traveled up in 1806, returning from the Pacific on his way to the falls of the Missouri, now the site of the town of Great Falls, Montana.

Then ten miles down stream to Missoula.

Missoula was a pretty little town on Clarks Fork about as Boseman but of later settlement. It was situated in a great park stretching along Clarks Fork northwesterly on the north side of the river.

Lewis camped on the site of the present Missoula.

Missoula was interesting as being about seven miles from the point where Lewis and Clark separated on their return from the Pacific in 1806 at the mouth of Travelers Rest Creek, now Lola Creek, Clark going up Bitter Root River and across divide to the Jefferson River and Lewis up the Big Blackfoot River.

The great range of the Bitter Root Mountains were just west of Missoula.

At Missoula I had an experience that is clear cut today after forty odd Years.

I had climbed a hill north of the town to get a better view of the mountains to the west. Descending I stepped at an irrigating ditch for some fish interested me. They were trout, I saw, but unlike the specked trout of he East. Instead of the small red spots, simulating red sealing wax was a longitudinal red band with splashes of a brighter hue.

As I was studying the fish I heard, "Hev a nip, pardner," and looked up to see a mounted cowboy across the ditch holding out a flash. I saw that the man was very drunk.

"No thank you," I said.

Then began that annoying persistence of a drunken man and my negations.

Foolishly perhaps I said emphatically, "No!" and started to walk away when I heard, spoken ominously, "Better had, pardner, if yer know what's good fer yer."

The man had drawn his revolver and it was resting on the saddle horn, pointing directly at me.

Never had I been so aroused. This drunken fool, the saliva drooling from the corners of the mouth and the eyes bleary and shifting.

He was an animal, the man had been submerged.

I wanted to spring on him and pound his head to a jelly, but the ditch was between us.

A quick movement on my part might cause him to press he trigger.

On the ground about me were some large stones, my mind was telling me, "Hit the horse with a rock and it will throw the man."

Then I heard, "Yer don' no nuthin' 'bout good likker an' I ain't goin' t' waste it on such a damn ----!"

I watched the man as he wheeled, and digging the spurs in the horse's flank ride away reeling in his saddle.

I wished, oh how I wished, that the horse would throw him and drag his by one foot until he would be only a bundle of torn clothing with bits of flesh adhering.

That animal had held me up on the broad highway, insulted me, and I could not resent it. I hoped that he would die by violence and that soon.

Although Missoula had not been long settled as a town, the Catholic Church had established Indian missions in that part of Montana at a very early date.

Of course Missoula had its drinking, gambling and dancing. How could it be otherwise for all sorts and conditions of humans of both sexes had established the early settlements and these communities had become human melting pots in which the good and the evil had been fused together into a new and higher creation of humans. I had met that kind personally in Boseman and again in Missoula.

A gambler in the early days married a girl from the dance hall. Now he was a substantial citizen and she was a good wife and mother.

This had been a common occurrence and the knowledge had given me a feeling of exultation that from the mire of primitive passions, had arisen love and honor the highest attributes of the human race.

After leaving Missoula we would be lost to the world—no settlements of any kind—it would be nature pure and undefiled. I would not have to say at every turn, “Avaunt Satanus!” and with the pleasing Allusions of youth I expected many adventures in the forest primeval, but first we would go forty miles on wheels.

It was a dead axwagon and that means a wagon with no springs, but the driver’s seat had springs so he did not care if we had no seats. There would be five besides our party making nine in all.

A brilliant one of the none said, “See them boards, saw ‘em off,” and he was applauded.

But the boards were out off a little too short leaving but an inch of play on each end, on the sides of the wagon box.

I sighed when I found that two of the extras were too big fat, “leddys,”

I sat down in the center of the board serving as the rear seat and sighed again and more deeply when the two stout "leddys" established themselves one on each side of me and I had to sit a little forward to give hem room to expand and this placed my knees a little below and close under the board seat ahead, and then we started.

"This be a hell ov'er layout, ain't it, dearie?" one of the leddys said to me.

"I think so," I replied and I was including the two fat "leddys."

I soon saw what would happen The board in front would slip off the side of the wagon box and, borne down by the weight of the three men, would sheer off my knee caps and I would be a cripple for life. The women's dresses would protect their knees and besides they were farther back.

I watched the ends of the boards nervously as they slid back and forth. Then as the wagon gave a lurch one of the women screamed followed by, "I'm gonna slip off dis damn board an' break me neck."

I saw my opportunity for double killing and said, "You two ladies have not enough room. I will get out and sit on the baggage behind."

Say, dearie, yer be a gent," she commended.

My position behind did not prevent the two "leddys" from conversing with me.

"Air yer married, dearie?"

"No," I said.

"Sum girl missed it thin. Yer slick, dearie, and got a canther? 'bout yer. Ain't yer assed one?"

"No," I said and laughed.

The woman was older than I but not old enough to be my mother, but had evidently taken a motherly interest in me.

“I got a gal an’ she be a good gal. She ain’t one of them damn goin’ goin’ goin’ all th’ time kind” the leddy informed me.

I was glad when something happened to the harness and the wagon stopped so I could get off, and have a little quiet and commune with myself.

Up hill we went then down hill along a stream to the Flathead River which was our destination. There was a store and several other houses. It was a supply agency for the country to the north.

My two “Leddy” friends continued north, but one left me with “Yer ain’t one them fresh galoots an’ yer be respective an’yer gab be o’right. When yer cum back I’ll be et Missouley.”

My chief asked me, grinning, “Picked up some old friends, I see, You appear to have winning ways.”

One thing I hate about myself is that my face becomes so red when I am in the limelight.

“No, I don’t think I will marry that Missoula girl nor ever any other, and be dragged around to pink tea and all that sort of stuff,” I told myself.

I had settled my future. My home will be a one-room bungalow in the forks of a big oak, entrance by a rope ladder which will be drawn up after me, I will have the tree trunk studded with sharp spikes so no “cute an’ cunnin’ leddy” can climb up and steal my watch and stick pin, or talk to me when I don’t want to be talked to.

The chief bought supplies and hired a man with his pack animals for we were now to enter a region of mountains, rushing waters, gloomy forests, and wild beasts so I was told; and:

“The wisest of the wise
Listen to pretty lies
And love to have them told.”

And with my poetic fancy I could imagine that Circe, daughter of the Sun, lived there, who with her smiles and coquetries lured men on to their destruction, but the pee-wee after many vicissitudes came through without the loss of a single tailfeather, but that anon.

While the Chief was attending to business, I botanized. There was a beautiful red flower about two inches in diameter and the leafless stem but a few inches high that had been attracting me for some time. It appeared as if someone had picked the flower somewhere then stuck it in the ground. I found afterwards that it had been discovered by Lewis and Clark and named Lewisia. Indians called it Bitter Root and the root was used for foot. It had given the name to the Bitterroot River and Bitterroot Mountains.

There were many plants that I had never seen before and having no means of collecting them it was an embarrassment of riches.

The next morning I was introduced to the "pack saddle and diamond hitch" for the first time. The diamond hitch was the name given to the manner of lashing the rope so as to hold the load on the pack saddle.

I was worried about the broncho I would whip but the Chief cut the Gordian Knot by saying, "You will carry the two mercurial barometers so must have a gentle horse," and I proposed that I would not accept the kindness of anyone who offered to relieve me of the mercurial barometers.

I mounted my steed very cautiously on the correct side and she made no protest but turning her head viewed me appraisingly as if she were saying, "Oh well he isn't as green as I thought he was. He has a little gray matter but will bear watching."

When safely seated in the saddle I watched Jones and he did what I hoped he would do, climbed up on the wrong side but did not remain long on his steed. Two stiff legged jumps and Jones describing a graceful curve in the air,

landed on terra firma on his stomach.

“Oh Jones,” I said confidently, “you mounted on the wrong side.”

Jones was not to be pacified and made remarks about the western horse and one in particular.

Then I tried to explain, “That horse has a better pedigree than your father’s horses. He is of Spanish Andalusian stock and came over with Coronado in sixteen something.”

Still Jones was not mollified and told me to hang myself and go to a hot place all of which I politely declined to do but I observed that Jones mounted his steed the next time on the other side, which was the right side.

I must explain that the horse the packer would ride had a bell hanging by a strap about her neck. She was the bell mare and the others would follow; was it because of her sex, creatures of her gender being so dominant or horses as Poe said:

“To the tintinnabulation that so musically swells
From the jingling and tinkling of the bells.”

The packer did not explain when I asked him but merely said, “Oh hell, hain’t yer nev’r seed a Bell Mare?”

I was becoming irritated by the criticisms on my ignorance, so I hit back with “And if you went back to my country you might find a thousand things that you had not only never seen but never heard of. Did you ever hear of a carillon of bells?”

This was a stumper and he did not reply.

When all the pack animals were loaded the packer mounted the bell mare and shouted, “All set.”

But there was a slip between the cup and the lip.

A shovel was tied on top of one of the packs and a dish pan to the shovel.

When the horse moved the dish pan rattled against the iron of the shovel. The pack horse looked back. Perhaps he had never before seen on his back a shiny dish pan. The horse gave a jump and the dish pan beat a tattoo on the shovel and that was enough to start the temperamental broncho. The dish pan loosened and as it fell off the horse kicked it. Descending a beautiful curve in the air it fell to the ground and began to roll over the prairie.

The other pack animals had evidently never seen before a walking dish-pan so they all bucked in unison and before long the camp outfit was scattered over a considerable area of ground. A sack of flour having sprung a leak, left an artistic arabesque of white on the grass indicating the intricate movements of the carrier of the flour sack.

The remarks of the packer on the situation were comprehensive and energetic and the diction not of the Sunday school

I was very glad that my steed did not enter into the gaities of the pack animals for the two cistern barometers would have suffered.

It was almost noon before , "All set!" became the final decision. We travelled ten miles down the Flathead river and pitched camp but this term was but a gesture for we had nothing to "pitch" except to unpack the animals. We had not tents, but this did not bother me for I had Lid out many a night in the Adirondack Wilderness before a camp fire with no blanket or shelter.

But Jones wanted information and asked, "What do we do if it rains?"

"Do as your damn please," the packer said and this liberty of action Jones did not appear to appreciate.

"Who would cook?" was the next question.

The packer was not hired to cook and of course the two Chiefs must not. It would disgrace their high positions.

Turning to me my chief said, "Have I not heard that you at one time won

a medal as cooker of hot cakes?”

“Flapjacks,” I corrected, “in the Adirondack Mountains.”

I was proud that my reputation had carried so far.

“And if you will kindly explain what are the component parts of this flapjack and its preparation?” the chief asked.

Then I began, “The component parts of a flapjack are flour, baking powder, and salt in due proportions, and the size of the flapjack will have the diameter of the container, the fry pan, bacon grease is the lubricant, When one side is browned—”

Then Jones interrupted with, “It is turned over with a cake turner.”

“It is not” I said firmly, “ a little sideway shake of the fry pan handle loosens the flap jack. An adroit movement of the fry pan handle and the flap jack rises to a height of several feet, turns over and drops back into the fry pan.”

My chief declared that only I could manipulate a flapjack.

Jones wanted his coffee, “Just so” so he would make coffee.

My flapjacks were a complete success but Jones’s coffee was not as it should be. It was hot water with a slight greenish tinge.

Jones had used the whole unroasted green bean!

For my bedding place I found a small depression that would fit my body well and in it I placed some hemlock tips.

I dreamed that I was floating down Clarks Fork on a leaf but the leaf sank under me and the water was very cold. Then I awakened.

It had been raining and as water runs down hill my little depression was a pond. It was two A.M.

I made a fire and removed my soaked clothes. As I had no fear of the other sex being around I hung my clothes on a limb above the fire and the smoke changed my lingerie from a white to a deep brown. That would save washing

and I had heard that gray backs do not like smoke. Not that I possessed gray backs but the smoky odor would be a deterrent.

Our routine was to rise at daybreak and be "All set" by six A.M., go twenty miles and then camp. I liked this for it gave me time to look about after arriving at camp.

The sun told me that we were traveling about northwest. Along the stream and in forest most of the time gave little chance of seeing the surrounding country.

We came to a large stream the next day, coming into the Flathead River from the south, which was Clarks Fork having made a big bend from the west to the north and we must cross and I wondered how. I did not ask the packer but Jones did.

"Th' hull bunch has gotter swim it."

I eye a melting snow bank on the other side of the river and this assured me that we need not fear sharks or crocodiles. As for swimming I did not mind by my lonesome, but on a horse that was different.

I knew one thing, let the horse have its head, don't jerk on the reins. I decided that I would take my feet out of the stirrups and slide off my horse if she began to start any monkey shines, for I was sure of myself if alone, and the horse could go as she pleased.

Of course the packer, with the bell horse would lead and the others would follow.

The sensation of riding a horse in swift swimming water was novel and not at all pleasant.

The water backed up on the upstream side of the horse and rose above the saddle. Looking at the rushing water ahead it seemed as if I and the horse moving sideways upstream and produced a peculiar sensation of dizziness

I think that the packer had miscalculated the swiftness of the water, for several of the packs were wet and of course all the riders were wet to the waist and above.

we camped near the river bank, and after helping to unpack the horses and spreading out the packs to dry, I walked down to the river.

Washed upon the bank of the river near where we crossed I found an old boat. It was a bateau type. It had evidently floated a long distance for it was rock scarred. In it was one paddle. I dragged the boat down into the water and found that it leaked by little. There had been a name on it and I thought that I had made out the letters "L" and "C".

Imagination may carry one far and I was imaginative, so I thought how romantic it would be to sail down Clarks Fork in a boat that had once carried Lewis and Clark.

THE CONFESSIONS OF A TENDERFOOT

Five -- Dangers

In which I grab a man's hair. Perform a surgical operation. The worm turns. Meet a grisly bear. A rock slide. Find a river steamer in the woods. The Cascade Mountains. Au revoir

My idea of sailing down Clarks Fork in the old boat had changed for the present. I was saddle sore. The lower half of my lingerie was stuck fast to my anatomy and it was very painful.

Then my attention was directed to a horseman, leading a pack animal on the other side of the stream and I watched him.

He rode into the river, and the horse appeared to have suddenly dropped off into deep water. The horse began to plunge unseating the rider and I was immediately by the man's arm movements that he could not swim and my mind became concentrated on the man for a moment; then I ran up the bank and shouted to the packer and when I saw him coming ran back to the boat, which was half way in the water, and kneeled down in the bow.

The packer grasped the situation for as he reached the boat the man sank.

Pushing off the boat the packer grasped the paddle. We saw the man come to the surface, then go under again.

We followed after with the current when suddenly two hands appeared ahead of the boat the fingers clenching convulsively then the hands disappeared.

I called to the packer to speed up a little for it seemed to me that the only hope was to see the man beneath the water for he had gone down for the third time.

Suddenly I saw the man's head beneath the surface and reaching the full length of my arm touched the man's head then grasped his hair.

Slowly I drew the man up until his face was above the water surface when he grasped my arm in a vice-like grip with both his hands. I had braced myself for this by leaning away from the boat edge.

The packer paddled the boat to the shore, then we dragged the man up the bank. He had swallowed little water and soon revived. Then he told his story which was simple and brief.

"I can't swim an' got scared when we got in deep water an' jerked th' reins."

The man's riding horse and pack animal had swum across and were quietly feeding near us.

I will never forget those two twitching hands above the water, then the man might have dragged me out of the boat.

The man would not give his name or where he came from and departed hastily.

The packer summed up the situation:

"Stuck on th' idea that he'd better make a quick get-er-way from sum-where fur 'is health."

We were not far from the Canadian line so perhaps the Canadian Royal Mounted Police were after this man and they were bloodhounds on a criminal's trail—never let up.

Now I had time to think about my own woes and consulted the packer on the subject of my lingerie.

“Bacon rind be good when yer git loose from yer larnjerry.”

I sat down in Clarks Fork for an hour then began to separate myself from the offending lingerie, but in so doing lost more than just epidermis. Then I applied the bacon rind.

“Whoopee!” “Great Caesar Ghost!” I ran around in circles. I jumped, I sad things (Deleted).

I had forgotten that salt exists in bacon rind, but then as Montaigne said, “For a desperate disease, a desperate cure.”

I was sore mentally and physically and fully prepared to insult “Old Nick” himself.

It was later when I was cooking supper that the worm turned.

Jones was sitting at his ease, a tree trunk supporting his back, and reading a scrap of newspaper that he had salvaged from somewhere.

Looking up he said yawning, “When are you going to have something to eat?”

I rose, I was eloquent! I have deleted that elegance but I did say, “You are a lazy loafer and it's a great pity that when you were born the doctor did not tie a stone about your neck and drown you in a mud hole.” With the fry pan uplifted I remarked, “Get me some wood and hurry or we will have fried brains for supper!”

Jones moved fast and brought the wood and I burned the only piece of literature in the camp—a scrap of newspaper.

My chief must have approved of my eloquence for he said, “When you get

started you cover quite a wide range of literature,” and to Jones he said, “It will be your business from now on to supply the cook with fuel.”

The next day we were in the forest again with no lookout I walked again for I had not yet recovered from my self-administered surgical operation, but day by day and in every way I was getting better and tougher in spots.

I was liking Clarks Fork for we had met but one human creature, the one who had escaped drowning and the days were Sunday-like in their quietude. I marveled at the scarcity of birds and animals, but there was one old friend of northern New York, that gray fluffy bird, the camp robber, the Canada Jay, who from an overhanging limb would drop down softly and snatch up a bit of bacon from your plate.

“There was the brotherhood of venerable trees and the river glideth at its own sweet will.”

Then the evenings in the forest:

“Twilight, a timid fawn went glimmering by
And night the dark blue hunter followed fast.”

I could not but think that I had used my hand in that affair with the drowning man, so perchance my salad days, when I was green in judgement were a thing of the past.

We made camp in a little glade by the river at a point where a small stream came in from the north.

Up the stream a little way at the edge of the timber I saw some flowers that interested me, but lost interest in them when on the muddy bank I saw a track. It had somewhat the appearance of the impression of a human foot but was of immense size and I recognized it as the track of a bear.

I had once been told by a bear hunter, “Leave a bear alone and he will leave you alone. But this had been told of the rather small eastern bear,

but I would venture, so I slowly followed the tracks up the stream my ears and eyes on the alert.

I had gone but a short distance when from the hillside on my left came a hoarse “woofh!” “woofh!”

I had heard that sound before but never in such volume and partly hidden by a small pine I saw an immense bear. The animal was a silver gray in color. It was the “White Bear” of Lewis and Clark—the Silver Tip Grizzly.

I was afraid to run back fearful that it might encourage the bear to follow, so I slowly backed away down the path I had come.

The bear lumbered down the hillside slowly until it reached the point where I had commenced my retrograde movement. Then I saw something more—there was a cub and I had heard that a mother Grizzly with young was about the most dangerous animal in North America.

I saw that the bear had scented me for it gave an angry snort, and the hair along the median line of the back rose stiffly. The cub was playful but the mother bear with her paw cuffed the cub towards her when it was inclined to get too far away.

I had heard that the Grizzly does not climb trees so I selected a suitable tree behind me that I would climb if I must.

All the time that I was backing up the bear was moving forward at the same rate.

I was curious and so was the bear, but I think from different motives. Curiosity once killed a cat and I was quite sure that the bear would not be the cat.

I must keep my eyes on three objects—the bear in front, a tree nearby and the ground behind me for fear that I might trip and fall, for then the bear might charge.

I continued walking backward crab fashion so as to keep the three objects in vie, the bear following, could I say at a respectful distance, hardly I think with that hair raised stiffly six inches high along its back, those fierce little pig-like eyes, and the mouth curled up at one corner exposing a big white tusk.

I was rather good sprinter at college and when camp came in view, I sprinted. I must have made a hundred yards in eleven seconds, anyhow I dropped down panting.

I could not speak but I had thoughts.

“You jolly well made an ass of yourself, eh! What !”

Jones had observed my rapid approach and asked, “Why the hurry?” and I made reply, “To say goodbye before it was too late.”

I told the packer about the bear tracks I had seen but omitted my experience.

“I’ll jest take a leetle look,” he said and soon returned with, “Yep, I seed th’ tracks goin’ an’ comin’. Mighty big un. “Praps th’ un that killed that feller ‘bout two weeks back—chewed ‘im up.”

“How very interesting,” I said, for not doubt the bear having had a taste of one man would like to sample another.

I think after all the bear merely wanted to chase me away but then I was not dead sure, and it is not good form to monkey with a buzz saw. One swing of that powerful front leg with its six inch paws would rip a man open.

That next day we passed through Thompsons Prairie and the day following I was in trouble again. I was inclined to believe that the primeval forest harbored genii who were after the tenderfoot’s scalp.

A high rock bluss with a great talus at the bottom beckoned to me. My

innate curiosity demanded that I find out the source of those great piles of rocks at the cliff base.

The bluff of course was not possible so I climbed up one side through the timber and found the origin of the talus. There was a great slide of loose gravel and rock extending up the mountain above the cliff edge. I would have a better view from the other side and started to cross the slide. It was not easy for my feet sank down in the loose material. I had gone half way when I saw that there was bed rock beneath the slide and the loose material was shallowing and the walking easier.

Suddenly the whole slide began to move and I with it. This was interesting but when it was apparent that I was moving toward the bluff edge, not so interesting. I hurried and the slide moved faster until the whole side of the mountain appeared to be in motion. I dropped down and clung to a projecting knob of bed rock and the motion ceased but I saw the whole lower edge of the slide go over the edge of the bluff, disappear and heard it crash on the talus below.

If it were all like this I just hurry, so I hurried. When I stopped exhausted there was no knob of bed rock for an anchor and I dug frantically with my hands until I reached the bed rock. My fingers slid over it until they reached a crack and to this I clung.

The situation was desperate. I would not look to see the slide disappear over the bluff but could not help but hear the crash below and I was seeing myself go over the bluff edge and falling.

Grim death stalked within my vision, and like a drowning man was magnifying mole hills of misdeeds into mountains of evil.

I waited, my fingers in the rock crack until I was thoroughly rested. I looked ahead. The slide had at some time cut down the ground leaving the

roots of the pines exposed. If I could only reach that point and hang on to a root I would be safe, then crawl up to the forest level. I must move diagonally up across the slide for straight across would carry me over the bluff. I must keep my eye on some object, one of the tree roots and put my mind on that so as to minimize the terrifying effect on my nerves of the crash of the rocks below.

I must switch my mind to something lighter and remembered a nursery rhyme and began:

“One for the money,
And two for the show,
Three to make ready,
And four to—GO!”

The I started. I saw the pine roots moving up for I was moving down with the slide. I reached a root but it slipped from my grasp, then another the same way. The third I held. I think one foot was over the bluff but I did not look to see. I carefully moved up, root by root, testing each one, fearful that it might not hold until I could easily crawl up on to the firm ground of the forest. I did not stop here but walked forward until I was many yards from the slide, meanwhile hearing the thunder roar of the rocks on the talus. Then I laid down.

I said “Thank God” and it was not a conventional thank offering.

I was now glad of the experience for it had compelled an exploration of my conscience, and I had not raked up anything very wicked. That “numony” medicine had not been on my conscience at all or anything I had done at Woolly.

But after all I did not think that I was getting a square deal. Why should Atropos be so eager to snip off with her scissors my thread of life? Perhaps I was destined to be a great church dignitary—a Saint Anthony tempted by a befy of alluring houris. I had been called a “parson”—yes, but

by suggestion a “convict”, a “prune” and a “pee-wee”.

I do think that I have behave pretty well—never lost my head—and perhaps Valkyrie is hovering over me, and if I turn up my toes as I surely will if I maintain my present gait, who will pick me up as one worthy of the Valhalla.

I buttonholed the packer on the subject of the slide and he remarked, “I bet that’s the place I heard ‘bout. Th’ Injung-tied a feller up an’ let ‘m slide over. I heared it called Devils Slide. A feller be plum locoed t’ go thar.”

I had learned before that “plum locoed” meant “pretty crazy”. Was I perfectly crazy?”

When I met Jones he asked excitedly, “Did you hear the rocks fall off the cliff?”

“Yes and saw them,” I said.

“I’ll go up there and send down some more,” Jones remarked confidently.

“I would n’t, Jones.”

“And why not?” Jones asked aggressively.

“For several reasons, Jones. You would come down with the rocks. There would be no one to tote wood for the cook, the ground here is full of roots and rocks and impossible for grave digging. Then there is no coroner within a thousand miles. Of course we might drag your body behind a pack animal to the coroner’s but by that time the coroner could not tell how the corpse died.”

Jones did not push off any rocks. I think he consulted the packer.

At the next camp I did not explore but sat down by the river and watched the swirling waters.

When I heard a soft “pee-a-wee” I looked up. On a twig above I saw a little flycatcher—the Pee-wee bird, and old friend of mine and asked,

10

“Oh Pee-wee, shall I call thee bird
Of but a wandering voice?”

Again the soft “pee-a-wee,”

“Have you come to warn me, so far from your home—a thousand miles
to the east?”

Again the soft “pee-a-wee” but I read a “yes” in the note.

“And because I never stole your eggs when I was a boy,” and the Pee-
wee answered a “yes”.

Suddenly the bird darted upward. I heard the snap of its bill, and
returning to the twig the pee-wee began to make a luncheon off a small butterfly.

Two days later as we topped a hill we looked down upon a tent town
in the forest on the bank of Clarks Fork. The trees had been cut down but the
stumps were still standing. There was something else and I rubbed my eyes,
was it a dream, for tied to the stumps of the river bank was a small white
steamboat of the flat bottomed Mississippi River type.

A steamer on a narrow swirling mountain stream in a forest was an
anomaly, but it was true.

The tent town proved to be a railroad camp at the end of the Northern
Pacific Railroad grade from the west. As to the steamer, it had come from
Portland during high water, but how, my mind questioned, for the course
of Clarks Fork was not very clear except that it ran into the Columbia some-
where and I consulted a map in the engineer’s office as to how a steamer must
go back down stream.

I found that Clarks Fork turned north after entering Washington and
flowed into the Columbia north of the International Boundary. The steamer
must travel eight hundred miles to arrive at Portland.

The tent town being a railroad construction camp was not of the elite

but at the same time kept under restraint. I saw some “leddys” but did not investigate their social status as fit companions for the tenderfoot.

The deck of the steamer felt queer under my feet. I had a feeling akin to homesickness. I felt out of place. My place was where I had been during the past two weeks and this thought rather shocked me. Had my life in a civilized community and my education produced merely a thin veneer over the primitive that would slough off so easily.

It was wonderful to observe how the crew maneuvered the steamer in that narrow swift running Clarks Fork.

The ride through Lake Pond Dorveille was very fine and at Sand Point on the lake shore, about forty miles from the tent town we entered a railroad train about two weeks after we had left one on the Yellowstone some eight hundred miles to the eastward.

Then south west across Washington to the junction of the Snake and Columbia Rivers and down the Columbia on the south bank to The Dalles, Oregon, where we had fresh salmon three times a day for the fish by the thousands were doing up the Columbia to spawn, and may after performing that duty to nature floated dead down stream.

At The Dalles I had the opportunity for retrospection. Was it some Circean sorceress of he wide open spaces, the forest shades, the mountain fastnesses who had lured me into her domain, that she might slay me? It would seem so—seven attempts in fourteen days. A false note, a false step, and I would not have lived to tell this tale.

I shall marshall the facts and show how my demise was to be accomplished:

1. Brained by a bottle in a dance hall.
2. Neck broken by being thrown from a stage.
3. Frozen by a winter day in June.
4. Shot by a drunken cowboy

5. Drowned by a drowning man.
6. Torn to pieces by a grizzly bear.
7. Crushed by falling from a cliff.

Does not these seven attempts and all different indicate a hand more than human, a sinister influence that had placed these pitfalls directly in my pathway.

But this influence had not reckoned on the tenderfoot's uncanny way of crawling out of holes that had been dug for him. Of course it was not the tenderfoot himself, it was his guardian angel.

After all why should we poor mortals cooped up in our little shell of ignorance, ask why this thing or that thing happens.

"We—that is the party in which I was the assistant of the Chief—worked along the Columbia for a time. It was a sandy barren country and there was wind, so we had a large pinch of sand mixed with our food at all meals. We swallowed our food without chewing for the gritting of the sand on the teeth was not agreeable. It is not so with chickens for they have no teeth, besides kind nature has ordained that sand aids a chicken's digestion, but humans prefer pepsin.

Gradually we worked up into the Cascade Mountains and followed the crest for seventy miles only dropping down when it became impossible for pack animals. We camped in sub alpine parks near the timber line and these parks were flower gardens, and the flowers not here and there but massed colors, white, pink, red, purple, and yellow. Daisies, violets, columbine, anemone, larkspur, arnica, lupine, painted asp, mertensia, phlox, and many others.

To one who cared for flowers, it seemed a sacrilege to ride through them and in my mind I was looking for a sign reading, "Keep off the grass".

The Cascade Mountains cut off the warm moist winds of the Pacific, so to the east are the dry open areas of the Columbia.

We camped on Stampede Pass, where beneath it six years after, the Northern Pacific crossed through a tunnel, beneath the pass.

We travelled light—no tents, so when rain came we curled up under a pine tree. If there was no sheltering tree we followed an old adage, “to grin and bear it” but I never saw an external lightening of the countenance when it rained.

We camped on Snoqualmie Pass, where twenty years after the Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul crossed, far below the surface.

Snoqualmie Pass I will never forget for here it was that I said as I had once before, but this time with far greater reason and more energy of statement:

“You jolly well made an ass of yourself! Eh! What!”

There was a high peak near Snoqualmie Pass that the Chief wanted to use as a topographic station, but he had not indicated it to me. We could not see our from the Pass for it was in heavy timber. The Pass itself was a snowy meadow and the only dry spots were around the base of the larger trees where the roots had elevated the ground surface, so each of us chose one of these dry islands for his boudoir.

It rained and the swamp became a lake, more rain the next day and the lake grew larger. The third day and our boudoirs became inundated and besides had encroached upon the area of our sleeping quarters to the extent that we must draw up our legs or sleep with our feet in the water. I rather liked the situation for it was so novel and unconventional but the cook protested with “Why in hell don’t Noah an’ th’ Ark cum ‘long I can’t climb a tree!”

The cook should have been satisfied for his island allowed a fire and a full length bed, but we must wade to our meals.

It was clear the next day and the chief, the packer and myself started

for the peak. I stopped to examine a flower then another. The woods were dense and I lost sight of the others. I shouted and followed in the direction of their answering call, but finally could hear them no longer. I think now that I had followed an echo. I wandered all day and climbed several peaks trying to locate the chief and packer, then returned to camp.

What should I do—go home—back East I had no money but I could work my way, mix drinks and teach dancing and between times ride the blind baggage. Why all this despair and sarcasm? Because the chief and packer had everything they needed to make a successful topographic station including the instrument tripod, excepting one thing—that instrument—and I had that.

I concluded to await the chief and hear just how he would say “Fired”.

The chief was tired I could see that, but all he said, and it was quietly, “You don’t make a success of two things, botany and topography, both, at the same time.”

This was so unexpected that I had nothing to say for a moment. Then came the reaction and I blurted out, “You are damn right!”

It rained for three days after and our little boudoir islands were under water. The mountain peak was never occupied as a topographic station!

The chief never chided me again for I kept so close to him that I often trod on his heels.

Later—six years—he asked me to be “Best man”.

We were on the Wenatchee River and near where it flows into the Columbia. It was a sage desert—not a road, not even a cabin. Now the town of Wenatchee with a population of over six thousand and the land for many miles covered with orchards and vineyards.

I returned home, steamer, Portland to San Francisco, east by Union Pacific Railroad.

In 1884 I obtained a position on a Government Survey and by a remarkable coincidence returned to the country of Lewis and Clark—the Yellowstone and headwaters of the Missouri and later along the Rock Mountains from the Canadian Boundary to New Mexico, but I never forgot those two weeks of 1882.

No one can recapture the first impressions of anything in this world.

In my more than three decades of wanderings along the backbone of the continent and on its slopes, in the cow country, rough mining regions, and lumber camps I lost nothing of health or morals.

As for the land of the “Wild and Woolly” what is that anyhow? It is a matter of mind and not of location. If a man wants that sort of thing he can find it anywhere. Perhaps some vagrant zephyr may have borne to me a thread or two of wool and it adhered to my clothing, but that was all, and was easily brushed off.

What I was doing in 1882 I have been doing ever since and am doing now, looking out upon the world with eyes of faith. I have had some rude awakenings but I rebuild my castle of dreams and lived in it again. It has kept me young in feeling. That I as an innocent in those long long years ago I am not ashamed.

If I have changed in all these forty and four years, the change has not so much a matter of mind as of pulse. I am so much older.

I kept no journal of my adventures but I have a little tin box in which is stored my memories. I call it Pandora’s Box.

I open the little tin box and see a small branch on which the dry gray green leaves are still adhering. It is sage brush! I am conscious of a sweet pungent odor that was registered on my brain forty and four years before. I shut my eyes and see again in mental vision what I saw then and so impressed me. The great open spaces—the rushing waters—the virgin forests—the mighty mountain ranges.

I close my Pandora Box with a sigh. I want to live over again that life of my young manhood—that life that made me what I am.

The years from 1892 on are often so overlapping in my mind that perhaps I may have innocently juggled dates and locations but the incidents are true. What I have written is a movie without a heroine. There is no romantic clinch in the final closeup and fade out, but

“The wisest of the wise,
Listen to pretty lies,
And love to hear them told
Doubt not that Solomon
Listened to many a one
Some in his youth,
and more when he was old.”

--OoO--

*Frank Tweedy
Washington
DC
June 1926*