# EX BEACH DVENTURE

## Colonel and Horse Thief

By REX BEACH

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PER HOSE marks on my arm? Oh, 1 got 'em playing horse thief! Yes, playing. I wasu't a reai one, you know. Well, I s'pose it was sort of a queer game. Came near being my last, too, and if Black Hawk hadn't been the best horse to Texas the old colonel would 've killed me sure. He chased me six unles us it was-me with one arm full of his buckshot and anxious to explain and him straining to get in range again and not wishing any further particulars.

That was way back in the sixtles, when I was as wild a lad as eve straddled a pony.

You see, five of us had gone over into the Crow Nation to race borses with the Indians, and it was on the way back that the old man and the builet holes figger in the story.

At the beginning it was Jim Barrett's plan, and it had jest enough risk and devilment in it to suit a harum scarum young feller like me. So we got five of the boys who had good horses, lumped together all of our money and rode out to invade the reservation.

You know how an Indian loves to run horses? Well, the Crows had a good deal of money then, and our scheme was to go over there, get up a big race, back our horses with all we had and take down the wealth.

Taking chances? Dou't you believe it. That's where the beauty of Jim's plan commenced to sort of shine through,

You see, as soon as the money was up and the horses started every indian would be watching the race and yelling at the nags; then in the confusion our boys was to grab the whole pot, Indian's money and ours, too, and we'd make our getaway across the river back into Texas.

We figured that we could get a few minutes' start of 'em, and, with the horses we had under us, there wasn't much danger of their getting in range before we crossed back to where they couldn't follow us.

Well, sir, I never see anything work out like that scheme did. Them Crows was dead anxious to rup their ponies and seemed skeered that we wouldn't let 'em get all their money up.

As we was eating supper the night before the race Donnelly says; "Boys, I'm sore that we didn't have more coin. If we'd worked 'em right they'd 'a' give us odda. We could 'a' got 5 to 3 anyhow and maybe more."

"They shore have got a heap of confidence in there skates of their'n," says "Kink" Martin, "I never see anybody so anxious to play a race in my life. If it wasn't all planned out the way it is I'd like to stick and see which hose is the best. I'd back Black Hawk agin any hunk of meat in the territory with the kid here in the sad-

They'd ribbed it up for me to ride Martin's mare, Black Hawk, while a little feller named Hollis rode his own horse.

Donnelly's part was to stay in the saddle and keep the other horses close to Barrett and Martin. They was to stick next to the money and one of 'em do the bearin' off of the booty while the other made the protection play.

We hoped in the excitement to get off without harming any of Uncle Sam's pets, but all three of the boys had been with the rangers, and I knew if it came to a showdown they wouldn't hesitate to "pot" one or two in getting AWAY.

We rode out from camp the next morning to where we'd staked out a mile track on the prairie, and it seemed as if the whole Crow Nation was there and nary a white but us five.

They'd entered two pretty good looking horses and had their jockeys strip ped down to breechclouts, while Hollis and me wore our whole outfits on our backs, as we didn't exactly figger on dressing after the race-leastways, not on that side of the river.

Just before we fined up Jim says: "Now, you-all ride like-and when you git to the far turn we'll let the guns loose and stampede the crowd. Then jest leave the track and make a break fer the river, everybody fer himself. We'll all meet at them cotton woods on the other side, so we can stand 'em off if they try to swim across after us."

That would have been a sure enough hot race if we had run it out, for we all four got as pretty a start as 1 ever see and went down the line all together with a-banging of hoofs and Indien yells ringing in our ears.

I had begun to work Black Hawk out of the bunch to get a clear start across the prairie at the turn when I mard the guns begin snapping like

we turned the rearing

away, leaving them two savages fearing down the track like mad.

I glanced buck as I turned, but instead of seeing the toys in the midst of a decent retreat the crowd was swarming after 'em like a nest of augry bornets, while Lonnelly, with his reins between his teeth, was blazing away at three reds who were right at Barrett's heels as he ran for his horse. Martin was tashing the jumping cayuse away from the mob, which sputtered and spit angry shots after bim. Bucks were running here and there and hastily mounting their ponies, while an angry roar came to me, punctuated by the popping of the guns.

Hollis and I reached the river and swam it half a mile ahead of the others and their yelling bunch of trailers, so we were able to protect 'em in their crossing.

I could see from their actions that Bennett and Martin was both hurt, and I judged the deal tudn't panned out exactly according to specifications.

The Crows didn't attempt to cross in the teeth of our fire, however, being satisfied with what they'd done, and the borses safely brought our three comrades dripping up the bank to where we lay taking pot shots at every bunch of feathers that approached the opposite bank.

We got Barrett's arm into a sling. and as Martin's hurt wasn't serious we lost no time in getting away.

"They simply beat us to it," complained Barrett as we rode south. "You all had jest started when young Long Hair grabs the sack and ducks through the crowd, and the whole bunch turns loose on us at once. We wasn't expecting anything so early in the game, and they winged me the first clatter. I thought sure it was off with me when I got this builet in the shoulder, but I used the gun in my left hand and broke for the nearest "They got me, too, before I saw

what was up," added Martin, 'but I tore out of there like a jack rabbit. It was all done so cussed quick that the first thing I knew I'd straddled my horse and was making tracks. Who'd 'a' thought them durned indians was dishonest enough fer a trick like

Then Donnelly spoke up and says: "Boys, as fur as the coin goes we're 'Mexican stand off'-lost our money. at that from appearances. What I thief and murderer, according to the want to know now is how we're all way Bennett presented it. He certaingoing to get home, clean across the ly was the boss liar of the range. state of Texas, without a dollar in the outfit and no assets but our guns and

calculations. We'd bet every bean on house. that race, not seeing how we could up, especially when they were as hard ther in inviting us in, looking as we were.

est hay diggers either. Everybody 'll think some sheriff is after us, and two to one they'll put some officer on our trail, and we'll have more trouble, 1 believe I've had all I want for awhile."

three deputies, bringing back a prisoner that we've chased across the state. We'll ride up to a ranch and demand lodging for ourselves and prisoner in say that we'll pay with vouchers on the county in the morning."

"No, sir; not fer me!" says Martin. "I'm not going in fer forgery. It's all right to practice a little mild deception on our red brothers, as we figgered on doing, but I'm not going to try to filmflam the state of Texas. Our troubles would only be starting if we began

"Your plan's all right, Kid," says Bennett to me. "You be the terrible desperado that I'm bringing bome after a bloody fight where you wounded Martin and me and 'most escaped. You'll have every rancher's wife giving you flowers and weeping over your youth and kissing you goodby. In the morning, when we're ready to go and I'm about to fix up the vouchers for our host, you break away and ride like the devil. We'll all tear off a few shots and foller in a burry, leaving the farmer hoping that the villain is recaptured and the girls tearfully praying that the gallant and misguided youth escapes."

It seemed to be about our only resort, as the country was full of bad men, and we were liable to get turned ry, so we decided to try it on.

that night, me between the others, with my hands tied behind me, and | the girls to fix up his arm. Jim called the owner out.

"I want a night's fodging fer my deputies and our prisoner," he says. "I'm the sheriff of Guadalupe county, and I'll fix up the bill in the morning." "Come in! Come in!" the feller says,

calling a man for the horses, "Glad to accommodate you. Who's your pris-"That's Texas Charlie that robbed

the Bank of Euclid single handed," answers Jim. "He give us a long run clean across the state, but we got him jest as he was getting over into the indian Territory. Fought like a tiger."

It worked fine. The feller, whose name was Morgan, give us a good layout for the night and a bully break-

fast next morning. That desperado game was simply

great. The other fellers attended to the horses, and I jest sat around looking victous and had my grub brought to me, while the women acted sorrowful and fed me pie and watermelon pickles.

When we was ready to leave next morning Jim says, "Now, Mr. Morgan, I'll fix up them vouchers with you." and, giving me the wink, I let out a yell, and, jabbing the spurs into Black Hawk, we cleared the fence and was off like a puff of dust, with the rest of 'em shooting and screaming after me like nud.

Say, it was lovely, and when the boys overtook me, out of sight of the bouse. Morgan would have been aston-



"That's Texas Charlie that rebbed the Bank of Euclid."

ished to see the sheriff, his posse and the terrible desperado doubled up in their saddles laughing fit to bust.

Well, sir, we never had a tritch in the out and injured. We jest made a proceedings for five days, and I was getting to feel a sort of pride in my but saved our lives-and mighty lucky record as a bank robber, forger, borse

He had a story framed up that painted me as the bloodiest young tough the Lone Star had ever pro-That was a sure tough proposition, duced, and it never failed to get me and we had left it tectotally out of all the attention there was in the

One night we came to the best look lose. In them days there wasn't a ing place we'd seen, and in answer to railroad in that section, ranches were Jim's summons out walked an old scattering, and people weren't giving man, followed by two of the prettiest pink teas to every stranger that rode girls I ever saw, who joined their fa-

"Glad to be of assistance to you. "We've got to eat, and so's the Mr. Sheriff," he said. "My name is horses," says Hollis, "but no rancher is Purdy, str-Colonel Purdy, as you going to welcome with open arms as may have heard; in the Mexican war disreputable an outfit as we are-two special mention three times for distinmen shot up and the rest of us with- guished conduct. These are my daughout bedding, grub, money or explana- tera, sir-Annabel and Marie." As we tions. Them's what we need-expla- went in he continued: "You say you nations, I don't exactly see how we're | had a hard time getting your prisoner? going to explain our fix to the hou- He looks young for a criminal. What's

Somebow when I saw those girls blushing and bowing behind their father I didn't care to have my crimes made out any blacker'n necessary. "I'll tell you how we'll work it," I and I tried to give Jim the high sign says. "One of us 'll be the sheriff of to let me off easy-just make it for-Guadalupe county, back home, with gery or arson-but he was looking at the ladies, and, evidently believing in the strength of a good impression, he said: "Well, yes; he's young, but they never was a old man with half his the name of the state of Texas and crimes. He's wanted for a good many things in different places, but I went after him for horse stealing and murder. Killed a rancher and his little daughter, then set fire to the house and ran off a bunch of stock."

"Ob, oh! How dreadful!" shuddered the girls, backing off, with borrifled glances at me.

I tried to get near Jim to step on his foot, but the old man was glaring at me something awful. "Come to observe him closely, he

has a depraved face," says he. "He looks the thorough criminal in every feature; dead to every decent impulse, In those days I was considered a pretty handsome feller, too, and I

knew I had Jim beat before the draw on looks, but he continues making mat "Yes, and he's desperate, too-one of the worst I ever see. We had an awful fight with him up here on the

line of the territory. He shot Martin and me before we got him. You see, I came. wanted to take him alive, and so i took chances on getting burt. "Thank you, miss; my arm does ache about all the horse stealing I wanted considerable. Of course if you'd jest

down cold if we didn't have some sto- as soon dress it- Oh, no; I'm no braver'n anybody else, I guess! Nice We rode up to a ranch 'bout dark of you to say so, anyhow." And he went grinning out into the kitchen with

feet bound together and me fastened to a chair and said: "Yes, yes, I know you can watch him, but you're in my house now, and I feel a share of the me. responsibility upon me. I've had experlence with desperate characters, and I'm going to be sure that this young reprobate don't escape his just punishment. Are you sure you don't need more help getting him home? I'll go with you if"-

"Thank you," interrupted Hollis. "We've chased the scoundrel 400 miles. and I reckon, now we've got him, we can keep him."

At supper Jim, with his arm in a new sling, sat between the two girls. who cooed over him and took turns feeding him till it made me sick.

The old man had a nigger move my chair up to the foot of the table and bring me a plate of coarse grub after

they all finished eating. He had tied my ankles to the lower rung of the chair himself, and when I says to the nigger, "Those cords have plum stopped my circulation; just ease 'em up a little," be went straight up.

"Don't you touch them knots, Sam!" he roared. "I know how to secure a man, and don't you try any of your games in my house either, you young fieud I'd never forgive myself if you escaped."

I ate everything I could reach. which wasn't much, and when I asked for the butter be glared at me and said: "Butter's too good for horse thieves. Eat what's before you."

Every time I'd catch the eye of one of the girls and kind of grin and look enticing she'd shiver and tell Jim that the marks of my depravity stood out on my face like warts on a toad. Jim and the boys would all grin like

(diots and invent a new crime for me. They put it to the old man so strong that when he turned in he chained me to Sam, the cross eyed nigger that stood behind me at supper, and made us sleep on the floor.

I told Sam that I cut a man's throat once because be spored, and that uigger never closed an eye all night. i was trying to get even with somebody.

After breakfast, when it came time to leave. Donnelly untied my feet and led me out into the yard, where the girls were hanging around the colonel and Jim, who was preparing to settle

As we rode up the evening before i had noticed that we turned in from the road through a iane and that the fence was too high to jump, so when I threw my leg over Black Hawk I hit Donnelly a swat in the neck, and as he did a stage fall I swept through the gate and down the lane.

The old man cut the haiter off one of his Mexican warwhoops and broke through the house on the run, appearing at the front door with his shotgun just as I checked up to make the turn on to the main road.

As I swung around, doubled over the horse's neck, he let drive with his old blunderbuss, and I caught two buckshot in my right arm where you see them marks

I had sense enough to hang on and ride for my life, because I knew the old tire eater would reckon it a pleasure to put an end to such a wretch as me if he got half a chance.

I heard him bowl: "Come on, boys: We'll get him yet." And over my

From the way he drew away from money that he was wrong, either.

man ever got through that war with

for in five minutes we'd left the posse



behind, and I saw him madly orging his horse into range, reloading as he

As I threw the quirt into the mare with my good arm I allowed I'd bad

The old devil finally saw he was losing ground in spite of his best efforts and let me have both barrels. heard the shot patter on the hard road behind me and hoped he'd quit The old man insisted on having my and go home, but I'm blamed if he didn't chase me five miles further before turning back in hopes I'd cast a shoe or something would happen to

> I believe I was on the only horse in Texas that could have outrun the colonel and his that morning.

> About noon I stopped at a blacksmith's shop, half dead with pain, and had my arm dressed and a big joit of

As the posse rode up to me, sitting in the sun by the lathered flanks of my borse and nursing my arm, Jim yells out: "Here he is! Surround him, boys! You're our prisoner!"

"No; I'm blamed if I am?" I says. "You'll have to get another desperade. After this I'm the sheriff!"

# TWO NEW ROADS FOR CALIFORNIA

### Extends Entire Length of That State.

#### TOWNS CONNECTED.

Highways Being Constructed at Cost of \$18,000,000 - How Economy Practiced and the Shortest Possible Routes Are Followed.

California wants and is going to have two trunk roads, north and south, and its well defined plan presents an object lesson to other state of great distances and emphasizes the fact that the through road is a modern necessity in a general system.

The California law requires roads to be built the length of the state along the most direct and practicable routes. one along the coast and another traversing the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys, with lateral roads to such county seats as may not be on the main lines. For constructing these roads \$18,000,000 was voted two years ago. The automobilists naturally worked for this legislation, and it is worth noting that California has more motorcars than France, in excess of 75,000,

In the eastern and central states not only are conditions different, but the topography of the country is less severe and lends itself more readily to the building of roads that will best serve the interests of the people. The great bulk of travel on the through roads of the east is not from one terminal to the other, but between the important cities along the route and between them and either terminal. Consequently it is more expedient to build main roads so as to reach all the important points along or near the route, even to the extent of sacrificing a part of the directness and adding some mileage.

That the comparatively few people who travel the whole length of a road should go a few additional miles rather than compel a large number of short distance travelers to go additional disshoulder I saw him jump one of his tances is self evident. For every ten loose borses standing in the yard and persons who travel across a state there come tearing down the lane, ahead of are probably ninety who travel from the befuddled sheriff and posse, his one point to another within the state. white hair streaming and the shotgun so that as a matter of convenience to waving sloft as though charging an the great majority a route across a army of greasers at the bend of his state should touch all of the important cities within reasonable reach.

With the amount of money provided the boys I wouldn't have placed any the utmost economy must be practiced and shortest possible routes followed I've always wondered how the old to comply with the law. To build roads that will stand the strain of only three recommendations to the much motor travel the state highway commission has adopted concrete for He certainly kept good borses, too, almost the entire system. In building the road the grade is prepared and drained so as to leave the subgrade dry that it will not freeze and beave with frost.

It is then thoroughly rolled. On this is placed four inches of rich concrete. which is surfaced with a cost of heavy asphaltic oil and saud about threeeighths of an inch thick. This surfacing, according to the commission, costs 5 cents per square gard and can, if necessary, be renewed every year or two under the head of maintenance.

#### FOUR STATES BUILD ROAD.

Highway to Connect Arkansas, Okla-

homa, Kansas and Missouri, of improved automobile roads, connecting more than 400 towns and 5,000,000 people, the Ozark Trails association Missouri and Kansas

The association plans to raise \$5,000 ward annually through dues paid by members. This will be used in the promotion of good roads and their upkeep after they are built. The association will not contribute financially to the actual building of the roads, but will offer \$2,000 in prizes yearly for the best pieces of road built.

The territory to be embraced by the association consists of from ten to twelve divisions, each division having a road to be marked every half mile with a white marker bearing the words "Ozark Trails." The route runs at far north as St. Louis, west as far as Oklahoma City. Kansas City and Wichita. Kan., south as far as Rogers and east at Montene.

#### BAD ROADS LOWER PRICES.

Government Issues Report Citing Losses to Farmers.

Where bad roads prevail farmers are forced to move their crops, not when the market price is favorable, but when the roads are favorable and frequently at heavy pecuniary loss as a result, according to the office of public pony express in the wester states of roads of the department of agriculture. In a statement it cites specific cases | rule the service was performed by runof such losses, asserting:

Excessive fluctuations in market prices are seldom due to overproduction. They frequently take place in give the new road considerable hard regions where the local production does not equal the consumption. There are counties rich in agricultural pessibilities, burdened with bad roads, where the annual incoming shipments of food exceed the outgoing shipments

in the ratio of four to one. Many such countles with improved roads would not only become self supporting, but would ship products to ble for the road's condition within other markets.

#### WOMEN WORK ON ROADS.

Philippine (slands Scene of Great Ac-

tivity Among Native Females. You would not think that a woman could ever outwork a man when it comes to heavy road work, but such is nevertheless the case in the Philippines.

In the construction of the Pacay-Currimao road it is recalled that at one time there were approximately 500 women and girls employed daily, notes the Engineering News. These feminine workers, receiving from 20 to 25 or 35 centavos per day, according to their strength and ability, are most efficient when materials for subgrade. surfacing or gravel and sand for concrete are to be carried a short distance. They tie up their skirts or "pandling" to be less hampered as they work and wield shovels, load, carry and empty their baskets with a zeal that outclasses the men.

In the construction of the subgrade on the Paoay-Currimao road it was necessary to hauf material about one-half a kilometer at one point This was accomplished with women workers. Men londed the baskets at the borrow pits. The baskets hold about one-sixtleth cubic meter and are carried on the head. On a short haul a woman will carry from a meter to a meter and a half of material per day.

As may be imagined, there is considerable talking done as the work progresses, especially in the afternoon. when the women begin to tire. Ignorance of the dialect may have caused the listener to misinterpret, but it is said that the capataces (men) use some very forcible arguments to convince the women that they should talk less and work more.

On concrete work women are used to advantage carrying sand, gravel and water. They are not strong enough to mix concrete for any length of time, so men are employed for that purpose.

#### DRAGGING STATE ROADS.

Successful Roadmaking Depends Largely on Ce-operation.

Several of the states which have realized the great value of the split log road drag employ this device in building state roads. Connecticut has met with great success by the use of the drag, and few states in the Union have better roads than Connecticut.

There exists, however, in other states a serious difference of opinion among authorities as to whether or not the responsibility of dragging the roads



DRAGGING CONNECTICUT ROAD.

rests solely upon the farmers' shoulders or whether the state or county should do this work.

In the last analysis successful roadmaking depends upon harmonious cooperation between individuals and county, state and national authorities, We may not have reached the stage when state aid to the extent of many millions of dollars is advisable, but we certainly have reached the stage For the purpose of building 150 miles when the burden should be taken from the unsupported shoulders of the farmer, where it has rested all too long. The farmer is perfectly willing was organized at Montene, Ark., by 300 to do his share. He simply objects to delegates from Arkansas. Oklahoma, the policy which makes his share all the work and little of the credit or re-

#### CHINESE TO BUILD ROAD.

Highway Will Be a Hundred Miles Long-To Spare No Expense.

Chipese engineers under the direction of Jick G. Wong, an American trained engineer, have been in Hongkong for some time making arrangements for commencing the survey of an automobile truck road in Kwangtung province, which is designated as a feeder for the Kwangtung section of the Canton-Hankow railway and also probably as the beginning of a rail-

way in connection with that trunk line. The road now planned and for which detailed surveys are being commenced will be substantially 100 miles long. It is expected to start at a station called Poko in Chinese, in section 12 of the Canton-Hankow railway, about seventy miles from Canton and will follow the line of the old imperial mail and courier road or path, a road over which imperial dispatches are been transported for hundreds diyears by relays much in the manne of the old the United States, except that as a ners. The new road will extend to the town of Kongsi, near the border of Fukien province. It # planned to surface dressing .- Horseless Age.

Jamaica's Fine Highways The little island of Jamaica has over 1,000 miles of first class macadam roads. Each section, a distance ranging from a few hundred yards to a mile or more, is in charge of a section man or woman, who is manoustthose limits.