

"HORNEYHEADS AND CATS" IN OLD FISHING HOLE NEAR LAWDALE

Ramblin' Bill Talks of Boyhood Scenes Here and Describes Desert For Friends of Old

(By Ramblin' Bill)

Editor of The Star.

About the most welcome sight I have seen for some time was that copy of the Cleveland Star you sent me. Glancing through its columns I was reminded of boyhood days spent in the old North State; of sunshine and showers and last but not least, it brings to me the fragrance of roses, springtime violets, honeysuckle blossoms, peach and apple blossoms, for I remember well that its about this time of year or just a mite later that North Carolina is in bloom and the birds are singing a welcome to spring. There is a certain fishing hole just above Lawdale where I'd like to be fishing today; where the horny heads and catfish are hungry and would almost steal one's bait out of the old Prince Albert can. Many's the day that I have sat and fished at this "ole fishin' hole" to the tune of honey bees in the foliage above and I could hear the farmers in the fields nearby talking and sometimes using strong language to their mules. Just how many fish I caught does not matter and if I were there today, I could march to that old fishin' hole unashamed because I was fishing while other folks were at work.

This is a desert country and fishin' holes are few and far between, but you would be surprised to listen to the tales they tell about the good fishing to be had in the White river section in northern Arizona. Personally I have never verified these stories of fisherman's luck in Arizona's streams, although I have cast a few lines in some of Old Mexico's streams with fair results. However, in my opinion, there is just one fishin' hole in the world and that is just above Lawdale whether they bite or not, I'd like to be fishin' there today.

For the benefit of those who have never lived on the desert or those who are not acquainted with the southwestern sections of the U. S. A. I am going to attempt to enlighten them just what the desert is and especially what life is like along the international boundary of Arizona and Mexico. With a warning to all the young blood craving romance and adventure to remain in North Carolina unless their pocket-

books will stand an expensive pleasure jaunt. Southern Arizona is mostly made up of arid waste lands although there are a few good ranges where cattle feed the year round and some irrigated spots where farming activities are carried on with more or less success. But generally speaking, southern Arizona is a desert consisting of cactus, Spanish dagger, chapparal mesquite and sand, said sand being inclined to shift with the winds and said winds being considerably active nearly 12 months in the year. To the stranger and uninitiated, Arizona in the summer or winter is a terrible place. However, when one gets used to it, Arizona is a wonderful place, a healthful climate, and a garden spot despite the shifting sands, terrific winds, severe sunshine and bitter winter cold. The days in the winter time are always warm and the nights both summer and winter are old enough for cover. Not a day goes by that the sun does not shine in Arizona.

My first trip to Arizona was not a health seeking one as I came as a soldier to guard the border. Later an overdose of German gas made it necessary that I come here to make my permanent home. I have steadily gained in health until I am now normal, my weight having increased from about 130 to 180 pounds, or ten pounds above normal. Arizona has given me health and a new lease on life and I love Arizona. I love its desert wastes, its drab mountains and great silent places. I love its people with their open frankness of expression, their plain ways and straightforward methods. I love to be out on the desert at night and lie by the camp fire and listen to the coyotes howl on the nearby hills and watch millions of stars in the sky (Arizona has more stars visible, it seems than anywhere).

There is something about the desert that attracts one that is beyond explanation. I believe that the Almighty watches over the desert with just as much zeal as he watches over other parts of the universe and when a man is alone at night in the desert he is closer to God than in any other part of the world.

Give me a canteen of water, a blanket, a days rations and my rifle and I am on my way for a genuine picnic in the desert. Such excursions have saved by life when the doctors shook their heads and wanted to operate on me for something that I never had and would have probably left some of their tools in me and made it necessary to operate again to recover their instruments and who knows but what I would have been pushing up daisies today with my toes, had I listened to their advice.

I'll describe one trip I took last fall—a deer hunt in the Chircahuas, sixty miles northeast of Douglas or through what is known in these parts as Cave Creek section and Rucker canyon.

Not knowing the country very well, I selected an old timer a Mr. Bidwell, 70 years old and a typical westerner of two-gun fame in the old days, yet active and robust and rearin' to go. I had a double purpose in selecting Mr. Bidwell for this hunt, because he holds the reputation of always bagging his deer and he knows every nook and cranny in the mountains. We packed my car with several days provisions, two rifles and two shot guns and plenty of ammunition as well as enough bedding, for he it is known that October the nights are cold in the Chircahuas. We left Douglas about midnight on the opening day of the season and made our hunting grounds by daylight, or just as the sun was peeping over the hills. We lost no time in getting ourselves concealed in the small timber of scrub oak, juniper, and other undergrowth. Not a sign of life anywhere—not even was there a jack rabbit or cotton tail in the brush and I began to have my doubts as to there being any deer, but Mr. B. was not discouraged and kept cautioning me to be quiet. We began the ascent of the nearest mountain keeping well in the draw or wash and moving cautiously from one bush to another using our eyes as well as our ears as we went along. Soon we came to where the wash divided, I taking the right and Mr. B. the left agreeing to meet further up the mountain and hunt back to the water hole near where we had left the car.

Hardly had I gone three hundred yards when I heard Mr. Bidwell's rifle and I turned back to come almost face to face with a large buck running almost level with me in the draw. I brought my rifle into play and the third shot Mr. Buck came to earth and after several futile attempts to rise lay still. He was a ten pointer of a large variety of the hite tail mountain deer and as it was not my first deer by any means, it gave me a thrill greater than anything I had ever bagged before in the way of big game.

Thinking that Mr. Bidwell had missed his shot I called to him to come on over, "that I had got him," only to be informed that so had he got his I went

over to where he was and sure enough he had bagged the twin brother of my deer. Then happened to be two grazing near each other or else ready to duel over the grazing ground. We skinned our game and hastened back to town having been gone less than 24 hours and with two deer or our limit for this year's season. Unfortunately Mr. Bidwell, suffered a fall on this trip or just after bagging our deer that caused him to be laid up for some days after. But I must give him credit for knowing how to hunt deer and for being a true and genuine sportsman. At his age his eyesight is perfect and his aim unexcelled. He can hit a dime with a six-shooter nearly everytime at fifteen yards and he got his deer the first shot while I took three for mine and felt lucky at that.

Next season we are going into Old Mexico after deer and a mountain lion and maybe a lobe wolf or two. He tells me some interesting tales of his long hunts in the olden days when many of them were man hunts too. He never boasts or brags and sometimes lapses into silence when in the middle of a yarn when a man hunt was embraced. I notice that his old single action six-shooter has several notches in its handles and when I attempt to have him tell me about how those notches got there he is silent and wants to talk about some other subject. One day I thought I'd try him out just to see how he would act. I approached his house from the front just at the hours I knew he would be taking his daily nap and when he opened the door I jumped at him and demanded that he throw up his hands knowing that he couldn't tell who I was on account of the bright light in his sleepy eyes, but before I knew it he had his sixshooter and had me covered and I had to do some fast explaining. He goes across into Old Mexico quite frequently and dances until the wee morning hours and not infrequently imbibes a little too much of Mexico's liquid refreshment. He is one of the few left of the old timers of the west and gold all the way through.

Now we'll go back to my description of southern Arizona or some bits of it for the edification of any of your readers who might be interested.

Sulphur Springs Valley.

Sulphur Springs valley is located in the southern portion of Cochise county Arizona. On the south is Old Mexico, on the west is the Nace mountains, northwest the towns of Lowell, Warren, and Bisbee, the north Courtland, Pearce and McNeil, all small towns, to the northeast the Chircahuas mountains, and to the east Niggerhead, Coljege Peake, Washington's Nose and other famous mountains.

Douglas, a town of ten thousand population lies in the extreme southeastern portion of the Sulphur Springs

valley and just a few hundred yards away from Old Mexico. Approaching Douglas from the east the motorist is greeted with a most wonderful sight. As he comes down from the foothills of the Chircahuas and enters the valley on good hard-surfaced highway, he first sees a smear of smoke in the desert and hardly a sign of other habitation. As he gets nearer he looks across a wonderful valley bordered with juttled mountain ledges with towering peaks in the back ground volcanic in appearance. In fact he is looking as far as the Catilina's near a hundred miles away and at the top of the Huachuca mountains about 70 miles distant and also at mountains in old Mexico but he is more interested in the great level valley with here and there a windmill, a green strip, and maybe a squatter's cabin near the road. A few miles further and he realizes he is approaching a town of some size. The big smelter stacks loom up a little higher. He sees other roads leading in and soon he reaches the suburbs of the town at the aviation field and fair ground with a newly built fence. He takes a lingering look back over the road he has made a great descent. As a matter of fact within 15 or 20 miles he has dropped from an altitude of five thousand feet to thirty-nine hundred feet. He is now in the Sulphur Springs valley and in Douglas a town only 23 years old with paved streets modern facilities, a chamber of commerce, two big copper smelters, a railroad terminal and everything that a town could hope for, and still be in the midst of a great desert for while they call it the Sulphur Springs valley, there are no sulphur springs that I know of, and all the water of any kind must be pumped from deep wells by means of wind mills, electricity or gasoline power.

As he drives down G. avenue into the heart of the business section, he forgets that he has been traveling through a desert country. Douglas has two beautiful parks with green trees, green lawns, and abundance of beautiful homes and green yards. It also has four theatres, several good hotels many wholesale houses and commission merchants and about everything else that any city in the east of its size has.

Then if one has a thirst he can repair to our neighboring metropolis, Aqua-Prieta, Senora, Mexico, and quench said thirst with anything from old Scotch to the native Mexican Tequila or mescal. There are no restrictions about one visiting Old Mexico, for the American dollar is welcome there and many of them find their way to our neighboring town for stuff other than shoes and bread for the babies.

After a night spent in Douglas, the motorist finds himself on his way westward, for they all are headed for California, many coming back later,

sadder but wiser and sometimes afoot. He leaves Douglas on a wide paved highway which extends all the way to Bisbee 25 miles westward. Approaching Bisbee he starts to ascend over mountains until he rises to over 7,000 feet altitude and crosses over the famous Tombstone divide where a slight wrong turn of the wheel would send him to Kingdom come. Bisbee is a mining town of no mean import, the home of the copper mining industry of the southwest. It has only one main street and very narrow. One can look up from its main street into homes a thousand feet above where it seemed if one threw a cud of tobacco out of his back door, it would land on somebody's head below. Big jagged rocks above the streets and homes are chained to keep them from taking a roll into someone's parlor. The youngsters in Bisbee all own roller coasters and small autos and have lots of fun gliding down into the town through its heavy traffic much to the embarrassment of the police officers and drivers. But the youngsters are expert and their is seldom a casualty even though their speed would make some of the famous race track drivers shiver. Fifty-four miles west of Douglas one reaches Tombstone, the county seat of Cochise county. This old history town sets like a jewel in the desert and while it boasts of being the oldest town in southern Arizona, there are only a few hundred population. The old Bird Cage theatre of which has been mentioned by many writers in their narratives of the southwest, still stands partly in ruins as a monument to the wild and woolley days of Arizona. Just how many men were killed in this building in the olden days it would be hard to ascertain, but the cemetery near Tombstone contains many unmarked graves.

Arizona is indeed a wonderful country, summer all the time and hell all summer.

RAMBLIN' BILL.

P. S.—Next time, I will give you an earful about Old Mexico and its jealous hearted women. Douglas, Ariz., Mar. 25, '25.

POTATO BEDDING WEEK FOR CLEVELAND COUNTY

(Extension Service.)

This is potato bedding week for the potato storage house in the county at Kings Mountain, Grover, Shelby, Lattimore and Boiling Springs. Over 1,500 bushels will be bedded by these houses for storage this fall. The Kings Mountain house found out last year that the last potatoes they bedded made the first slips and they have selected the first week in April to bed this year. The small sprouts on potatoes are killed when the potatoes are bedded before it gets warm and it takes a long time for new sprouts to come.

GROVER COMMUNITY NEWS OF INTEREST

(Special to The Star.)

Grover, Mar. 30.—Miss Meldona Livingston, principal of Union school spent Friday night at her home in Grover.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Oates of Rutherfordton, Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Washburn from Shelby and Mr. and Mrs. Ellis Turner and Mrs. Austin from Charlotte were visitors at the home of Miss Bessie Turner Sunday. Mrs. E. A. Dempsey and son Nathaniel, visited relatives in Grover Sunday.

Rev. and Mrs. Holy Love, who have been at Mt. Holly for several days where Rev. Mr. Love has been conducting a meeting, have returned to their home in Grover.

Misses Alene Mullinax and Terry Pinkleton students of Limestone college spent the week end with their parents in Grover.

Miss Barbara Austin, from Charlotte spent the week end with Miss Lucy Turner.

Mrs. Anna Hughes, son and daughter from Rockhill, S. C., and Miss Horsley from Winthrop College spent Sunday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. O. A. Mullinax.

Miss Annie Belle Harrill spent the week end at her home in Lawdale.

Misses Mabel Fortune and Mari Harrelson, attended the teachers meeting at Shelby Saturday.

Mr. J. A. Ellis has been confined to his home for several days with influenza.

Mr. Lee Beam is making rapid progress in the construction of his six room bungalow on the National highway adjacent to the residence of Dr. George Oates.

Mr. F. Z. Sheppard was recent visitor in the Dixon community.

Mr. J. D. Sheppard, Miss Thelma and Gwendolyn Rollins, Edith Randall and Margaret Sheppard attended the play at Earl Saturday night.

The "Path Across the Hill" is the name of the play that will be presented by pupils of Grover high school next Friday evening at eight o'clock. Admission will be 25c for adults and 15c cents for children.

At least Nero was honest. The towel found in his bathhouse recently by excavators did not bear the Pullman mark.—Detroit News.

They are talking about adding month to the year again. Let's add right after February to postpone income-tax day.—Columbia Record.

Paraguay reports the discovery of something claimed to be 200 times sweeter than sugar; but neglected to mention her name.—Detroit News.

EVANS E. MCBRAUER

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