

A little distance away supper was prepared and served to the valiant men who had so nobly fought and who had done such great work - half a hundred against two. Surely they had reason to be proud of their victory. Carved on the monument to the defenders of the Alamo are the words, "Thermopylae had three messengers of defeat, the Alamo had none." Neither did any survive to relate the "inside facts" of the gallant defense of Nolan's K. C. Ranch. Champion's blood-stained diary, Dunning's confession, and words let fall by drunken members of the invading party, have heretofore, been all that was known. There is little that I can add to what has been said. It was well and thoroughly covered in Dunning's confession.

Desertions now became even more pronounced. Many qualified themselves for John Clay's bitter and unrelenting hatred. Clay says in his book, MY LIFE ON THE RANGE: "Against this there were a few cattlemen, some of them old-timers, who failed to support their friends, who before the raid were far from silent critics of Wyoming's tardiness in punishing the rustlers. They were absent in the hour of need and among their fellow men they were despised and a black mark placed against their names." (The above are Johnnie's words, but the italics are mine.)

At Tisdale's Ranch, Dr. Penrose, invading surgeon, had seen enough. So too, had Ed Tawse, the Cheyenne Sun's special correspondent. Pleading, or claiming illness, they left the party.

Again I was left with the wagons and again Charlie was told to go with the gun-men. It was about sundown when they left the ruins of the K. C. Charlie and I had but time for a few words together. Said Charlie, "Get away if you can, Billie, and join Red Angus. I'll do the same thing. Don't hunt for me if you get away. Head direct for Buffalo." This I promised to do and would have done, had it been possible.

Buffalo was sixty miles away. It was thirty miles to the Western Union Beef Company Ranch, where George W. Baxter, Ex-Governor, was superintendent and where Mike Shonsy was foreman. This thirty miles was made in five hours, or at the rate of six miles per hour, requiring stiff trotting on the part of the horses. Charlie had now become most friendly with the gang. They accepted him as one of them. On this trip he rode beside Joe Elliott. "What's the hurry, Joe?" he asked. "We want to reach Buffalo before daylight!" Elliott answered, "We must kill of Red Angus, his deputies, Jack Flagg and a score or more of prominent friends of the rustlers and we must do it before that hell-roaring, red-headed, Scotch hellion of a sheriff hears the news of what we've done and brings the country upon us!"

At the Western Union Beef Company's Ranch, a hundred head of grain-fed horses awaited the invaders. Here, all changed mounts and after a hearty lunch they set out at a sharp pace, for what Canton, Smith, and Shonsy were pleased to dub, "the doomed city of the plains," Buffalo.\*

All went well until near the Crazy Woman River. Here, in the vicinity of Carr's Ranch, a campfire was sighted along the road ahead. The cowardly invaders, thinking it Red Angus and his deputies ("Conscience doth make cowards of all."), cut the fences and made a wide detour, coming back into the main road to Buffalo a goodly and safe distance beyond the blazing campfire.

About 2:00 a. m. they reached the "28" Ranch. Here a rest of two hours was taken and a lunch consisting of bread, meat and coffee, consumed.

At 4:00 a. m., the march was resumed. Some miles along, an excited horseman was met. He informed Wolcott, Canton, Smith and the leaders that all Buffalo was in arms. News had reached Angus of the attack on the K.C. and that he, Angus, had sworn in several hundred deputies. They were leaving Buffalo under strong guard and had sent strong parties out in different directions to search for signs of the invaders.

"How comes it," asked Wolcott, "that Angus and the others were not killed last night, as planned?"\* Answer was given that, warned of the invasion, Angus had placed Buffalo under arms and had left hours before such action could be taken. Now it was unsafe to think of such a thing.

After a brief consultation among the leaders, they now changed their line of march and headed toward the T. A. Ranch, there to fortify themselves against the attacks of a justly-aroused community. Here, in the darkness and confusion, Solon gave them the slip by working his horse into a draw, and once out of their sight and sound, heading rapidly, as he supposed, in the direction of Buffalo.

In the meantime, Terance Smith, owner of the adjoining ranch, had heard the firing at the K. C., and had ridden over to investigate. This he did as best he could without danger to himself. Prowling about like an Indian he found out, after carefully spying out the lay of the land, that an armed force of some fifty or more men had made an attack on parties entrenched at the K. C. Ranch house. This learned, he withdrew, mounted his horse and headed for Buffalo, spreading the news of the invasion as he went. Red Angus, the sheriff, swearing in a dozen special deputies, now rode rapidly toward the K. C. to more thoroughly investigate.

Aroused by the excitement, people were flocking to Buffalo. These, as they arrived, were deputized and armed and all preparations made for properly welcoming the murderous ruffians when they should appear within rifle range.

During this time, neither Jack Flagg nor his stepson had been idle. Reaching Grabing, thirty miles from the K. C., at 9:00 p. m. that evening, they gave the alarm. Securing food, shells for himself and arms for his stepson, Flagg, accompanied by the young lad, and a few eager recruits who had volunteered for the purpose, returned toward the K. C., intending to assist the men whom they supposed

still imprisoned therein. At 12:00 p. m. they reached Carr's Ranch. Here they found a dozen or more armed men gathered. These men had learned of the trouble at the K. C. Ranch from Terance Smith and had gathered and remained here, to await the arrival of the officers.

Flagg now assumed charge and the combined forces mounted in preparation for the advance on the K. C. A short distance on, however, it was decided to camp and wait for daylight. It was this party and their campfire that so frightened and alarmed the invading forces.

Flagg's party remained here the balance of the night and in the morning, fearing for the safety of Buffalo, headed for that city. Accompanied by Solon, who fell in with them while on the road, they arrived that afternoon.

Until Buffalo was reached, Charlie was looked upon with more or less suspicion but at Buffalo, our freighting friend, now one of Red Angus's deputies, received him with open arms and thus vouched for, Charlie was considered in good standing. He remained with Jack Flagg's party until the end came and the invaders surrendered to the soldiers from Fort McKinney.

From Buffalo, swelled by reinforcements and increased by some half a hundred men, they started under the leadership of Flagg, for the T. A. Ranch, where spies had reported the invaders were intrenched. By daybreak, Monday morning, April 11, the invaders were entirely surrounded.

With the wagons, I had been in far less danger than my partner. The few men with the wagons were friendly and we got along fine, but still I never found an opening that would allow me to creep away safely. Thus, time passed and we journeyed slowly along until early in the morning of Sunday, April 10, when we were captured by a band of Red Angus's deputies. Later, when the T. A. was thoroughly invested, the wagons were taken there. There, along with Jack Flagg's party, I met and was reunited with my chum, Solon.

I had little trouble clearing myself of being one of the invaders. I was well-known to Angus, Flagg and others. Among the deputies, too, were several old-time friends and they, on hearing my story, vouched for me. I was allowed my liberty unconditionally. I could mingle with deputies and do as I pleased. Of course, I immediately joined Charlie and our friend, the freighter, and from thence until the surrender of the invaders to the soldiers, we were together.

END OF PART SEVENTH