

Buffalo Bill vs. Yellow Hand

(Continued from Page 7)

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Mr. Frew said he was riding not more than 50 feet behind Buffalo Bill at the time. Just as Yellow Hand fell, the troops were ordered to fire and did so. He said it was possible that Cody dismounted long enough to plunge his knife into Yellow Hand and that he (Frew) might have overlooked such an incident in the general excitement. But he is emphatic in declaring that he would not have overlooked so spectacular a duel as that described first by Buffalo Bill's show press agents and later reproduced as authentic by other writers.

But if Mr. Frew's diary tends to destroy a time-honored thriller of pioneering days in a part of the West, it also prevents a chronicle of the troublous days in the Indian country following the Custer massacre that is little less interesting, although less romantically related.

Young Frew had enlisted in the army at Cincinnati early in the spring of 1876 as a saddler. After brief sojourns at Jefferson Barracks and Fort Leavenworth he was ordered west with another artisan, a farmer, to join General Crook's command. At Cheyenne an escort of two troops of cavalry was furnished the two recruits to see them safely to Fort Laramie, and from that point they headed northeast, again under escort, and joined their company on Sage creek, July 1. This was just five days after the Custer tragedy.

From July 1 to October 31 Frew kept his diary, making entries almost daily and accounting for the few he skipped. During that four months his company covered much territory in what now is four states—Wyoming, Nebraska, Montana and South Dakota—scouting for Indians, driving them back to their reservations and protecting the whites, chiefly adventurers who had moved into the Indian country seeking gold. The cavalry units sometimes covered as much as 60 miles in a single "march" and 25 to 35 miles is shown by the diary to have been just an ordinary day's ride.

Food, water and wood, the diary reflects, were about the most important things in the life of a young cavalry saddler, and as the record reveals, the lack of these items almost resulted fatally for both men and horses two or three times during September. Hundreds of horses did die. The diary further discloses that the pictured romance of the Wild West which lured young Frew, born and reared in Columbus, O., to enlist to fight the Indians, was not so alluring at close range but principally was hardship.

The second entry in the diary, that of July 2, notes that Indians were seen by "Coady," but no fighting occurred. July 5 the soldiers found some rifle pits in which were the bodies of two men and their horses, slain by Indians. July 11 there was the notation, "Drew beef, first since we came on scout. Worth its weight in gold."

After the fight in which Yellow Hand was killed July 17, the troops started back to Fort Laramie, arriving July 21. The diary records that the writer had had nothing to eat for 36 hours and also notes that Company C, arriving from scout duty, had brought in 14 captured ponies "packed for the warpath."

After a day's rest at Fort Laramie a detachment, including Frew's company, started north to join General Crook, who had moved ahead with other units of his brigade. Each day's march is recorded and nearly every entry contains something of interest.

At Fort Fetterman three men deserted, "taking their horses and equipment." July 30 the troopers found three wagons whose owners had been "jumped by Indians and abandoned everything." The next day Saddler Frew killed a buffalo. The young diarist was impressed by the monument erected at old Fort Phil Kearney in memory of 90 persons killed there.

August 3 the detachment joined General Crook and two days later headed up into Montana. The diary entry says: "Started for Sitting Bull with 500 mules packed." The augmented body of troops soon got into rough country, first along

able to ride. Myself feeling fine." By September 4 the soldiers had reached the Bad Lands along the Little Missouri river in South Dakota. The terrain is described in the diary thus: "The hills all around are like cinders, all melted and run together."

Entries for the next several days tell a story of hardship that needs no embellishment. They follow:

"5—Camped on headwaters of Heart river, 30 miles. Cut down to half rations. "6—Camped at big pond. No wood to build fire. Lost a great many horses.

"7—Camp, 40 miles. Rain and cold. Boys in desperate condition, killing played out horses. No wood yet.

"8—Camp in range of hills. Wood at last. Marched 30 miles. Boys feeling very weak for want of something to eat. Fifteen horses gave out today, mine nearly gone.

"9—Came across an Indian village at Slim Butte, routed them at 4 in the morning. Some took refuge in a ravine close by and took us till noon to get them out. They killed three of our men before they would come out, then we started a fire to smoke them out and they came out

Can the Factory Save the Farm?

Today, thanks to a recent laboratory discovery, rubber may be plated on steel, copper and other metals, just as gold or silver is.

"Undoubtedly the makers of synthetic rubber will pursue a further program of research to develop outlets for their products—just as the makers of bakelite developed the scores of uses to which that synthetic resin is put. And therein, too," added Dr. Little, "is a suggestion for those who fear the competition of outside industries. The only way to compete with research is by more research.

Promises of synthetic food, of synthetic milk, for example, are perennial. A while back Mr. Roger W. Babson, speaking in Boston, predicted that in 50 years milk will be made from kerosene and the delivery of cow's milk in Boston will be prohibited by law.

"Well," laughed Dr. Little, "chemistry has performed wonders: It will accomplish many more, but it will never change kerosene to milk. We can make artificial rubber, knowing that our synthetic product is not chemically rubber, but simply a material which has certain of the physical qualities of rubber. But to make artificial milk we must achieve a product which when taken into the stomach will behave as milk does—and this means that it must duplicate in its chemical constituents the nutritious ingredients of milk.

"Specifically it means," he continued, "the synthesis of such extraordinarily complex compounds as albumen, casein and vitamins; the combination with glycerin of eight to 10 complicated organic acids to make butter fat; the conversion of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen into milk sugar. The cow is already performing these chemisms on a satisfactory scale. I see no reason for the dairy farm to fear competition from the factory.

"On the contrary, it is possible that the dairy farm may be aided by the factory's utilization of some of its wastes. Artificial ivory is being made of less nutritious residue of skimmed milk. Research could undoubtedly discover other commercial possibilities."

A late report from Hawaii tells of the recent synthesis of a fertilizer from the waste molasses of the sugar-making process. This achievement, the result of 17 years' research, will greatly reduce the Hawaiian importation of chemical fertilizer, and at the same time will utilize thousands of tons of heretofore rated as waste.

Opportunities for similar savings and transmutations into useful goods are numerous, and await the systematic exploration of the researchers. A system of farm relief founded on this policy would have an entirely different basis from any hitherto tried under government auspices. It would aim not to peg the price for the benefit of the farmer, but to multiply the uses of agricultural output for the advantage of the public. Its success would mean more demand for products of the farm, more factories to utilize these products, more employment both on the farm and in the factory.

covered from head to foot with mud from digging to conceal themselves. American Horse, the chief, had his guts hanging out. He died soon after. They came back with reinforcements at 2 o'clock, charged us from all sides, but we drove them back. Kept up a steady fire till dark.

"10—Camp, 15 miles. I had to walk, my horse was killed yesterday. Feel very bad, nothing to eat but dried meat taken from Indians, about 5,000 pounds of it.

"11—Camp, 27 miles. Plenty of wood and water. Killed 25 or 30 ponies to eat. The old sore backed horses are at a discount since we got the Indian ponies to eat. In the absence of salt I opened a cartridge, put the powder in my soup. (Note: Mr. Frew recalls that he never tried this experiment again, for the powder not only turned the soup black and ruined its taste, but made him ill.)

"12—Marched 40 miles. Mud very deep. I gave out twice on the road, laid down, got up, went on, got into camp about 1 in the morning. Lost about 300 horses. Killed over 30 ponies to eat.

"13—Broke camp about noon, made 5 miles. Camped on Bullfinch river and got beef and flour. Such a time cooking. Boys cooked till midnight."

And that ended the hardest period experienced by the young saddler during his campaigning.

The battle of Slim Butte stands out very distinctly in Mr. Frew's memory. The Indian village, he recalls, in reality was an Indian supply depot, and he relates that before leaving it the troops burned up a fortune in buffalo hides which had been collected by the Indians and which the soldiers could not carry with them.

The remainder of September was something of a picnic, compared with what had gone before. The diary records that General Crook started for Fort Laramie September 16 and Frew's company did scout duty the rest of the month along Box Elder, Spring and Rapid creeks, all in South Dakota. During October recruits and fresh horses came up at Custer and Rapid City to fill out the depleted ranks and the troop went on scout duty along Cheyenne river. Toward the latter part of the month the troop was ordered south and arrived at Fort Union, N. M., October 21.

Mr. Frew's diary ends with that date and he says now that there was nothing of moment in his soldiering after that date. He was discharged January 15, 1877, at Sidney barracks. His discharge, signed by Capt. S. S. Sumner, now brigadier general, retired, carries the indorsement: "Character very good, a sober, reliable man and a good soldier," a notation of which Mr. Frew is justly proud.

Soon after his discharge Mr. Frew went to West Plains, Mo., still following his trade of saddler and harness maker, and was married there in April, 1878. Just 10 years later he moved to Harrison and established the Frew Saddlery Company, a concern which operated continuously for more than 40 years.

For many years before the advent of the automobile the Frew harness and saddle shop was one of the largest in the Ozark mountain region. Two men were employed all the time making nothing but saddles, and much of the time several men devoted all their time to saddles. For several years Mr. Frew employed one man who made nothing but side-saddles, and he was kept busy. Three sons were trained in saddle and harness making and during the World's Fair at St. Louis, the eldest son, George, now dead, made the saddle for a Kansas City concern which took first prize and sold for \$800.

Besides saddles and harness the Frew company made anything in leather goods that customers wanted, and for several years a wagon show which once exhibited in Harrison for a day, ordered one or more sets of shoes for its lone elephant each year.

The Frew company sold the first automobiles in Harrison, but as Mr. Frew dignifies it, his automobile business was ahead of the town, and the venture was not highly successful. For several years his shop specialized in high class hand-made suitcases, traveling bags, etc., but about two years ago, after his sons had gone into other lines of business and left Harrison, Mr. Frew decided to retire.

He closed out his business, but he fitted up a small shop at his home, and he still takes care of the orders of a select few customers who have bought Frew leather good for many years. Mr. and Mrs. Frew recently observed their fifty-third wedding anniversary.

Arkansas Man, an Eyewitness Refutes Thrilling Tale of Buffalo Bill's Knife Duel

By Ralph A. Hull

1931

A GENERATION OR SO AGO one of the grim, gory and otherwise thrilling tales which gripped the interest of the American boy, and many of his elders as well, was an account of a spectacular knife battle in which Buffalo Bill (William F. Cody) slew the Cheyenne Indian chief, Yellow Hand.

It is a good story yet, this yarn about how the famous western scout and the notorious redskin chief met in the wild country near what now is the Nebraska-Wyoming line in July, 1876, and fought a duel to the death. It went something like this: Buffalo Bill, scouting slightly in advance of a column of United States cavalry, sighted a band of Indians led by Yellow Hand. As the two groups advanced, the scout and the chief spurred toward each other, dismounted and rushed into a hand-to-hand fray, their respective parties halting, meanwhile, to view the startling spectacle.

THE Indian, his savage face made more frightful by the warpaint of his kind, at once brought into play all the wiles and craft handed down to him by a long line of Cheyenne chieftains. He circled, feinted and dived his knife at the throat and body of his antagonist. The scout, scarcely less picturesque with his long hair and fringed buckskin garb, met every onslaught and parried every thrust with the cunning, coolness and fearlessness for which he already was noted. There was the clash of hilt on hilt, the ring of steel as blade met blade and then the end, as Buffalo Bill broke through the Indian's guard and plunged his knife deep into Yellow Hand's heart for the fatal blow.

There's only one thing wrong with the story—it seems pretty certain that most of it is fiction.

Authority for this statement is James B. Frew of Harrison, Ark., now aged 73, who was a witness to the killing of Yellow Hand, and whose memory of the affair is supported by an entry in his diary written on the evening of the day it occurred.

Indians reported by pickets, the command ordered to retreat in the night, but two couriers arriving from the agency being in danger Cody fired on them, killing the chief, Yellow Hand. The rest tried to rescue him but we charged them, killing six. Followed them into the agency 40 miles.

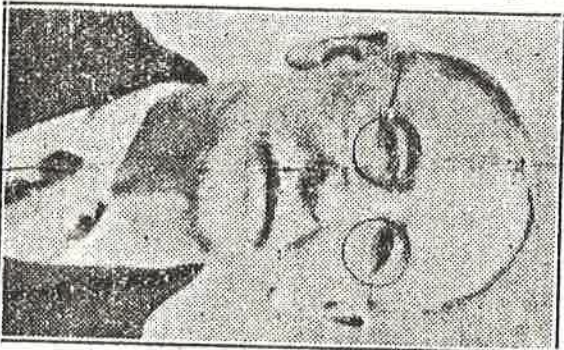
The notation in the diary next preceding the above shows that the cavalry detachment had camped the night of July 16 on Indian creek, several days' ride in a northeasterly direction from old Fort Laramie (not the present site of Laramie) in eastern Wyoming. As Mr. Frew recalls it the troops had resumed their scouting on the morning of July 17 when the Indians were reported. The order to the troops to seek concealment in the ravine was given with an idea of taking the Indians by surprise, but before the maneuver could be carried out the messengers from the Red Cloud agency, or reservation, appeared unexpectedly.

THE Indians started in pursuit, Mr. Frew said, and Yellow Hand streaked out ahead of his band. Buffalo Bill, then chief of scouts for General Crook, was riding in advance of the troops. He spurred forward to meet the Indians,

troops were trying to round up Sitting Bull and his followers who had participated in the Custer massacre and still were on the warpath.

The Harrison veteran never has been particularly interested in refuting the dramatic knife duel story, especially since the death of Buffalo Bill, inasmuch as to do so would seem, in the minds of many hero worshippers, little short of sacrilege. But the story has been denied before by others and about two years ago the Nebraska historical department, having learned that Mr. Frew was a witness, had him send photostatic copies of his diary to aid in the effort to check up on the yarn.

THE first time Mr. Frew heard the "drama" version of the killing, he said a day or two ago, was about the time Buffalo Bill started his wild west show more than 40 years ago. He then attributed it to circus ball-hoo and decided if the embellishments would help the erstwhile hero to boost his show, he certain-



JAMES B. FREW

when he saw the couriers were in danger and as soon as he was within range fired at Yellow Hand. The first shot, according to Mr. Frew, only slightly wounded the Indian chief in one leg, but the shot killed his horse. As Yellow Hand extricated himself from the fallen animal, Mr. Frew said, Colonel Cody fired again, this shot striking the Indian in the body and dropping him to the ground.

Mr. Frew said he was riding not more than 50 feet behind Buffalo Bill at the time. Just as Yellow Hand fell, he said, the troops were ordered to fire and did so. He said it was possible that Cody dismounted long enough to plunge his knife into Yellow Hand and that he might have overlooked such an incident in the general excitement, but he is emphatic in declaring that he would not have overlooked as spectacular a duel as that described first by Buffalo Bill's show press agents and later chronicled as authentic by other writers.

BUFFALO BILL killed Yellow Hand all right, and it is possible the death blow was dealt with a knife, Mr. Frew agrees, but the scout then shot the Indian off his horse, then dropped him with a bullet fired through his body, and there was no "duel" with knives, he is certain.

Mr. Frew in 1876 was a member of company D, Fifth United States cavalry, a unit in a brigade commanded by General Crook. The brigade was a part of the forces sent against the Indians that year and was in the field at the time the ill-fated Custer and his entire command were slain. At the time of the Buffalo Bill-Yellow Hand episode, the

ly did not want to put a damper on it.

The entry in the Frew diary regarding the Yellow Hand affair is dated July 17, 1876. Edited as to capitalization, and punctuation, for which the writer, as a youth of 20, showed almost a total disregard, but retaining the original spellings, the entry follows:

SOON after his discharge Mr. Frew went to West Plains, Mo., still following his trade of saddler and harness maker, and was married in April, 1878, at West Plains. Just 10 years later, he moved to Harrison and established the Frew Saddlery company, a concern which operated continuously for more than 40 years. For many years before the advent of the automobile the Frew harness and saddle show was one of the largest establishments of its kind in the Ozark mountain region. Three sons were trained in saddle and harness making and during the World's fair at St. Louis, the eldest son, George, now dead, made a saddle for a Kansas City concern which

Chicago Tribunes?

BORN 1/9/1856

DIED 8/16/1939

age 83

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Bellhop Jackets' Are New Fashion Fantasy

PARIS (AP)—The "bellhop jacket" is a new fantasy edging its way into madame's wardrobe. New sports and street frocks have perit little jackets to match which button up the front as snugly as any bellhop's.

One of the smartest of these is of green wool worn with a green wool

TO OBSERVE THE WAR.

Col. Samuel S. Sumner Will Go to South Africa.

Col. Samuel S. Sumner of the United States army, who has been assigned to go to South Africa and study the English and Boer methods of warfare, is the military attache of the United States mission in London, and commanding officer of the



COL. SAMUEL S. SUMNER.

Sixth United States cavalry. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1842, and was commissioned a second lieutenant of cavalry in 1861. In 1864 he was promoted to a captaincy of cavalry and was brevetted for gallantry in several battles. In 1879 he became major of the Eighth cavalry.