



Philip Steele of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police by James Oliver Curwood

Author of The Danger of the Snows etc.  
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"I thought so," he muttered with a slight catch in his voice. "You didn't follow my good advice, Billy Nemo, and now you reap the harvest of your folly. You have paid your debt to M'sieur Janette."

Then Philip turned quickly and looked back at Billinger. In his hand the agent held a paper package, which he had torn open. A small and similar package lay in the snow in front of him.

"Curse it!" he gasped. "It's a part of the money stolen from the express car. The two hundred thousand was done up in five packages, and here are two of 'em. Those men were dead when I came, and each had a package lying on his breast. The fellow who plucked me was just leaving the dip!"

"He dropped the package and began playing down his trousers leg with a knife. Philip dropped on his knees beside him, but Billinger motioned him back.

"It's not bleeding bad," he said. "I can fix it alone."

"You're certain, Billinger?"

"Sure!" laughed the agent, though he was biting his lips until they were flecked with blood. "There's no need of your wasting time."

For a moment Philip clutched the other's hand.

"We can't understand what this all means, old man—the carrying off of—of Isobel—and the money here, but we'll find out soon!"

"Leave that confounded carbine," exclaimed Billinger, as the other rose to mount. "I did rotten work with it, and the other fellow fixed me with a pistol. That's why I'm not bleeding very much."

The outlaw had disappeared in the black edge of the Red Lands when Philip dashed up out of the dip into the plain. There was only one break ahead of him, and toward this he urged his horse. In the entrance to the break there was another sandy but waterless dip, and across this trailed the hoof-prints of the outlaws' mounts, two at a walk—ode at a gallop. At one time, ages before, the break had been the outlet of a stream pouring itself out between jagged and enormous walls of rock from the black heart of the unbroken country within. Now the bed of it was strewn with broken bark and masses of boulders, cracked and dried by centuries of blistering sun.

Philip's heart beat a little faster as he urged his horse ahead, and not for an instant did his cocked revolver drop from his guard over the mare's ears. He knew, if he overtook the outlaws in retreat, that there would be a fight, and that fight would be against one. That was what he hoped for. It was an ambush that he dreaded. He realized that if the outlaws stopped and waited for him he would be at a terrible disadvantage. In open fight he was confident.

His prairie-bred mount took the rough trail at a swift canter, evading the boulders and knife-edged trap in the same guarded manner that she galloped over prairie-dog and badger holes out upon the plain. Twice in the ten minutes that followed their entrance into the chasm Philip saw movement ahead of him, and each time his revolver leaped to once. It was a wild, again the swiftly moving shadow of an eagle swooping with spread wings between him and the sun. He watched every concealment as he approached and half swung in his saddle in passing, ready to fire.

A quick turn in the creek bed, where the rock walls plunged so close, and his mare plucked her forehead with a suddenness that nearly sent him over her head. Directly in their path, struggling to rise from among the rocks, was a riderless horse. Two hundred yards beyond a man on foot was running swiftly up the chasm, and a pistol shot beyond him two others on horseback had turned and were waiting.

"Lord, if I had Billinger's gun now!" gasped Philip.

At the sound of his voice and the pressure of his heels in her flank the mare vaulted over the animal in their path. The clatter of pursuing hoofs stopped the runner for an instant, and in that same instant Philip halted and rose in his stirrups to fire. As his finger pressed the trigger there came to his ears a thrilling sound from behind him—the sharp galloping beat of steel upon rock.

Billinger was coming—Billinger, with his broken leg and his carbine! He could have shouted for joy as he fired. Once—twice, and the outlaw was speeding ahead of him again, unhurt. A third shot and he stumbled among the rocks and disappeared. There was no movement toward retreat on the part of the mounted men, and Philip listened as he slipped in fresh cartridges. His horse was patient; he could have excelled and joyous tumult of his own heart—but above it all he heard the steady beat, beat, beat of those approaching hoofs! Billinger would be there soon—in time to see his horse gallop at a deadly rate, while he got into closer quarters with his revolver.

God bless Billinger—and his broken leg!

He was filled with the craze of fight now and it found vent in a yell of defiance as he spurred on toward the outlaws. They were not going to run. They were waiting for him. He caught the gleam of the hot sun on their revolvers, and saw that they meant business as they swung a little apart to divide his fire.

At one hundred yards Philip still held his gun at his side; at sixty he pulled in his mare, flattened along her neck like an Indian, his pistol arm swinging free between her ears. It was one of the cleverest fighting tricks of the service, and he made the movement as the guns of the others leaped before their faces.

Three shots rang over his head, so close that they would have swept him from the saddle if he had been erect. In another moment the rock-bound chasm echoed with the steady roar of the three revolvers. In front of the flaring end of his own gun Philip saw the outline of the light pitch forward in his saddle and fall to the ground.

He sent his last shot at the man on the left and drew his second gun. Before he could fire again his horse was rearing, and he was sprawling and stumbling upon her knees, and with a gasp of horror Philip felt the saddle-girth slip as he swung to free himself.

In the few terrible seconds that followed Philip was conscious of two things—that death was very near, and that Billinger was a moment too late. Less than ten paces away the outlaw was deliberately taking aim at him. While his own pistol arm was pinned under the weight of his body. For a breath he ceased to struggle, looking up in frozen calmness at the man whose finger was already crooked to fire.

When the shot suddenly rang out, it passed through him in a lightning flash that he saw the shot intended for him. But he saw no movement in the outlaw's arm; no smoke from his gun. For a moment the man sat right and stiff in his saddle. Then his arm dropped. His revolver fell with a clatter among the stones. He slipped sideways with a low groan and tumbled limp and lifeless almost at Philip's feet.

"Billinger—Billinger!"

The words came in a sob of joy from Philip's lips. Billinger had come in time—just in time! He struggled so that he could turn his head and look down the chasm. Yes, there was Billinger—a hundred yards away, where he had been lying. He was on his hands and knees, his head buried in the sand, his eyes closed. He was dead.

With a wild cry Philip jerked himself free. Good God! It was not Billinger. It was Isobel! She had slipped from his arms and was lying dead. He staggered a few steps among the rocks and then sank down among them.

With his pistol still in his hand he ran back to where Billinger's horse stood upon the plain. Twice in the ten minutes that followed their entrance into the chasm Philip saw movement ahead of him, and each time his revolver leaped to once. It was a wild, again the swiftly moving shadow of an eagle swooping with spread wings between him and the sun. He watched every concealment as he approached and half swung in his saddle in passing, ready to fire.

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up as far as the water hole. Saw what happened there.

Philip's hand dropped on the butt of his revolver.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"Me? I'm Blackstone—Jim Blackstone, from over beyond the elbow. I guess everybody for fifty miles round here knows me. And I guess I'm the only one who knows what's happened—and why."

He had stepped behind a huge rock that shut out the lower trail from them and Philip followed, his hand still on his revolver.

"They're both dead," added the stranger, glancing with a nod of his head that he meant the outlaws. "One of them was alive when I came up, but I ran my knife between his ribs, and he's dead now."

"The devil," cried Philip, half-drawing his revolver at the ferocious leer in the other's face.

"Wait," exclaimed the man, "and see if I'm not right. The man who was responsible for the wreck back there in my danger—Billinger—has been for years, and now I'm even up with him. And I guess in the eyes

made at the water hole. The gang was waiting for him there. The money was divided, and two of the gang rode ahead. The other two were to go in another direction, so as to divide the pursuit. The remittance man remained with them, and when the others had gone a distance he killed them both. He was sane now, you understand. He had committed a great crime and he was employing his own method of undoing it. Then he was going back to bury—her."

The man's voice broke. A great sob shook his frame. When he looked up, Philip had drawn his revolver.

"And the remittance man—" he began.

"Is myself—Jim Blackstone—at your service."

The man turned his back to Philip, half-drawing his revolver. For a moment he stood thus. There followed in that same moment the loud report of a pistol, and when Philip leaped to catch his tottering form the glaze of death was in the outlaw's eyes.

"I was going to do this—back there—beating her," he gasped faintly. A

shiver ran through him and his head dropped limply forward.

Philip laid him with his face toward a rock and stepped from his concealment. The girl had heard the pistol shot and was running up the trail.

"What was that?" she asked, when he had hurried to her.

"The last shot, sweetheart," he answered softly, catching her in his arms. "We're going back to Billinger now, and then—home."

"THE END."

"SAID HE FELT BETTER."

Picked Up After Listening To His Own Funeral Service.

HUNTINGTON, W. Va.—In Pike County, Eastern Kentucky, Jud Maerson, an aged mountaineer, attended his own funeral service. He was buried to the log meeting house to listen to the evangelist who travels through the mountains on horseback.

Maerson, who lives in one of the wildest sections, became ill and died. Therefore, when the exhorter made his periodical trip through the hills, he requested that his funeral services be held. The mountain people in holiday garb flocked to the log church. Maerson said he felt much improved by the sermon. After the services, a dance was held.

A NICE LITTLE WINDFALL.

Pittsburgh Lady Got \$515 On A Long Lost Insurance Policy.

PITTSBURGH, Pa.—In 1866 J. K. Morange, a broker of this city, loaned a sum of money to Edgar Jones, an expressman, and took as security an insurance policy on Jones' life, including a transfer of the benefits. When Jones died, or it died at all, nobody knew. Morange died in 1880. Recently the insurance company put an advertisement in the Pittsburgh Dispatch in the hope of ascertaining who was entitled to the balance due on the Jones policy, \$515. The very next day after the publication Mrs. J. C. Perrier, 715 Maryland avenue, Pittsburgh, visited the Dispatch office and produced the Jones policy, with the transfer of benefits, and said she was Mr. Morange's daughter, and his only living heir. She will get the money.

Better a woman with rosy cheeks than a man with a rosy nose.

In France last year 14,600 divorces were granted.

BLACK SATIN THEATER BAG.

A charming theater bag can be made of black satin with a geometrical center design in flat, vegetable beads in several shades of mustard color.

The beads are first sewed to the fabric and over them is worked an open work netting in black floss.

Smaller beads are used in other parts of the design. They were of the same coloring and not covered with the netting, such as used on the big flat beads. Both kinds of beads are used in making the lattice which finished the bottom of the bag.

A GOOD EGG SHAMPOO.

# Solve the Mystery

of  
**The Man in the Well**

WHICH BEGINS IN  
**OUR NEXT ISSUE**

A Serial Story of Unusual Merit  
Well Written by PIERRE SALES

A TRAGEDY OF LOVE.

Mabel McCormick Tries To Save Her Sweetheart's Life.

DANVILLE, Ind.—Holding the shot-ridden form of her dying lover in her arms, Miss Mabel McCormick, 24 years old, drove half a mile over a lonely country road to a farm house, where she summoned a physician in a vain attempt to save his life. The wounded man, Charles Cashbolter, 22, died a few minutes later.

Cashbolter was shot while driving with Miss McCormick near here when his rival, Charles Weaver, 25, sprang from the side of the road, stopped the horse and fired a charge of buck-shot into Cashbolter's body.

Household Hints

CHEAPER BREAD.

Rye and Corn Much Cheaper Than Wheat and Just as Nutritious.

Chemists have repeatedly called attention to the extravagance of the American public in respect to foods and have seen in this one of the causes of the high cost of living, says the New York Medical Journal. Again and again they have pointed out that cheaper cuts of meat, for example, are fully as nourishing as filet and porterhouse steak, and that all that is needed in addition is as to the proper method of cooking.

MARK YOUR TRUNK.

Trunks are like that old song, "All coons look alike to me," and all trunks look alike piled up on the metal platform. Mark yours. White initials, a red cross, blue star, or something different from the usual markings should be printed on both ends of the trunk. It may be necessary to make a quick transfer and you will be able to instantly find your own trunk.

CLEANING A WHITE PARASOL.

A woman who cleaned a white parasol took it into the bathroom and coated it inside and out with a strong lather made of white soap; then the parasol was hung on the clothesline and the hose was run on it. The rain of water from the hose drove out every particle of suds and dirt and the parasol dried in a very short time.

RECIPE FOR CURLY HAIR.

A very good fluid for keeping the hair in curl is made of a tablespoonful of bruised quince seed to a pint of hot water. The water is poured over the seeds and the whole allowed to stand for several hours.

FRENCH CHALK TO REMOVE STAINS.

Use French chalk to remove a grease spot from a skirt. Apply thickly and let it stand for several days. If this is not effective, sponge the material first on one side, then on the other, with spirits of wine. Then press over a piece of thick linen.

THE STICKY CAKE AND THE PAN.

If a cake sticks to the pan, turn the pan upside down and lay on the bottom of it a cloth wet with cold water. After about 5 minutes the cake can usually be removed quite easily.

VINEGAR IN BOILING OF EGGS.

Into the boiling water used for poaching eggs, pour one teaspoon of vinegar. Stir the water with circular motion, drop in eggs and you will find they are round in shape, and look inviting as well when taken out.

CAMPFIRE TO PRESERVE FLOWERS.

Flowers wither quickly in the heat, but a small piece of camphor in the water will keep them fresh much longer.

OUR GRANDMOTHER SAYS.

Cream only slightly sour may be utilized to serve with puddings, by heating it stiff after adding the juice of a lemon and a tablespoonful of sugar.

Small screws, brads and tacks may be kept from rusting by pouring them into bottles and corking tightly.

That poisonous victim will obtain instant relief by bathing the afflicted parts with strong, cold coffee.

Odd bits of soap, when boiled make an excellent shampoo jelly.

If a little thick cream is added to cake icing it will not crack when cut.