

## Out of The Rockies

### A Hidden Fountain

The energetic youth had barely reached his teens, at the time he received a premonition that all was not well with his father, who was a long way from home. He didn't explain anything to his mother further than to say: "I'm setting out right now for Buckskin." It was midnight, but that made no difference.

Marion saddled up his favorite horse, loaded ample provisions on his pack horse and was off for the Buckskin Mountains. He would be prepared in the event an emergency demanded. At any rate, he was on his way without waiting to reason why.

Leaving Richfield, he rode one horse and lead the other. On and on he pressed, through one desert after the other. He stopped at Panguitch, Long Valley, Johnson and Limestone Tanks; resting four hours at each place, allowing his animals to feed. Finally he reached House Rock, at four o'clock one afternoon.

He looked all around, above and below. Peering down over the edge of the steep rocky bank of the mighty Colorado he spied his father, huddled up on a narrow shelf about thirty feet below him.

Without a moment's delay he fastened one end of his lariat around a big rock. Holding to the rope, he let himself down that steep place to where his father lay in a precarious condition. His tongue was badly swollen, hanging out of his mouth.

The boy placed his canteen to his father's lips who drank ravenously. In fact, he would have emptied it, had not the boy tactfully used good judgment, withdrawing the canteen before any harm had been done to the famishing sire. He had been without water for days in that sweltering heat.

The youth proceeded to scale that steep place, with his father. Reaching the top he tied his father to a tree, to prevent him from following him, while he searched for the other man.

Descending that precipitous embankment, he landed back down to where he had found his father. A searching glance revealed the whereabouts of his uncle Dolph, on another flimsy shelf farther down below. Nothing to do now but to go right on down, if his sixty foot lariat would reach that far. Yes, it did; but there wasn't an inch to spare, no not one. This man's tongue was also badly swollen, protruding from his mouth. An awful sight to behold. The famishing man reached for the canteen and eagerly gulped at the precious water, until the boy seized the canteen and gave it a fling before his uncle drank too much.

Well! That was going too far thought the thirsty man and he exclaimed in harsh tones: "I'll thrash the tar out of you for that." Be that as it may, our scout managed to get his uncle up that high wall to the top, when a real hand to hand combat got under way. Uncle Dolph sprang furiously at the boy and swore: "I'll pitch you over the edge of that precipice for throwing that canteen away as you did." And was that man mad!

In the scuffling one or the other of them happened to kick a big stone slab, which slid around to one side, exposing to full view a fountain of sparkling water, clear as crystal, cool and refreshing. At the slightest touch that flat stone would turn one way or the other. It was four feet from edge to edge and at least eight inches thick. It was expertly mounted on some sort of ball-bearings, which had been fashioned out of hard rock. Turning one way would open the antique

fountain while turning it the opposite way would close it up so completely that no one would suspect that anything of the kind existed.

No telling how long that fountain had been there. Probably for ages. Who knows? One thing is quite certain, that whoever built it must have understood his job. Its construction and arrangement was such that the heavy slab held its position perfectly intact and responded wonderfully well at the slightest touch. It was the workmanship of a genius.

The elements could very well supply the water, but no forces of nature could ever produce such an elaborate process with a sliding door to turn and be opened for use and closed for protection, when not needed. It took a degree of intelligent thought, combined with skillful direction and effort, to establish such a unique fountain right in the solid rock.

The purest of water seeped into that little fountain and out again, with precision. No one knows the source of that tiny trickling stream, nor just where it ended. The concealment was perfect.

Whenever Marion W. Owens had occasion to mention this experience, relative to this hidden spring, his listeners became astonished at it, so much so that they didn't know what to make of it. Especially was this apparent from the fact that he had the reputation of always telling the truth.

However, one individual ventured so far as to say: "Your story seems to be farfetched. And yet I have never found you in a lie." The upshot of it was that our scout took his friend to the spot and showed him the whole affair. That done, this man had no room to doubt further.

And so our noble scout still retained his enviable reputation for holding with the truth.

Agreeableness is one of those faculties that readily responded to cultivation. We have known persons, who, when we first became acquainted with them were boorish, rough and disagreeable in their conversation and manners, but through study and effort, became in the course of time, greatly changed and passed in society as decidedly agreeable associates. Nothing helps so much to lubricate the wheels of social intercourse as a smooth, pliable, kindly manner. Manner is even more important than matter in our dealings with the world. We can say severe, rebuking things to our acquaintances, if our language is kind, gentle and mellow. Men will often swallow bitter doses of truth if expressed in a sweet, acceptable manner, and the effect of moral teaching generally when courteously given is excellent in its influence upon the whole nature of the recipient.

### Geronimo

To conquer and subdue a stubborn wilderness requires courage and fortitude, to say nothing of the added handicaps and inconveniences thrust upon innocent communities of struggling pioneers by roving bands of Indian savages.

This story comes from one who is thought to be the first white child born on the Gila River, and whose grandparents on both sides were among the first colonizers sent by Brigham Young into Arizona. With such a background in addition to having been on the scene of hair splitting events, what he says ought to count for something. In this connection, it might be well to state that he has the reputation of telling the truth without resorting to exaggeration. The simple truth simply told is eloquence enough for anyone.

One time, as he and his younger sister with their parents were returning from a visit to some of the folks, an unusual thing occurred. You see, visiting around among relatives and close friends was a custom among the people those days. The truth of the matter is, that was the main source of their diversion. They frequently traveled long distances, going and coming, as the country was new and the settlements far apart.

It was on this occasion that they met a company of U. S. troops near Black River. The Colonel rode up along side of the Owens' wagon, when something similar to the following conversation took place.

"There is great danger traveling about in these parts just now, mister," observed the Colonel. "Those infernal Indians are causing untold depredations throughout this region. I suggest," said he, "that you forgo your trip just now. Already Geronimo and his band have killed eighty-five of our soldiers. Word has just reached us that Geronimo is headed this way. I advise you to stay here with us tonight. We'll protect you and your family against any and all harm. Please, mister, don't go out on this desolate road and become a prey to such vicious outlaws. I beg of you not to do that."

To which this Mormon pioneer replied: "I don't doubt your good intentions, Colonel, but I'll feel much safer alone than to be found here with you." And so he drove on about twelve or fifteen miles farther and camped for the night on top of a high ridge known as the Hogback.

Brother Owens was not unaware of the evils accredited to this notorious Geronimo, who was the chief of a big band of renegade Indians from several tribes feared for their treachery.

The Arizona pioneers those days always took a saddle horse along as they traveled from place to place, and allowed this animal to run loose during the day time to browse along the roadside to feed, but during the night this horse was tied to the wagon to be on hand next morning ready for use to round up the other horses that had been running out to feed during the night.

But on this occasion Brother Owens took precautions to forgo reprisals from savage red men, who might be lurking about in that vicinity. He therefore hobbled his saddle horse and turned him loose with the other horses to feed during the night. For well did he know if this horse were tied up, he would be sure to whinney for the other horses and thus give an undue alarm, audible to the menacing foe that might be prowling about in the night. At which event he and his family would be at the mercy of unprincipled barbarians.

Next morning this good man spent considerable time in search of his animals. All his efforts were in vain; his horses were nowhere to be found. He returned to the wagon as he felt it was unwise to leave his dear ones alone too long at a time. He didn't want any harm to come to them.

Being way up on an exceedingly high eminence, as he was, afforded a splendid view all around. Naturally with such vantage, he cast searching glances in every direction in his efforts to note possible traces of his horses. What do you think? All of a sudden he caught sight of a big band of Indians crossing over a flat space, hurrying like the wind on its way.

Something else drew his attention: the horse bell tinkled a most welcome sound, and it seemed to be surprisingly near. He went at once in the direction of that gladsome signal and discovered his animals in a clump of cedars and pinion pines, which he had passed up during his hasty search earlier in the day.

The Owenses were soon on their way and reached the river about a mile beyond where they had camped. They called long a loud for the ferryman, without any response. Finally as a

last resort, Mr. Owens fired his gun several times. Then looking way up among the jagged cliffs he observed where the ferryman had fled from the marauders, who had taken possession of the ferry and crossed over, leaving it on the opposite side of the river.

This family, of course, was anxious to be ferried over, and Mr. Owens called to the attendant: "Won't you be kind enough to come and ferry us over this wild river?"

"I will for five dollars," came his reply.

"All right," Mr. Owens answered back.

Would you believe it? That ferryman plunged into that raging current, swam clear across the stream, brought the ferry back and conveyed the man with his family and outfit safely across Black River, which was fully a hundred yards wide at that point. It was a wicked flood, running swift and deep.

The Owens had not gone far when they encountered a heinous sight. Paddy McRay, a man with a cork leg, the surveyor, tax assessor and collector for that region, had been tied to his buckboard and burned to death, by merciless, cruel Indians, after they had murdered his colored cook and Mexican driver, besides plundering what money he had with him.

Paddy evidently had held the red men off for a spell, judging by the many empty cartridges which lay strewn on the ground. There must have been at least two hundred or three hundred of them. He had always carried two six-shooters and a rifle with him wherever he went. After he had exhausted all his ammunition, he was an easy prey for the marauders. Such a sight was terrible to behold. But what could be done about it?

It was enough to disconcert the strongest heart. But another gruesome sight awaited them four miles farther on. A man was found stretched out over a big ant bed. Buckskin strings had been wrapped around each wrist and ankle and tied securely to stakes that had been driven into the ground. That man was named Ellsworth. The ants had stung him to death.

As these good people were outraged in sizing up the awful situation, the dog Bingo, a cross between a St. Bernard and a shepherd, bristled up his back and began sniffing furiously. Something else must be in the offing somewhere near, or why such commotion? The dog jumped down off the wagon. Mrs. Owens got back in the seat, while her son Marion, had not yet six, handed her the reins, and he got out.

"See!" Piped the child, "something has been dragged here." Bingo scented the trail some distance and stopped abruptly at a certain point. He was loath to go any farther until persuaded by the crack of a whip accompanied with stern commands from Mr. Owens. About twenty-five yards beyond, in a thicket of service-berry bushes, lay the wife of the man who had been subjected to the pestiferous onslaught of the ants. She was in a state of unconsciousness. Would you believe it? She had been maliciously cut open, the four months old baby had been stuffed inside her, crudely sewed up with buckskin and left to die. Talk about inhumanity! But leave it to Indians squaws to inflict torture! You see they were compelled by the bucks to do all the dirty work.

Mr. Owens asked the little fellow: "Sonnie, can you ride a horse?"

"Yes, daddy, I can," came his eager reply.

"Then ride this horse to Ft. Apache and tell Major Chaffee, at the gate there, about this poor woman. Can you do that?"

"Yes daddy. I'll go right now."

Marion William Owens, the little hero, mounted his horse and was off on that long lonely road of twenty some odd miles. There wasn't a house anywhere along the way. It was the month of March, and this youngster wouldn't see his sixth birthday until the following June. He finally made the trip and delivered the sad message to Major Chaffee, as directed by his daddy.

The Major ordered the ambulance made ready and notified the surgeon to go at once to render what aid he could to the suffering woman. The driver did his best to urge his four mule team over that desolate winding route to the scene of the trouble.

In the meantime the boy's parents had managed to remove the poor soul into the wagon. They laid her carefully and tenderly on the whipcord bed, provided with a nice soft featherbed and quilts. She was made as comfortable as possible. They had driven some distance when they were met by the Government ambulance.

The surgeon proceeded as expeditiously as he could to cut the buckskin string to liberate the innocent little one from the sad plight she was in. Then first aid was given to the dear mother, by plastering adhesive tape over the precarious incision, that had been so cruelly inflicted. This done, a hasty trip was made toward Fort Apache hospital, where this patient lingered for six long weeks, receiving special care and attention.

Mrs. Ellsworth recovered from this sad ordeal and lived fifty years in widowhood. Her daughter still survives, having been rescued from an untimely death under the service-berry bush.

No wonder the Government had to take a hand in putting a stop to such vicious savagery.

Geronimo's band of outlaws were the worst set of renegades he could induce to follow him, from among the Apaches, Cherokees, Sioux and Yaquis, who skulked about through Arizona, New Mexico and adjacent territory across the border into Mexico. They went almost everywhere throughout that region, perpetrating all sorts of depredations, and causing untold misery for ever so many of the settlers.

It required three long years of assiduous work to round up all those invidious followers of Geronimo. It was no easy task to handle them even after taking them into custody. But the job was finally completed in 1887. The surly savages were lined up in a caravan twenty-one miles long and escorted from Ft. Apache to Holbrook, a distance of eighty miles.

They were quite stubborn and unruly and persisted in asking: "Where we going?"

The soldiers simply answered: "We're taking you to a new hunting ground, on to a reservation of your own." And it required constant vigilance to hold them in check.

Reaching Holbrook, they were loaded into freight cars, while their dogs and ponies were turned loose to roam the wide open spaces. Thus it happened that the Navajos came into possession of so many mustangs.

Geronimo and his confederates were taken to Florida banished upon an island off Key West, and held there in confinement. That seemed to be the only logical thing to do under the prevailing circumstances. The people of the hitherto infested area felt quite relieved to be rid of those merciless outlaws. Now they were free to take on a new spirit of activity.

One night during the summer of 1890, Brother Owens sat in his house at Woodruff, reading the Deseret News by the light of a glorious full moon, such as is common in Arizona. "Dick," the family dog, lunged toward the door and would have bounded clear out into the yard, had not his master seized his tail and held him. Brother Owens peered out into the yard and called: "Hello!"

"Don't member me do yah?" Came the voice of an Indian as he strode toward the house.

“What do you want?” asked the householder.

“Want to stay um here tonight.”

“I guess we can manage that all right,” proffered the owner of the place.

And so three weary Indians shuffled inside. Mrs Owens prepared supper for them. You should have seen those fellows eat! They said they hadn’t eaten for days. After filling up on Sister Owens’ cooking, they related how they managed to escape from the Florida island. “That was awful place. Heap glad to get away from there,” they said.

Among other things, they told how they battled with hungry sharks that attacked them, overpowering four of their number, while these three succeeded by sheer inches to avoid being caught and eaten up.

They had to swim three miles to reach shore, which required all the strength they could muster. And were they tired! Desperately! They didn’t stop for anything. They seized the first opportunity to slide into a boxcar and beat their way back to Holbrook. That took several days. And after reaching that point, they walked the twelve miles from there to Woodruff. All this was related with their language he conversed with them to their great delight. As a result the conversation lasted until four o’clock in the morning. Being anxious to return to the Apache reservation, they asked to borrow three saddle horses.

This was readily granted them and in a few days the horses all returned safely, which gave proof of the boys’ success in reaching their destination without hindrance.

Mr. Owens had a contract with the Government to haul freight from Holbrook to Ft. Apache. Thus frequent trips were made to the reservation and he many times met those Indian boys, whom he had befriended. They would do most anything within their power to oblige him. He had always been a friend to good Indians, who never forgot a kindness shown them.

The Glory of Truth

A truth is truth, wherever, found.

On this or any other ground.

Naught can supplant its royal crown,

Though harshly spurned by envy’s frown.

Although at times it seems subdued,

Withhold your wrath until reviewed;

Then its full glory you shall see

Triumphant truth! What majesty!