The Chatham Record.

H. A. LONDON,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION,
$1.50 PER YEAR
Strictly in Advance.

The Chatham Record.

VOL. XX. PITTSBORO, CHATHAM COUNTY, N. C., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1897 NO. 18.

The Chathaw Record

RATES
—OF—
ADVERTISING.

One square, one insertion..... $1.00
One square, two insertions. ... 1.50
One square, one month..... 2.50

For larger advertisements liberal contracts will be made.

ROYAL RANGER RALPH;

—:on:—

The Waif of the Western Prairies.

BY WELDON J. COBB.

CHAPTER XXVI—Continued.

It was fully two hours before the bandit band reached the ravine. The rain was now falling in torrents; the situation was a most gloomy and uncomfortable one. Before them ran the river, broad and deep, and with a swift current.

"Ha! What is this?"

Danton's words announced that he had found a canoe. It was quite large, and evidently belonged to the Indians. Where it lay there were marks on the bank as if a second canoe had recently been there.

"The girl must have escaped by way of the river," remarked Despard.

"Yes, and she had help."

"How do you know that?"

"There are the footprints of two persons here."

"Ha!"

"Both small and apparently those of women."

"Then she had a companion?"

"Undoubtedly. One of them wore moccasins."

"An Indian?"

"The Modoc princess."

"Impossible!"

"It must be White Fawn."

Despard turned pale. He dreaded the vengeance of Shadow Snake and his daughter.

"Let us hasten," he said.

"And take the canoe?"

"Yes."

"It will not hold more than half of us."

"Then let the others cross over and get away from the Indians as best they can."

This plan was consummated. A portion of the band were rowed across the river. Despard, Danton and the others then directed the canoe to midstream and allowed it to proceed down the stream.

They passed the cliff and the ravine in safety and soon left it far behind. Apparently they were safe from pursuit, and would not be followed in time to be overtaken. The Modocs, in the ravine beyond their fire in the fort, had not witnessed their departure. Somewhere down the river, in advance of them, they theorized, was the canoe containing the Modoc princess and their escaped captive, Inez Tracey.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MODOCS.

The pows and movements of Dyke Despard, the bandit leader, were fast approaching a climax, as he was soon to learn in a tragic and unexpected manner.

The Indians whom his spy had discovered in the ravine were indeed members of Shadow Snake's tribe, and he had avoided a deadly conflict by his timely escape. The savages had located his recent camp, had trailed him to the ravine, and later explored the cliff, but found no trace of him.

Darrel Grey had remained faithfully at his post in the fort.

When the rain and mist obscured the outlaws he did not retreat from the intrenchment, but endeavored to watch the foe as best he could. Thus hidden by the gloom, the outlaws escaped without his knowledge. He was amazed when at last the mists were dispersed and he saw no trace of his enemies in the vicinity.

Instead, a score of dusky warriors were ascending the winding mountain path.

What did it mean?

He was perplexed and somewhat alarmed at the discovery. The savages seemed to be following a trail and were coming directly to the summit of the cliff. Sooner or later he must be discovered, and resistance against such superior numbers would be folly. Besides, by this time White Fawn and Inez must have effected their escape.

He could not explain the mysterious disappearance of the bandits, but he observed that there was a possibility of leaving the fort and retreating before the Indians reached the summit of the cliff.

Darrel began to creep behind the rocks in the direction the Modoc princess and Inez had gone. He saw, some distance away, a place where he might essay a descent to the valley, and hastened to reach it.

Suddenly he started in dismay.

As if by magic, two stalwart savages had darted across his path. Before he could retreat or advance they had seized him securely.

They gave utterance to a triumphant yell, and began to lead him toward the ravine where their chief was. Darrel faced his enemies boldly as they gathered around him.

Shadow Snake listened to the rapid words of Darrel's captors, in explanation of their recent capture. Then he turned to the prisoner.

"Ugh!" he ejaculated; "who is the pale-face?"

Shadow Snake did not evidently recognize Darrel as the man he had liberated at White Fawn's request at the outlaws' stronghold in Lone Canyon. In his new disguise, the Modoc chief did not suppose his present prisoner and his daughter's friend to be the same person.

"I am the friend of the White Fawn," he said simply.

The chief started.

"Ugh! The pale-face knows the princess?"

"Yes."

"You have seen her of late?"

"A few hours since."

"Where?"

Briefly Darrel related how he had met the White Fawn. He told the Snake that he had once saved his daughter's life. He related how he had rescued Inez from Despard, and detailed the pursuit and the attack on the mountain hut. The old chief's eyes blazed fiercely as Darrel spoke Despard's name.

"Ugh!" he uttered savagely. "The Black Crow shall be trailed. Whither has he gone?"

"I do not know."

"And the Fawn?"

"Escaped by the ravine to the river."

Shadow Snake held a brief conference with his braves.

"The Eagle shall be the friend of the Snake," said the Modoc chief to Darrel. "Together we will find and punish the Crow."

Darrel showed the rattlesnake chain White Fawn had given him, and this cemented the confidence and friendship of the Modoc braves. Shadow Snake at once went around the cliff, and reached the ravine on the other side.

"The canoes are gone!" he uttered angrily, as they came to the spot where Despard had reached the river.

And an sagacity soon formed a theory as to their theft, which proved to be the correct one. The canoes they learned had evidently been taken at intervals.

"The Fawn went first with the pale-face maiden," explained Shadow Snake.

"Why do you think so?" Darrel ventured to inquire.

"Because the boat was pushed into the water as an Indian would do it, and the paddles were used at the side to aid its progress. The Crow has gone in pursuit. Some of his men were taken across the river."

"Why?"

"Because there was not room enough for them in the canoes."

Shadow Snake gave rapid orders as he arrived at these conclusions. He divided his band, and sent half of them in pursuit of the outlaws who had crossed the river. With the others and Darrel Grey he started down the banks of the stream.

Meanwhile the objects of Darrel's solicitude, White Fawn and Inez, had met with some exciting adventures. The Indian maiden and her charge had managed to reach the ravine in safety after leaving Darrel Grey. They had observed the canoes, and White Fawn selected one of them. She knew that the river led to some settlements, and for the present her only thought was to place Inez in a position of safety.

The rain made their situation extremely uncomfortable, but White Fawn resolutely plied the paddles, and they made swift progress. It was not until after noon that any incident occurred that in any way tended to alarm them.

At a point where the river divided, as she looked back, the Fawn saw a canoe coming down the stream about a mile distant. This caused her to hasten the progress of their own boat. An hour later, in the distance, she heard the sound of shooting, and she determined to abandon the canoe.

Then followed a weary tramp through the forests. At last, towards nightfall, they reached what looked like a mining settlement. Then a small village came into view, and on its outskirts they came across a rather pretentious inn, designated by a large sign-board as the Fair Play Tavern.

"We have reached a place of safety," said the Modoc princess, as she designated the tavern. "You are wearied and pale. See, yonder is a white squaw. Speak to her."

A woman, apparently the landlord's wife, was visible at the rear door of the inn. Inez approached and addressed her.

She told her briefly that she and her companion had lost their way, met with bandits, and wished to remain at the inn all night. The sight of money influenced the woman to agree to give them shelter.

A sigh of relief escaped the lips of Inez as she found herself with White Fawn in a comfortable room of the tavern. She, however, expressed a deep anxiety for her lover's safety. White Fawn stated that with the morning she would return to the scene of their recent adventures.

A meal was served in their room, and Inez sat at the window gazing out at the front of the tavern.

She started and uttered a cry of dread as the lights from the bar-room showed two new arrivals. At a glance she recognized them as Danton and Dyke Despard.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AT THE TAVERN.

The two men who had just entered the Fair Play tavern were indeed Dyke Despard and his evil accomplice, Danton. At the sight of them new terror and apprehension seized the timid Inez, and even White Fawn looked anxious and concerned.

Had they, however, known the true condition of affairs with the outlaw, they would have been less fearful of their power to injure them. For retribution, swift and terrible, seemed to have followed the bandits, and the arrival of their leaders at the tavern was in the nature of a flight from their enemies.

The canoe containing the outlaws had nearly overtaken the fugitives. The Modocs had pursued the bandits. Despard and his men had been attacked by the Indians at a bend in the river.

Shadow Snake was their leader and Darrel Grey was among them. Before the startled outlaws could prepare for a defense, a deadly hail of leaden bullets was poured into their midst.

Instantly the river became the scene of the greatest confusion and excitement. The canoe, penetrated by the bullets, sank in midstream, and those not killed or wounded tried to swim to the opposite shore.

Of their number only two escaped—Despard and Danton—and they were both slightly wounded. Of the others not one escaped the dread vengeance of the Modocs.

The bandit leaders gained the shore, evaded pursuit, and, as has been seen, reached the Fair Play Tavern shortly after the arrival of the fugitives.

They entered the bar-room, seeking to evade notice, and passed into the inner room behind the bar. The landlord, who was the banker, merchant and magistrate of the place, followed them with no sign of recognition on his face.

"Well, gentlemen——" he began.

"What! you don't know us?" said Danton.

"Despard!" he finally ejaculated, after staring at them for some moments.

"Exactly, and in trouble. See here, Marvin, we're in a bad box, and we've got to leave the country."

"How is that?"

"Close the door and we will tell you."

The landlord did so, and Despard began speaking in a rapid, confidential tone. His words indicated that in the past the now presumably respectable landlord of the tavern had been a man as unprincipled and criminal as himself.

He narrated his recent adventures, and informed Marvin that he must shelter them for a day or two, and then provide them with horses to leave the country.

"It's lucky you were disguised when you came in here," said Marvin, "for the community are terribly aroused about your helping the Modocs in the attack on the wagon train."

Despard scowled and looked disturbed.

"Well, well," he said, impatiently; "can you stow us away in a place of safety?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"There's a room yonder that no one can get to except through here."

"But if the vigilantes knew we were here and should search for us?"

"There's a trap in the floor leading to the cellar and thence to the stables. How are the vigilantes going to know it?"

"Because we have many enemies on our trail, and will undoubtedly be closely pursued. Bring us something to eat and drink, will you? We are nearly famished."

Despard and Danton retired to the room beyond the one they were in.

"We're safe enough here," remarked the latter with a complacent glance at their comfortable surroundings.

Despard surveyed the apartment critically.

"Not if Ranger Ralph and that young scout Grey trace us," replied Despard. "Where does this door lead to?"

"To the outside hall, I suppose. But it's bolted heavily on this side."

"I'm going to see."

Despard was some time operating the bolt, which apparently had not been used for years. He finally slid it back in its socket and opened it cautiously. It led, as Danton had suggested, to a hall that ran from the upper to the rear portion of the house.

Despard seemed determined to understand his surroundings, and to be prepared for an escape under all contingencies. He stepped into the hall, which was in complete darkness, and closed the door after him. He saw that to attempt to leave by the rear of the house would be folly if the place was surrounded. He cautiously ascended the stair a few steps.

"If it comes to the worst we can retreat," he muttered. "Ha! What was that?"

Distinctly from the hall above he caught the sound of voices. He thrilled wildly as he recognized them, for they were those of Inez and White Fawn.

"Return to the room," the latter was saying.

"But every moment we delay is fatal, with that man in the house."

"The Black Crow can not know that we are here," responded the Indian maiden.

"He will soon learn of it. Let us fly."

"And be pursued and overtaken by him? No, we are safer here. Return to the room, and I will find out our true peril."

"Then see the landlady," urged Inez. "If she will provide us with horses we will leave at once."

"It is so. I will return soon."

The eyes of the outlaw chief gleamed triumphantly. The fugitives he had abandoned so effectually escaped were under the same roof. He must devise a plan to secure Inez and the diamonds at once.

The Modoc princess was about to descend the stairs. She must not discover him yet. Despard silently retreated and cautiously re-entered the room where Danton was. He started as he did so. Danton stood by a table pale and alarmed. Confronting him with drawn revolver were two men.

Their backs were to Despard, and they had not noticed his entrance. The outlaw stood spellbound as he recognized one of them as Darrel Grey. The other revealed himself by speaking at that moment.

"Hm Danton," he was saying, in a low, determined tone, "if you do not instantly tell us where Dyke Despard is I will kill you!"

It was the outlaw's bitterest enemy who spoke—Ranger Ralph.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A VILLAIN'S TRIUMPH.

The toils were fast closing in upon the heartless persecutors of the beautiful and innocent Inez Tracey, and in a flash Dyke Despard realized that a vital moment in all his plans had arrived.

He knew that a word to the rough but honest throng in the bar-room of the tavern would lead to his arrest, and a trial in which Judge Lynch would award him the fate of death by hanging.

How these two men happened to meet at the tavern—how they had managed to penetrate to this room—he could not surmise.

Even Danton, terrified at their sudden appearance, did not notice Despard's return to the apartment.

For a moment the outlaw chief seemed about to draw a weapon and spring upon his unsuspecting foes. Then his eye flashed fiercely, as a surer and more silent means of disposing of them came to his mind.

Marvin had told him of the trapdoor leading to the cellar. As his eye fell upon the floor, he noted that both of the newcomers stood upon that portion of it which comprised the trap. Sunk in the floor at the extreme edge was a small bolt. To draw this back meant to release the trapdoor. Despard doubted not.

He determined to boldly risk all on operating it, to the disaster of his foes. He stepped forward cautiously. His hand reached the bolt. There was a creaking sound. Ranger Ralph turned quickly, but too late to avert the disaster.

The door fell with a crash. Both men were precipitated into the gloom and darkness of the cellar. A low cry of malignant triumph escaped Despard's lips.

"Baffled," he cried. "Quick, Danton, the lamp!"

His companion brought the light to the trap. Despard peered eagerly into the dark void. Fully fifteen feet below upon a rocky, uneven floor, lay two forms. Apparently the fall had robbed their enemies of sensibility.

A ladder led from the trap downward. This Despard pulled up into the room. Then he closed and locked the trapdoor just as the landlord entered the room.

The latter seemed somewhat excited. "I guess you were right about being pursued," he said.

"Why so?" asked Despard.

"Two men came into the bar-room a few minutes since who acted very suspiciously."

"Where are they now?"

"I don't know. They disappeared very mysteriously."

"They came here."

"What?" ejaculated Marvin, incredulously.

"Yes, they came here."

"You know them?"

"As our deadliest foes."

"And they are gone?"

"Into yonder trap."

In graphic language Despard detailed what had occurred.

"Can they escape readily?" he asked as he concluded his recital.

"Not unless they know the way to a secret door to the stables."

"Then let us act. Marvin, do you wish to make a few thousand dollars?"

"Of course I do."

"Very well. In this house now there are two girls."

Marvin started. "How did you know that?" he asked surprisedly.

"I do know it. One of them—the white one—I love. The other, an Indian girl, has her fortune in diamonds in her possession."

The landlord's eyes gleamed avariciously as Despard unfolded his plan. Marvin was to act in immediate collusion with them.

"The men in the cellar will be insensible till we are away," said Despard. "You get your wife to pretend to befriend the girls."

"I'll fix all that, only I must not appear as being in your plot. It would hurt me among my customers."

"We'll manage all that."

Thus it was when, half an hour later, Inez and White Fawn stole from the tavern. The landlady had pretended to aid them but was only acting under orders from her husband. She told them to go to an old hut a few rods from the house, where she would bring them horses a little latter.

She had left a lantern with them, and the two girls stood silent and alone, watching its flickering rays and anxiously awaiting the woman's return.

A wild cry of dismay arose from Inez Tracey's lips, as the doorway suddenly framed two forms. In a moment Despard and Danton came into view. The latter seized the Indian girl. Despite her struggles, her arms were quickly bound behind her.

"You have not escaped us yet," hissed Despard, as he grasped Inez's arm. "Make no outcry if you value your safety."

Paralyzed with terror, poor Inez stood pale and mute, shrinking in horror from the triumphant face of her enemy.

"Danton," spoke the outlaw chief, "you know your part. Search the Indian girl for the diamonds."

White Fawn did not speak, but her dark eyes flashed scornfully on the man who had so wronged her. Danton uttered a cry of delight as he drew from the dress of the Indian girl a small box, which he examined hastily.

"The jewels?" asked Despard, eagerly.

"Yes."

"Very well. Secure them safely and watch your captives."

There was a mocking smile on the face of White Fawn, despite her perilous situation.

"Now, then," spoke Despard quickly to the shrinking Inez, "I have only a few words to speak to you."

"Miscreant! Will your evil plots and persecutions never cease?"

"Not until you are my wife."

"That will be never."

"We shall see. I have your fortune, in the jewels and the deeds to the lands your father left you."

"I care not."

"But I covet your love. If you will go and go with me, yonder girl shall die. Your lover Darrel Grey and your friend Ranger Ralph are lying insensible in the rear of the tavern."

Inez uttered a frantic cry of grief.

"All shall die, unless you wed me. Outside the hut is a magistrate. Agree?"

Poor Inez sobbed bitterly.

"Danton, kill the Indian!"

Danton raised a gleaming knife.

"No, no!" shrieked Inez, frantically. "I agree!"

Almost at the same moment Marvin entered the hut.

It was a strange scene—a dread moment, a delirium of emotion in which Inez only knew that she heard the words that made her Dyke Despard's wife to save her friends.

Almost in a swoon, she was led from the hut and placed on a horse. Despard held the bridle and mounted another steed.

"You shall hear from us soon, Marvin," he said. "Come, Danton."

They had left the Indian girl bound in the hut. Ten minutes later utter silence reigned over the scene. And in the near distance, Dyke Despard was bearing away the beautiful Inez—his wife—she fearful, apparently, at last in wounding the fortune for which he had so long and deftly plotted.

CHAPTER XXX.

CONCLUSION.

"Halt!"

Like a shock the word sounded upon the startled Danton. It was less than an hour after the departure from the hut, and he and his companion had gained a mountain path, and were rapidly making their way from the vicinity of the tavern.

Inez, weeping bitterly, allowed Despard to lead her horse a few rods, and he did not annoy her by speaking to her, although he kept a close surveillance over her every movement.

Danton had lagged behind his horse having lost a shoe. He had dismounted and was about to hasten to rejoin his companion, when he became conscious that two men blocked his way.

One of them flashed quickly by him, and he thrilled as he seemed to peer above him his dreaded enemy, Ranger Ralph. The other had gained his side so quickly that they were face to face.

"Draw a weapon and I fire," spoke the calm voice of Darrel Grey.

He held a gleaming revolver in his hand, before which the craven Danton quailed in terror.

"Drop your weapons in the road—quick!"

There was no mistaking the stern accents in the young scout's voice. Danton sullenly complied with his demand.

"You are my prisoner," spoke Darrel. "In a few moments I shall take you back a bound captive, to the settlement. We escaped from a cellar, as you know your victim, White Fawn. Before at once I heard shots you took from her."

Danton drew the box from his coat. Then suddenly he flung it far over the edge of the cliff.

Darrel uttered a cry of dismay.

"Kill me if you will. I have robbed you of half your triumph," cried Danton. "Ha! I am not beaten yet!"

Taking advantage of Darrel's dismay at the loss of the jewels he had spent two years to win, he made a fatal movement. Instantly the horse, and Danton's foot became entangled in the drooping reins. With a cry of terror, Darrel saw the horse deal him a few feet, and then send him crashing over the edge of the precipice.

Danton had met his doom in the rock-choked river below!

A series of shots some distance ahead warned Darrel that his friend, Ranger Ralph, had probably met Despard. A few minutes later he came upon them.

The ravine had indeed overtaken Despard, had torn his grasp from the bridle rein of Inez's horse, and then a deadly conflict had ensued.

They had emptied their revolvers at short range. Neither had been seriously injured. Just as Darrel reached the spot, the outlaw had darted up a steep incline.

"We shall meet again!" he cried. "You have triumphed this time—help!"

The word gurgled in his throat. As he reached the summit of the embankment, a deafening detonation rang forth.

Forward to a hundred rifles, Dyke Despard fell dead.

He had run directly into an ambush of the very Indians who had accompanied Darrel to the vicinity of Fair Play. A moment later Shadow Snake appeared. His vengeance was complete. His foe was dead, and the outlaw band of Despard was swept from the face of the earth.

Two hours later affairs had resumed a quiet aspect. Inez, embarrassed at again meeting Darrel, was conveyed by the Modocs to a settlement farther down the river.

Here White Fawn met her father, and here they were a happy portion, for she started forth with her father's letter to Inez's uncle, the husband of whom she had been robbed by the villain Despard.

One month later their grateful friends were happy to know that she had found him—a prisoner in a hostile tribe. They were reunited, and returned with Shadow Snake to their old camping ground, peace being declared with the white inhabitants of the district.

Ranger Ralph related to some stern of his search for Inez, and the next day a visit was made to the valley where Danton was laid, pending in the building of the lonely mound.

Marvin was not punished for his share in Despard's plots, no serious detriment could be proven against him.

Without one in part was found and a month later was present at the marriage of Inez and Darrel.

The happy pair resided in California, and both then and in need accompanied them.

Often they saw the brave Indian and who so befriended them.

And their happiness they never forgot these stand friends of the past. And among them all, there is none more highly than the intrepid scout who followed and then rescued Inez in the days when they sought to secure the treasure of Lone Canyon, the gem of border days. Ranger Ralph.

THE END.

HENRY W. SAGE.

Famous Philanthropist Who Gave a Million to Cornell University.

Henry W. Sage, president of the Board of Trustees of Cornell University and widely known as a generous patron and promoter of education, died recently at the advanced age of 87 years.

Henry W. Sage was born at Middletown, Conn., Jan. 31, 1811, and lived at Poland, in that state, until 1837, when his family removed to Ithaca, N. Y. He made heavy purchases of timber lands. The money with which he established himself in business was generously given him by his father.

HENRY W. SAGE.

He displayed remarkable aptitude for business, and he was so fortunate in his investments that he became a millionaire. Mr. Sage was a director in the Western Union Telegraph company, president of the Wagner Palace Car company, president of the Chemical National bank, president of the Ithaca & Cayuga Valley railroad company, president of the Ithaca Street railway company, president of the Ithaca Gas company, president of the Ithaca Land company, president of the Ithaca Water company, president of the Ithaca Fire company, president of the Ithaca Boiler company, president of the Ithaca Electric company, president of the Ithaca Hydraulic