

WILLIAM MACLEOD RAINE'S

To Ride the River With

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SYNOPSIS

Ruth Chiswick of L C ranch, obsessed by fear of danger to her outspan father, Lee, from a band of lawless rustlers headed by Sperm Howard, decides to save him by eloping with young Lou Howard, Sperm's son, and comes to the town of Tail Holt to meet him. While in Yell Sanger's store, a crook-nosed stranger enters, sizes up the situation, and when a drunken cowboy, Jim Pender, rides in and starts shooting, protects Ruth, while Lou Howard hides. Disgusted with Lou's cowardice, Ruth calls off the elopement, and sends the stranger for her father at the gambling house across the street. There the stranger, calling himself Jeff Gray, meets Morgan Norris, a killer, Curly Connor, Kansas, Mile High, Sid Hunt, and other rustlers, and Sperm Howard. Lee Chiswick enters, with his foreman, Dan Brand, and tells Sperm Howard of his orders to shoot rustlers at sight. Jeff Gray returns to Ruth and coolly reassures her of her father's safety. At supper, Ruth introduces Jeff to her father and Brand, and in Sanger's store later she speaks cordially to Curly Connor. Coming out of the store, they are greeted by sudden gunfire. Lee is wounded, and Jeff Gray appears with a smoking revolver. Two days later, Ruth tells her father of her projected elopement and her disillusionment. Later, Ruth meets Jeff Gray, whom she thinks tried to kill her father. Ruth accidentally wounds Jeff. She takes him to Pat Sorley's camp. Ruth is credulous of Jeff's story of shooting at the assassin rather than at her father, and later pleads with Lee to listen to him. When Lee arrives at Pat Sorley's camp, he finds only a note to Pat from Jeff. Meanwhile, Jeff rides into Tail Holt and sends word to Sperm Howard he wants to see him. He shows Howard a poster with his picture, with the name of Clint Duke, wanted as the leader of a band of outlaws. The rest of the band arrives. Jeff shows the outlaws the poster and asks their confidence, and tells them Ruth shot him. They agree to allow him to stay. Another raid on the L C cattle causes Lee to line up his men in pursuit, and to send his son Frank to town to reconnoiter. Pat Sorley finds Gray's horse's hoofmarks on the trail with the suspected rustlers.

CHAPTER V—Continued

"He didn't whop me," blustered Howard. "Didn't you hear me say he jumped me when I wasn't looking?"

"I heard you," Curly said with a skeptical grin.

"I never saw the day I couldn't comb that bird's feathers for him," the damaged man bragged.

He finished his drink and went away to repair his wounds.

Jeff Gray, watching him, caught the look that passed between young Howard and Morgan Norris. Presently the latter left the bar and sauntered back to the wash-room after Lou.

Gray also drifted in that direction. He sat down at a table close to the washroom wall and began to deal out a hand of solitaire. Intently he listened to catch anything that might be said by the rustlers.

killer and a thief. Say I'm paying off a grudge I owe Lou Howard and Morg Norris. That would make me a double double-crosser. Put it any way you like. But get this through yore noodle. If you stick around here another day, you'll go home in a wagon covered by a sheet."

"I wouldn't believe anything in the world you told me," Frank answered.

"Then don't believe it because I tell you. Use yore head. Young Howard is no-account, but right now dangerous as a trapped rat you try to pet. He's mostly vanity, and you've hurt that cruelly. He'd go the limit to get even. Norris is one of these snake-in-the-grass killers, mean all the way through. Boy, I'm going to tell you something I can't prove. Likely you won't believe me. Morg Norris is the man who tried to kill yore father at Tail Holt. I'm 'most sure of that."

"You're one of this outlaw gang, but don't mind throwing down on them when it suits you," jeered Chiswick.

"Smart as a whip, you are," Gray drawled. "You'll never find out whether I am all the kinds of skunk you claim, because inside of 24 hours Morg Norris will blast you off the map."

"Maybe he sent you here to scare me. If he did, you go back and tell him I don't scare worth a cent."

"I give up," Gray said, putting away his weapon. "When a lunk-head has got hell in the neck there's nothing to do about it. You're grown



shoulders. He would not have to play a lone hand any longer.

A man coming into the house stepped to one side to let Frank out. The man was Jeff Gray.

"Wait a minute, Chiswick," he said urgently. "They're aiming to ambush you."

Frank did not answer, nor did he look back. He was not going to let this fellow influence him. But the heart under his ribs began to pound furiously. Involuntarily he quickened his pace.

"Come back, you fool!" the crook-nosed man ordered. "They're posted in the cottonwoods over there."

Chiswick did not believe him, but a queer chill ran up and down his spine. He kept going, following an adobe wall parallel to the road.

The angry bark of a revolver sounded. Frank whirled, dragging out his weapon. Swiftly he fired at Gray. He knew the shot had come from the gun of Gray.

From the cottonwoods across the road a rifle cracked. Another boomed before the echo of the first explosion had died.

Frank flung himself at the adobe wall and clambered over it, dropping the forty-four from his hand as he swarmed up. The boy hesitated an instant. Should he go back for his revolver or run the great risk of being caught defenseless? He heard the slap of running feet. If he went back over the wall, he would be the target of several gunmen. Nothing could save him. He must keep going.

In the darkness a building loomed before him. It was a large adobe stable, and it filled the whole back of the enclosure. Frank hesitated. He dared not let himself be trapped in the stable. Better go over one of the side walls.

He caught sight of a figure on top of the wall. A man was astride of it. His gun flashed twice. Then he had jumped down into the yard and was running toward Frank.

Amazement filled the mind of Chiswick. The man had not fired at him, but at someone out in the road.

"This way. Into the stable. They'll get you out in the open."

Frank followed him into the building. Why he did so he could not tell, for the man in front of him was Jeff Gray.

"Up the stairs," Gray ordered, stooping to pick something from the ground.

"Sure. What would we want to hurt you for? We got a warrant for the arrest of Chiswick for disturbing the peace."

"Give us time to talk it over."

"Well, hurry up. And no monkey business. What's that noise up there?"

There was a rush up the stairs. In the darkness the defenders had all the advantage. Gray pistol-wiped the first man and sent him tumbling back against the others. Frank drove the point of the crowbar into the midriff of another. The attackers fell back in disorder. Hurriedly they scampered out of the barn. One of them had to be dragged.

"Back soon," Gray said grimly. "How are you getting along with that exit-hombres hole?"

With the sleeve of his shirt Frank wiped away the perspiration dripping into his eyes. It was not in the hay under the roof. "Give me ten minutes more," he panted.

"You don't get ten minutes," Gray told him, and he handed his revolver to the younger man. "Give me that crowbar awhile."

With short swift drives the red-haired man slashed at the wall. The point of the crowbar went through. The hole grew larger.

"Why not ten minutes?" Frank asked. "Think they'll rush us again?"

"Not none. They will set fire to the hay below and burn us out."

"Good God! We'd better go down and try to hold them back from getting into the barn."

"I wouldn't say so. Three-four would get killed, including maybe me. We'll just about make it. The creek is below. We'll drop down in the brush and slip away—if we're lucky."

"And if we're not?" Frank asked. His companion pried out an adobe brick. "I've been in a lot worse tightness than this," he said.

Frank had been slammed from the saddle to the ground many times. He had been in stampedes and blizzards. These seemed to him trifling hazards compared to the danger he was in now.

"Wish it was lighter, so you could see better," he replied, emulating the coolness of the other.

"It will be light enough soon, if I don't miss my guess."

Gray stooped and worked at a loose brick with his hands.

Someone ran into the barn. From the top of the stairway Chiswick

Get him?" inquired Gray. "No. I didn't really see him. . . . lit the hay."

The flame leaped up. Through the loose floor it caught the hay in the loft. Frank tried to stamp out the fire. A brick crashed down from the ceiling. The hole is big enough," Gray

"Slide out, fellow."

"First," Chiswick urged. "The smoke was pouring up in waves."

"As I say," the older man ordered.

Frank wriggled through and out. The heat and smoke were unbearable. Gray worked his way and body into the open. He landed on a stone, and fell over and over into the bed of the creek.

"Light?" Chiswick asked, in the darkness.

Gray snapped. "This is the creek."

Frank was crouching along the bed of the creek. The bank protected him from observation. Leaping from the stable drove back the rustlers. The fugitives were

crossed a barbed-wire fence across the creek. They were

in a clump of mesquite at the mouth of the creek.

(BE CONTINUED)

History of Earth Divided Into Five "Eras," Seven "Ages" and 22 Periods

The divisions of time established by geologists are based upon the formations of strata and the advents of different forms of animal life. The history of the earth is divided into five "eras," seven "ages," 22 "periods," and the last two periods are subdivided into seven epochs. These divisions, proceeding from the fifth downward to the first, states a writer in the Cleveland Plain Dealer, are as follows:

Fifth—Psychozoic era, age of man, human period, and recent epoch.

Fourth—Cenozoic era, age of mammals, embracing the quaternary period, which comprehends the terrace, Champlain, and glacial epochs, and the tertiary period, which comprehends the pleistocene, miocene, and eocene epochs.

Third—Mesozoic, or middle, era, the age of reptiles, the cretaceous, jurassic and triassic periods.

Second—Paleozoic era, the car-

boniferous age, or age of acrogens and amphibians; the Devonian age, or age of fishes; the silurian age, or age of invertebrates, or mollusks—the names of the fourteen periods into which these ages are divided are not in common use.

First—Archean, or eozioc era; the archean age, and the Huronian and Laurentian periods. The term is restricted by the United States Geological survey and most American geologists to the earlier portion of the pre-Cambrian, represented in the record chiefly by metamorphosed igneous rocks, but subordinately by metamorphosed sedimentary beds. The Archean rocks contain carbonaceous material, iron ores, limestones, etc., which probably indicate the existence of life, but no fossils have been found. The duration of the era during which the Archean rocks were formed was very great, possibly exceeding all subsequent time.

Beauty in Crocheted Linens

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AROUND THE HOUSE

Improving Meat Flavor.—The flavor of boiled ham, salt beef or tongue which is to be served cold is much improved if meat is left in the water in which it was boiled until it is cold.

Pressing Pleated Skirt.—Wire paper clips may be used very successfully to hold pleats in position when pressing a skirt.

Firm Pie Crust.—To prevent the lower crust of a fruit pie becoming soggy, brush it over with the white of an egg before putting in the fruit filling.

Sparing the Tablecloth.—Use white waxed paper under the child's tray on table. The paper saves the tablecloth and is barely noticeable.

Cleaning Upholstered Pieces.—Heavy upholstered pieces that cannot readily be taken outside can be freed from dust by placing over them an old sheet wrung out in hot water and then beating well with a cane. The sheet will absorb the dust.

For Light Muffins.—When making muffins in iron pans, grease the pans and heat them in the oven before putting the batter in. Your muffins will then be much lighter.

To Stiffen Meringue.—A generous pinch of soda added to the egg whites before they are beaten will make meringue stand up better.

When Tying Bundles.—Twine used in tying bundles should always be dampened. It will tie much tighter and will not slip when knots are made.

When Fat Catches Fire.—Never throw water on burning fat. Use flour instead. Water only spreads the blaze.

Dog Man's Friend, but—

No one likes to quarrel with the statement that the dog is man's best friend. In fact, we all like to believe it without question. But neighborhood dogs that insist on staining prized ornamental evergreens and shrubbery certainly do put a heavy strain on friendship. Home owners have faced this problem sadly, angrily and ineffectually—until recently a very simple solution came to light.

All that you do is spray the lower branches of your evergreens and shrubs with a little nicotine sulphate mixed in water. It's harmless to plants—harmless to the dogs—and brings a tremendous relief to frayed tempers. You see, the desired result comes because dogs do not like the nicotine sulphate odor and give a wide berth to any spot where that odor is found.

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