

# Bulldog Carney.

By W. A. Fraser.

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TWO miles from Dan Stuart's whisky dive and 18 from Golden the Missoula trail took a sudden kink in its flesh colored ribbon and wound around the butt of a big fir stump.

Behind the stump a man was kneeling that glad some September day—all among the tawny gold and crimson of the dead rose leaves and the soft gray and cream of the bleached bunch grass.

He might have been praying, so quietly was he kneeling there, but he wasn't. He was blaspheming softly to himself as his impatient eye wandered in and out among the bowlders and trees that fringed the trail.

The morning sun picked out little bright jewellike spots on the instrument he had leveled across the top of the big stump. He seemed to be a surveyor taking levels.

Just as three men riding bronchos came in sight at a sudden turn in the trail he bowed his head to the level of the instrument and looked carefully along its smooth length.

The bronchos were coming along at a swaying walk, their heads on a level with their withers and their bridle reins hanging loosely in the hands of the riders.

Suddenly there was a nervous tightening of the right hand grasping the instrument, a sharp click close to it, a puff of smoke, followed by a sharp crack, and the man riding the second broncho tumbled from the saddle, shot through the heart. He rolled over as he fell, and the bright blots of blood splashed over the rose leaves by the side of the trail.

The first cayuse, startled out of his sleepy lope by the report and flash, reared and plunged madly forward. As he took the first bound in the air a bullet glanced from the high horn in front of the man and went tearing its corkscrew way through the leather flaps of the big Mexican saddle.

The rider yelled and dug the spurs in the trembling flanks of the horse as he felt the hot lead scorching its way close to his skin.

"Blamed bad shot!" the man behind the stump jerked out between his square jaws as he pumped the lever of his repeater forward and back.

Evidently he had meant well, but the cayuse rearing had diverted the bullet from its intended way.

The third broncho and its rider were making good time in the other direction. The shot he sent after them did not increase their speed any, for they were doing their level best.

The animal the dead man had ridden did not move. He stood beside the fallen figure waiting with dumb patience for his master to rise and mount again.

Swing the empty shell from the rifle, the man who had shot walked leisurely over to the lying on the ground.

"Back, old man," he said, addressing the horse, "you're a blamed ster than your master. If you're ready for grub pile at me, I'll be ready for you."

"I suppose I ought to go, but I'm not going all the same," he added, taking a long breath as though the words scorched his throat a little.

"Yes, you must go, Arvil. I want you to go. This life is not the life for you. Your mother sent this money to you to take you back to her, so you must go now."

He stooped his tall, magnificent figure toward her a little that she might see better and with his hand parted the heavy black hair which swept across his broad forehead in luxuriant abandon.

"Do you see that big red scar?" he asked. "Well, if I were back there my mother would put her hand upon my forehead so, as she did when I was a little boy, and when that ugly scar met her gentle eyes she would ask how came it there. I could not tell her, neither could I lie to her. And it is that way with all the scars, both on mind and body. They are too deep. I cannot go back."

"Arvil, I do not believe that. You were good when we were together as children in England, and you are good now in spite of all you say, and you will go back. I promised your mother that I would find you here and tell you that she wanted to see you before she died. Father is coming here for a few days to look at his mines, and then we go on to the coast."

"You need not come back with me to the hotel. I have a good guide with me; the friend who got her to come with me called her Mammy Nolan. I know that you will go back, for you've promised me, and you never broke a promise to me yet," she said as she slipped quietly out of the door.

A little roll of bills was lying on the table where she had left it.

It lacked half an hour of 12 o'clock when a French half breed, Baptiste Gabrielle, galloped into the square of the police barracks at Golden on a cayuse reeking with the wet which is from the inside. The constable on guard, pacing solemnly up and down in front of the major's quarters, thought the fanatical looking rider was drunk or running amuck, and swore that he would put a hole in him unless he stopped.

"By goss, that fell' Whisk' Sand'son, he get keel," panted Baptiste, with a face the color of a lemon in a bottle of alcohol.

"By tam! a fell' wit' long neck he keep him behind stump, an he s'oot him soor."

"Is he dead, Ba'tiste?" queried Sergeant Hetherington, in a voice with a

full flavor of peat bog about it. "Is he dead, or on'y hurt?"

"Bet you life, that Whisk' fell' he dead," replied Baptiste. "That fell' he s'oot tree, fo' time, an Sand'son he kill for soor, he dead w'atever. He try soot me, but I stan' him off an come quick tell police fell'."

"March him in to the major," said Hetherington to a constable.

Before the major Baptiste's barangue, balled down, read: "Shot at 10 o'clock on the Missoula trail, about 15 miles from Golden."

"What was the man like who did the shooting?" asked the major.

"Tall fell' wit' long neck," was the graphic description this query brought forth.

"Indian, breed or white man?" asked the major.

"Don't know. Me tink he white. Tall fell'; tam long neck. That fell' he got Whisk'. Sand'son stuff, too, you bet. Fo', five f'ousan he get in appar'o."

"Who's tall, with a long neck?" asked the major shortly, turning to the sergeant major, who was standing in front of his desk.

"I will find out, sir," replied the latter, saluting as he passed out.

"That long Englishman, Arvil Santley, has a neck like an eagle, and Constable Grady says that he's been working in the racket to beat two of a kind lately, sir," was the sergeant major's graphic report when he lined up in front of the desk again.

"Let Sergeant Hetherington take two constables and rations for two days, and get after this devil before his tracks get cold. Commence at the track. Send it back to Golden. Tell Corporal Ball to look up this Santley outfit in town. If he's got the stuff, he'll have it caked somewhere about."

"That was the beginning, all in one day, the dead body lying out on the silent trail so stiff and cold, with the glazed eyes staring straight up into the mountain blue of the smiling sky, and the hurrying of men in brown jackets and dark, tight fitting, yellow striped pants, as they saddled and bitted the strong limbed bay horses which were to gallop and gallop after—the wind."

Sergeant Hetherington and his merry men picked up the tracks the tall man told Blazer they would find and followed them for many a goodly mile, which time thereof the tall man with the long neck was working his way along the mountain side to the ford.

Many miles beyond Dan Stuart's place the tracks vanished. Perhaps some one else had put bags on his horse's feet and led him across country.

"Corporal" Ball was the official recognition of Mr. Ball's efficiency, but "Lanky" Ball was the goddess form of expression his latilike superstructure provoked among the fellows.

"Lanky" Ball was more fortunate than the sergeant; he discovered something.

Twenty-four hours after he started out he discovered that he could not find the man with the neck like an eagle—Arvil Santley—therefore he had disappeared, had lit out, had hit the trail, had packed his outfit and dusted. These were the bits of local colored knowledge he picked up.

It was from Mammy Nolan, who kept a restaurant in a big tent and sold whisky on the side, that he found out about Santley. "He got steered up agen a skin game up to Dan Stuart's, and they corralled his last remittance from home. It's about time he did get out, for they had him stone broke. But he was a gentleman all the same," said mammy as she stood with her hands on her fat hips and looked up and down the corporal's ungainly figure.

"Looks as though he'd done the trick," said the major when Corporal Ball made his report.

"He's got a good start and will likely head for the second crossing on the Columbia and work his way down into Montana. There's a rough town at the crossing, and he's dead sure to head for that."

And then because the sergeant was away with two men and because the whisky men and the gamblers and those who were cursed simply because they couldn't help it needed much guidance, in their daily life and because the post was always short of men anyway the major had to put a special constable on with "Lanky" Ball to go after Santley.

"You'll need a good man, a rustler, to help you take this Englishman, for he's a lanky chap," said the major. "Who'll you get?"

"Bulldog Carney's the man, sir," replied Corporal Ball.

"Get him," commanded the officer.

"Lanky" Ball found Carney after much tribulation, search; found him at Mammy Nolan's, found him amid the glamour of many 'twa lamps, the smoke from which mingled with the odoriferous steam of frying pork and filled the big tent with a soft, summerlike haze.

Looked at from some angles Carney was just the man to go after the slayer of "Whisky" Sanderson. He was a big, powerful man, as big as the one they were after. He could handle "Pearl," his big revolver, with a dexterity that commanded universal respect. Long since he had fled away the sights, and when it was necessary to place several bullets in a limited time he "fanned" his gun—turned it into a miniature Gatling.

Sometimes the police were hot on his trail as leader of a big whisky outfit, and sometimes he was on their side, fighting shoulder to shoulder to put down some tough gang. He didn't approve of toughness as a pastime.

"Be gentlemen," he used to say. "Gentlemen can't work, and gentlemen must have money, but don't be tough for the fun of the thing. There is no fun in it."

When "Lanky" Ball explained to him what he was wanted for and that there was a reward of \$500, half of which he would get if they captured the man who did the job, he replied: "Cert, I'll go, for I'm gettin' stale here. The

game's ahead of me here, and I need a stake to start in again."

"They rode out ten miles that night so that they would be sure to have an early start on the trail next morning. Over their pipes between "grub pile" and "blanket time" they drifted on to the subject of the dead man and Arvil Santley.

"I'll bet you an even \$50," said Carney, "that Santley didn't do this job. I've got good cause to have a down on him myself, for I've got his signature across the bridge of my nose, where his big sprawlin English fist caught me unawares one night. But he'll show my trademark right enough every time he parts his hair," he added by way of vindicating his outraged honor, "for I carved his lofty brow for him, and if his skull hadn't been so thick perhaps we wouldn't be chasin him now. All the same he's not the sort to lay a man out for the fun of the thing. He never had any dealin with Whisky Sanderson, for he wasn't in the know. He was all right for sport, but the boys hadn't any use for him when they were running the stuff in."

"I'll just go you fifty, Carney," said the corporal. "The old man doesn't make many mistakes, and if we can get to the second crossing of the river before Santley we'll bring back the man that laid Sanderson out."

"It's a bet, then," said Carney, and there was a queer smile about the regular lips set so firmly in the square jaw.

Then they chipped in with their two blankets and slept under one cover, back to back, with their feet toward the small smoldering campfire; slept soundly, as just men should—"Bulldog" Carney, gambler, whisky smuggler and special constable, and "Lanky" Ball, plain corporal in the N. W. M. P.

"He's ahead of us," said Carney as they galloped side by side the next day. "I picked up some tracks back there, and here they are again. He doesn't seem to be in any hurry, though, for, accordin to his tracks, his cayuse has been takin it pretty easy."

That afternoon when they struck the crossing they couldn't find anybody who had taken Santley across the river.

"He must be on this side somewhere yet," said the corporal. "If you stop here and watch the crossing, I'll try and look him up on this side. He'll be about some of the gamblin dives likely."

He looked him up. He found him. In the queen's name he was made prisoner. Santley laughed when the corporal told him he was wanted for murder.

"It's some blawsted debt, I fancy," he said, "and the murder racket is only a blind, but I'll go all the same. I'm half sorry I left the beastly lode anyway, it's so beastly slow down this way."

When they came back to the crossing, Carney was gone—gone, cayuse and all—over the river. He had given the ferryman \$50 to take him across, so the ferryman told the corporal.

"He's a queer fish," said the boatman. "I didn't want to cross till the morning, but he got me down there by the boat and gave me my choice between \$50 and a plug of lead from that gun he spun around on his forefinger."

The corporal was dumfounded. "It's devilish queer," he muttered, "but orders are orders, and I've got my man."

"I know that you will go back, for you've promised me," and I don't see as I've any call to go after this crook." And he thought of Pearl and Carney's beautiful marksmanship and various matters and went thoughtfully back to Golden with his prisoner.

"Lanky" Ball had a good head for obeying orders, which is a good thing for a corporal to have, but he hadn't much of a head for solving just such problems as this, which was perhaps good also. Perhaps that was why he was corporal after 20 years of service.

"I'll bet you 50 cases that 'Bulldog' did that trader up," said Santley as they rode side by side.

"That's queer," said the corporal. "Carney bet me \$50 that you didn't do it, and now you want to lay me the other way. If he did it, I don't suppose that he'll come back for the stuff—the \$50 he laid that you didn't do it."

"I got the long Englishman, sir," reported the corporal to the major when they got back to the barracks, "but the other one's lit out—took his hook when I was lookin up the prisoner."

"What other one?" queried the major.

"Bulldog Carney, sir. He skipped across the river."

"That looks suspicious," thoughtfully replied the major as he pulled at his iron gray mustache.

"It would be a bad one on us if it turned out that he had done this and we had carted him out of the country—given him an escort; eh, corporal?"

Of course there was a trial with Arvil as the center of attraction. The other had gotten away, and they had to hang somebody if they could, so they devoted their energies to proving Arvil guilty, and the chances are they

would have succeeded if it hadn't been for one person.

His clearing out looked very suspicious, and they found quite a sum of money on him when he was arrested, although it was known that he had been cleaned out before he went away. He would not tell where he got it either. "None of their blessed business," he told them.

"It may hang you," said a friend, "if you don't tell."

"Hang it is, then," he replied doggedly.

But worst of all was Baptiste Gabrielle's evidence.

"Yes, by goss! Dat fell', he s'oot 'tree' fo' time me. Steek his head up f'om dat stump. See him me soor."

Then Mammy Nolan went out to the place where Whisky Sanderson had met his fate, and she found something too. The bullet that had killed poor Sanderson had been in a terrible hurry and had gone clean through and through him.

Mammy Nolan followed up the line of sight from the stump across where Sanderson had fallen and luckily located the bullet in a sand knoll 30 yards beyond. It was a case hardened 38.55 Winchester bullet.

"That's the bullet that killed him right enough," mused Mammy, "but it might possibly have been fired there some other time." It wasn't quite conclusive.

Then she found the bullet that had scorched the leg of the foremost rider that day imbedded in his saddle. That was conclusive.

Then commenced the search for the rifle itself. There was only one such rifle owned in Golden, and it had belonged to Bulldog Carney.

Now, Carney had been back in Golden after the murder, and he hadn't taken his rifle with him when he went away with "Lanky" Ball, so he must have hidden it somewhere.

To return to Golden after killing Sanderson he would cross the ford at Kicking Horse. It was a forlorn hope, but she made up her mind to drag the ford for the rifle.

When Mammy found the rifle where it had dropped, she knew she had forged one of the strongest links in the chain of evidence which fastened the guilt on Carney.

It was Mammy, too, who introduced a new witness to the court in the person of Grace Alton. She had come back from Vancouver in obedience to Mammy's telegram. Her evidence was very simple, but effectually cleared up the mystery of the money.

"I gave it to him," she said simply, "to pay his passage home to his mother. I told him a falsehood; I told him it was from his mother. He wouldn't have taken it from me if he had known the truth, but I wanted him to go home to his mother, who was asking for him every day. We were children together—Arvil Santley and myself."

It was a revelation to that wild western life, this sweet, womanly girl and the man who would rather hang than compromise her by telling that she had given him the money.

"I had too bad a name," he said when his friends rounded on him for a chivalrous govt.

Mammy didn't know about the money when she sent for Grace. She only knew that Grace and Santley had met when Grace was in Golden.

In the face of the new evidence not much stock was taken in Baptiste Gabrielle's saying that Arvil Santley was the man who had shot at him. He had been too badly frightened to know what the man who had done the shooting really looked like. Besides, the other man, who had galloped on in front, swore that it was a fair man who had shot, while Santley was dark. It came out that Mammy Nolan was a Pinkerton detective, and the business of running a restaurant and selling whisky on the side was only a blind. Nobody but the major had known this before.

After many moons of anxious tracing word of Carney came to hand. He was at St. Vincent, just over the border from Manitoba.

"The extradition law is slow," mused the major; "likewise is it uncertain. Now, if we had Carney on this side the line we could arrest him."

At this the sergeant, who was standing by, pricked his ears.

"It might be managed, sor."

"Perhaps, perhaps," said the major reflectively. "Corporal Ball knows his man. He escorted him out; perhaps he'll escort him back again. You will need considerable money, for it's a long trip." And he wrote out a fairish sized order.

"Lanky" Ball and the sergeant located Carney at a small hotel at St. Vincent, not a stone's throw over the line.

A little preliminary arrangement with the hotel keeper, and that night as Carney gently slept the sleep of the just two figures stole up the narrow stair which led to his room and silently slipped through the door.

How still and dark the room was! Ah, not so dark now, for, like the headlight of an engine, a bullseye lantern was throwing its full glare upon them, and they were looking into the dark depths of two murderous looking revolvers as Carney held them above the counterpane.

"Oh, that's you, 'Lanky,' is it?" he said cheerfully. "Glad to see you. Come to pay that \$50, I suppose? Just put it on the table there. I don't feel like gettin up. That's right. You can take one hand down," he said.

"Just lay your gun down on the table first, though. Quick, now, cough up that \$50, for you see you're burglars in my room, and if I let daylight through the pair of you it will be all right, you know."

Then "Lanky" put up 50 cases of the good government money he had brought to pay the expenses of taking Carney back.

That was the nearest they ever got to Carney, for he is still living the life of a "gentleman."



The puff of smoke was followed by a sharp crack.



"I know that you will go back, for you've promised me."

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