



NINTH INSTALLMENT

"Ten of us got our herds already started on the trail. I come on ahead to sorta break trail, yuh might say. The short, quick way into the Kicapoo range for us in straight through this country. That's what I was lookin' for Arthur about. Said he had a business proposition to talk over with us."

Abe Fornachon was nobody's fool. He held out his hand. "My name's Fornachon," he said. "Glad to know yuh, Tisdale. Shore yuh don't mind my sayin' that yore bronc looks like it could stand a couple of feeds of oats and a good rest. I'm haidin' for the Circle L, a couple miles along. Yuh better drift over with me an' rest yoreself an' yore hoss. Whend' yuh eat last?"

"Danged early this mornin'," Tisdale said. "Ain't no particular rush about me seein' Arthur; I can see him tonight. I'm with yuh."

At the Circle L they found Slim and Dakota perched on the corral fence, deep in thoughtful conversation. Slim looked up and waved to Abe. The Dot H Dot foreman saw that Slim was carrying a pair of guns. He and Tisdale dismounted.

"Slim—Dakota, meet a gent from the Big Bend country. Tisdale, this is Slim Loyale an' Dakota Blue."

When the round of hand-clasps was over, Abe explained. Slim nodded generously. "Glad yuh dropped in, Tisdale. Shore, we try an' treat folks. I'll tell Oscar to set yuh out a meal, an' I'll lean yuh a fresh bronc. Yores looks pretty gaunt."

Leaving Tisdale at his meal, Slim went outside again. Dakota, his eyes hot with interest, beckoned him. "Abe," he said "tell Slim what yuh just told me."

Abe did so, starting with information of Arthur's visit to the Dot H Dot and his ultimatum.

NOTICE OF LAND ENTRY

North Carolina, Wilkes County. Office of Entry Taker May 27, 1937

To the County Surveyor of Wilkes County—Greeting:

Romey Ashley, of Wilkes county, North Carolina, having on the 27th day of May, 1937, entered the following lands in Wilkes county, said to contain 18 1-2 acres more or less, and the notice required by Statute having been made, and no protest against issuing this warrant having been filed with me, now therefore you are required as soon as may be, to lay off and survey for said Romey Ashley the following described parcel of land in Union township, Wilkes county, North Carolina, adjoining the lands of H. C. Jones and others on the waters of Reddies River, and bounded as follows, to wit:

Lying on the south fork of Reddies River in Union Township, and bounded as follows:

Beginning on a chestnut oak, his own northwest corner, running south 7 degrees 30 minutes east 40 poles to a stake near a maple; thence south 63 degrees east 84 poles to a stake in A. G. Whittington's line; thence north 3 degrees east with his line 25 poles to a stake in H. C. Jones' line; thence north 57 degrees west with his line 98 poles to the beginning. Containing 18 1-2 acres, more or less.

Surveyed this the 22nd day of May, 1937, by Earl S. Caudill, C. S. Romey Ashley C. C. Presley Ashley C. C.

Entered on the 27th day of May, 1937, being Entry No. 1615, page 4, Entry Taker's Book for Wilkes county.

In making the survey of said lands you will observe the directions as laid down in Section 7562, and subsequent Sections relating thereto of the North Carolina Code making two just and fair plats of said survey, with the proper certificate annexed to each which you are to transmit with this warrant to the Secretary of State's Office, without delay.

Given under my hand this the 27th day of May, 1937.

OID WILES, Entry Taker

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"That's one angle that I don't quite get," he drawled. "What's the bunch, Slim?"

"My money is in the Standard Bank, ain't it?" explained Slim. "Well, Arthur knows it an' so does the rest of that crowd. The surest way to keep me from usin' that money to loan out on mortgages, like the Dot H Dot's, is to grab the money off."

"Don't yuh see that Brockwell an' Arthur have gone too far by this time to back down? They either stand to win big or lose everything. I'll bet yuh anythin' yuh want, Roy an' Stoney will have work to do."

When Steve Owens and Charley Quinn came jogging in from their work that evening Slim met them at the corrals. "For the next few days I got a nice easy job lined up for the pair of yuh," he told them. "Yore gonna have to do a lot of loafin' around. I want one of yuh to be on guard about the ranch here all the time, day an' night. Yuh can take turns, but I want the man on watch to have a Winchester over his arm and be plumb wide awake."

"What's in the air, Slim?" yelled Steve Owens excitedly. "A scrap?"

"Like to be," was the answer. "If it comes, it'll be a hummer. So watch things close."

"An' how!" chortled the irrepressible Steve. "We will, yuh know."

Just at sunset Tisdale came riding up. His eyes were bleak and his lips were stern. Slim and Dakota met him as he dismounted. At the look on Tisdale's face, Slim jabbed an elbow into Dakota's ribs. "I knew he'd be foam-in'," he murmured.

Tisdale wasted no time in expressing himself. As he swung to the ground he faced Slim and Dakota truculently. "Listen," he demanded harshly, "how much range does that damn law shark own around here, anyhow?"

Slim shrugged. "Not a yard of it that I know of."

"What? Don't he own any a-tall?"

"Not a bit."

Tisdale looked plainly astounded. "That hombre must be plumb loco," he declared. "He gave me to understand that he controlled all this range for at least five miles, both ways from the mouth of Jericho Valley."

"Then he lied, Tisdale. What he meant to say was that he hoped to control it by the time yore herds start across it. Ah, how much per haid was he gonna charge yuh in range toll for yore herds?"

"One round simoleon," exploded Tisdale. "Yes, sir, one whole damn dollar per haid, yearlin's included."

"What did yuh tell him?"

"I told him that he was a cross between a polecat an' a buzzard an' that he could go to blazes. I told him that we fellers comin' north to the Kicapoo range would pay a reasonable range toll, but nothin' like a dollar."

"I told him we'd fight our way through before we'd be robbed by anybody. Why, there's nigh onto thirty thousand bald of cattle movin' up Jericho Valley right now—the combined herds of ten of us Big Bend ranchers. There'll be at least half that many more followin' us that I know of."

"That Jasper musta figgered he was gonna clean up a fortune off us. He knows we can't afford to turn back by now. If we did, we'd never be able to drive another route in time to get to the Kicapoo country when it's opened."

"An' that range up there ain't gonna last any too long. It's a plain case of gettin' there right away, or not at all. But me, I can't understand him makin' such demands when he don't own none of this range."

"Suppose we go an' have supper," suggested Slim. "I'll tell yuh the whole set-up while we eat."

Over the meal, Slim gave the Big Bend man the entire story. "Yuh see," he ended, "Arthur an' the rest of the polecats in with him were schemin' quite a long way ahead. They shore hoped to be in control of this range. Several things kinda upset their calculations. One of them was havin' yore herds arrive so early. Another was my gettin' outa jail on a parole."

"With a little more luck they'd have won out, an' had yuh in a corner. Right now yore sore, Tisdale, over Arthur's demands. But yuh know as well as I do, that in the end yuh'd 'a' paid that dollar-a-haid range toll. Am I right?"

Tisdale nodded ruefully. "Yeah, yore right, Loyale. We'd just plain have to, or lose everythin'. But evidently, from the way he talks, that Arthur ain't given up hope yet of gettin' control of this range."

"He hasn't," agreed Slim. "The next forty-eight hours are gonna see hell a-poppin', or I don't know my way about. I'm tryin' right now to spread my cards to spoil his plans. Now then, just how much toll did yuh fellers figure yuh'd be willin' to pay an' call it a fair deal all around?"

"Two bits a haid," stated Tisdale. "An' we'll guarantee to drive the herd well bunched an' drive fast. We won't let 'em spread a bit. I think that's a fair offer."

"Darned fair," agreed Slim. "Now here's my proposition. Most of that crossin' will be over Dot H Dot range. Miss Hall, who owns the Dot H Dot, has got to have money to squelch Arthur an' his

Early Planted Yams Make Heavier Yield

Sweet potato plants set in the field before the middle of June will produce better yams and heavier acre yields, said L. P. Watson, extension horticulturist at State College.

When planted early, he explained, they have the benefit of a long growing season, and they usually have a chance to get fairly well established in the ground before extremely hot, dry weather sets in.

The crop will be improved if it receives a good grade of commercial fertilizer containing three per cent nitrogen, eight per cent phosphoric acid, and eight per cent potash applied with a drill at the rate of 800 to 1,200 pounds per acre.

Two-thirds of the nitrogen should come from inorganic sources and one-third from organic sources. The potash should be derived from muriate or sulphate of potash, Watson stated.

Stable manure should not be used unless it is well rotted and can be broadcast at least a month before planting time.

Disease-free seedlings should be planted in clean soil. If possible, if the soil is infested with stem rot or wilt, treat the seedlings with Semezan, or dip the roots and stems in 20-20-50 Bordeaux mixture, said Dr. R. F. Poole, plant pathologist.

He warned that Bordeaux mixture may injure the plants unless used with caution. Treat only freshly dug seedlings, and set them out immediately after they are dipped. Then water the plants at once.

Or the seedlings may be dusted with a mixture of 25 per cent monohydrated copper sulphate and 75 per cent lime.

Strawberry growers of Duplin County who graded and packed their berries properly this season have received from 25 to 50 per cent more in price than for those not so prepared.

foreclosure move. Me, I don't want a cent of money from yuh fellers. But if yuh'd ride over to the Dot H Dot with me an' make a deal with Miss Hall, puttin' up the toll money in advance, yuh'll get the crossin' for yore own price an' she'll have enough to pay Arthur.

"I've tried to get her to accept a loan from me, but for some darned reason I can't figger out, she won't take it. But a deal like I say with yuh, she'll grab in a hurry. An' it'll be to everybody's benefit except Arthur's. What d'yuh say?"

(Continued next week)

Brief Happenings At Pattons Ridge

PATTONS RIDGE, May 31.—The Fifth Sunday Singing Association met with Stony Fork church Sunday. Several choirs and quartets were present and some fine vocal music rendered. A very large crowd attended and as the weather was extremely fine. The day was enjoyed by all present. Dinner was served on the grounds.

Messrs. Zab and Fred Baker and family, of Patterson, visited in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Waters of this vicinity during the week-end.

Folks are taking advantage of the nice weather and are hoeing their corn and potato crops.

Miss Pearl Waters, who has been visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Waters, returned to Patterson, Sunday.

Mrs. Linnie Benge, of Boone, is visiting her parents, Rev. and Mrs. John W. Church, during this week.

Mr. Dempsey Church, who holds a position at Abshers, came home to visit his parents, Rev. and Mrs. John W. Church, during the week-end.

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12 Plants 20c 100 Plants \$.60

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