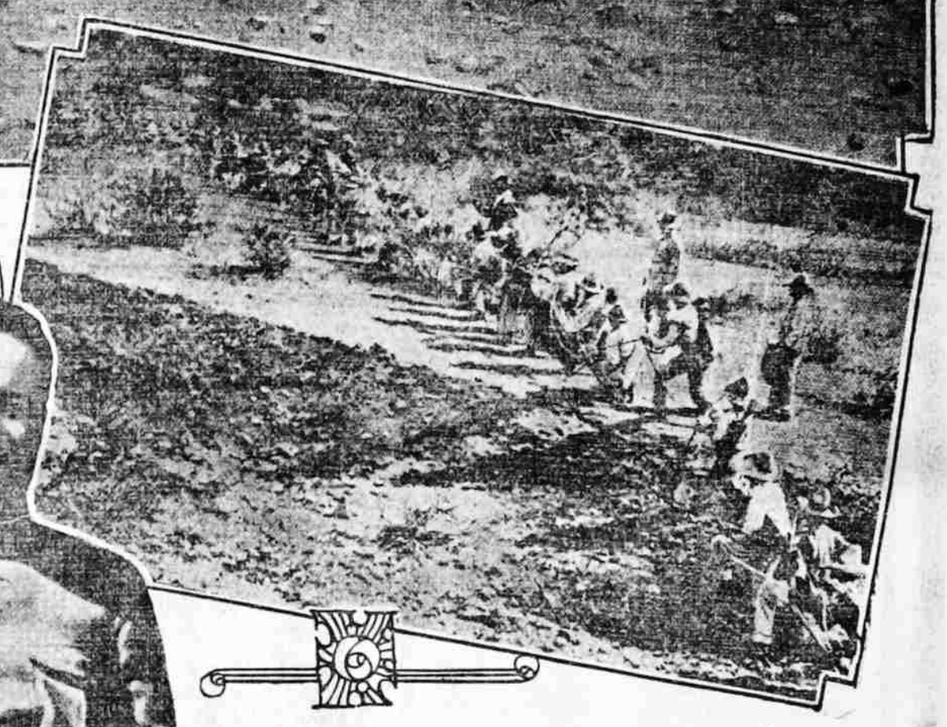
TO LEADERSHIP THROUGH VENGEANCE



Pancho Villa, an Insignificant Farmer's Son, Slew Powerful Neighbor, Who Wronged Sister, Thus Making Himself a Hero

Pancho Villa, first general of the Constitutionalists under Carranza, was not always a leader of men. Fifteen years ago he was a sturdy young farmer in the fertile valley at the foot of the hills which surround Torreon.

He was the son of an insignificant farmer and it never occurred to him that some day he would be more talked of than the King of England. He did not know then he would be called upon by newspaper photographers from every big daily of the United States and by the moving picture men of the world. All he knew about was farming.

Villa is unlettered. His education was limited even for a Mexican, but Villa had some great ideas about right and wrong and he loved his sisters more than most men love their sisters. One day something happened to Villa's sister which threw the name of the honest family of farmers into disgrace. Other families have hung their heads in shame and have closed themselves to the world.

Villa was not that kind. The story, as told throughout all Northwest Mexico, is that Francesco Villa, but better known as Pancho Villa, was changed in a minute from the humble farmer supporting his poor father and mother, into the hero of his part of Mexico. The "unwritten law," which has played an important part in many murder trials of the United States, has long been respected in Mexico. In the early days when Cortez landed in Mexico with his valiant fighting men, the unwritten law was transplanted to the American shores. Men who married Indians of that land saw to it that their honor was above all else in the world, and they would give their lives rather than be found lacking in defense of the women of their homes.

Villa was a Mexican of the Mexicans. It was his duty to support the honor of his two sisters.

Young Villa loved his sisters dearly. Both of them were extremely beautiful Mexican girls. The Villa girls were popular with the neighboring young ranchers, who sought them as company on long gallops over the roads through the woods adjoining Torreon.

There was a certain young magistrate in Torreon whom Villa disliked intensely. Word came to "Pancho" that this magistrate was seen ogling his elder sister. Later Villa detected the pair in a clandestine meeting.

In a rage he ordered his sister home and threatened the magistrate with death. That night, upon his arrival at the ranch house, young "Pancho" commanded his sister to cease her friendship with the magistrate.

The senorita's eyes filled with tears. She had become infatuated with the wealthy young man.

At the morning meal next day the elder sister was missing. A search of the house failed to reveal her. "Pancho" was worried. He discovered then that the magistrate, too, had disapeared. The pair had eloped. The brother's rage knew no bounds and at once he girded himself for pursuit.

GOES TO HOME OF PRIEST FOR AID.

He galloped madly to the home of a priest whom he knew.

"Get your horse and come with me," were the only words "Pancho" spoke to the priest. The priest obeyed.

In silence they rode off into the hills, where Villa was confident his sister and the young magistrate had gone. An hour before nightfall they struck the elopers' trail. Pushing on, despite darkness, "Pancho" and the priest came upon the couple in a camp.

Villa said no word, but drew his revolver. It was a dramatic scene. "Pancho" turned to the priest.

"Marry them!" he ordered sharply.

A flourish of Villa's revolver caused him to comply.

There, in the dark of night, in the hills high above Torreon, the marriage was solemnized. Within ten minutes from the time Francesco Villa's sister became the young magistrate's bride she became his widow.

Scarcely had the ceremony been said when Villa stepped between his sister and the magistrate. Again he turned to the priest.

"Make ready a death warrant!" he ordered, grimly.

The churchman would have refused, but young "Pancho's" revolver made him obey. Seizing the priest's leather-bound book, Villa coolly wrote the words that spelled death for his sister's abductor. The magistrate, a new husband, fell dead.

Villa ordered the priest to take his sister home. He galloped off into the darkness. His career as a bandit began.

For fourteen years Villa was a hunted man. He roamed the mountains and desert, pursued by Diaz's relentless rurales. He had many narrow escapes. He fought them back fiercely and was often wounded.

PEONS SHELTER VILLA FROM SOLDIERS.

Even then he was a hero among the peons. They gave him shelter and food when they could.

When it was too dangerous to live under a roof, he made his home in the mountain caves. When he dared not appear where food was plentiful, he stole it. When he needed money he held up people who had it. When he needed meat, he ran off a steer.

And so the years passed until the Madero rebellion began. Villa wanted to be a rebel, and he did take some part in the first revolution. Once he was captured and was in jail for a time while Madero was President.

But his fame as a leader and general has all come within the last year. He was in El Paso when Huerta became dictator, and he determined to take the field as a guerrilla chieftain against the usurping president.

With six companions he crossed into Mexico. In a week he had 100 men under him. In a month he had 500. Then the dispatches in American papers began to tell about him—about his raids in Northern Mexico and his defeat of Federal troops.

Presently, rallying about him a great number of rebels, in addition to his troop of raiders, he began a series of open and concerted attacks. He was uniformly successful.

His first conspicuous success was the capture of Juarez. It was conspicuous because Juarez is across the river from El Paso, Tex.

Quickly arranging the orderly administration of Juarez as a rebel city, he gathered his soldiers together and fell like a thunderbolt on a superior force of Federals who were leisurely coming up to Juarez to hang him, and utterly routed them at La Mesa.

Before they could rally he marched straight for Chihuahua, in their rear and took this city.

He was quick as a cat, and his rapid movements dismayed the slow-going Federals. They retreated across a desert to the city of Ojinaga, on the Rio Grande. Villa sent a subordinate to beat them. The subordinate fought the Federals for a week, but failed. Villa hurried to the spot and defeated them in an afternoon and an evening.

Villa fought bravely under Madero during the Madero rebellion. With nearly 1,000 men he came to Madero's camp and offered his services. The men were for the most part bandits, violators of the laws of Diaz. Villa saluted Madero and swore eternal fealty to him.

After Huerta's men killed Madero, Villa flew to arms. He swore he would kill Huerta as he had killed the man who wronged his sister.

Villa is not an educated man. He can hardly write his own name. Yet he has qualities of leadership which appeal to the Mexican. When Madero attacked Juarez it was Villa who led the fighting. His men attacked the city before Madero gave the order. Madero was not ready. He sent messengers to recall Villa. Villa could not be found. He was too near the front.

AT top—Pancho Villa reviewing his troops. Lower left—Villa leading his command. Lower center—Villa in uniform. Lower right—Villa's archers before Torreon.

History in Advertisements.

Thomas Jefferson once said there was nothing true in the newspaper except the advertisements, and any delver into local history who has had occasion to pore over the files in the public library, or in the New York Historical Society, will admit that the advertisements are the most interesting part of the paper. More real information regarding the manners and customs of the people, their modes of travel, the things they ate and wore, the books they read and their amusements is to be found in the advertising columns than in those parts of the paper devoted to what was termed news in those days.

The editor of the New York Gazette and Weekly Post Boy of November 21, 1748, said that he feared to publish news of local interest for fear his readers should tell him that they already knew it.

"In this dearth of news," he says, if we poor newswriters happen to add anything of our own we are generally soon whipped up or blamed for making free with other people's affairs. Indeed, some of us have lately informed the public of strange news and then added: Good news, if true, but no grounds to believe it. Then he launches into a complaint against the increasing high cost of living, which shows that the difficulties of the present day were not unknown to the residents of New York more than a century and a half ago.

"All the common necessities of life in this city," says the New York Gazette editor, "continue to grow so dear, as must soon impoverish our poor citizens' pockets unless they have better means to supply them than we have. Firewood is $7.75 to $8.50 a cord; butter 25 cents to 28 cents per pound, and flour so dear that it is a shame to mention."

It was several years after the establishment of newspapers in America before advertising in them became popular. John Campbell, the postmaster of Boston, who, in 1704, started the Boston News Letter, the first real newspaper in this country, had great difficulty in persuading his neighbors to advertise their wares. William Bradford and Peter Zenger, in this city, were no more fortunate in the early years of their newspaper publications, and even Benjamin Franklin, for many years after he began publishing the Pennsylvania Gazette, found his advertising columns very meagre.

One learns from these early advertising columns about negro slavery in New York, Philadelphia and Boston. In 1733 the New York Gazette advertises:

A likely negro girl for town or country; has had the smallpox. She is about 15 years old. Also to be sold, sundry drugs and medicine by John Briggs over against the meat market.

Seemed Like Home.

Little Lester, traveling on the Continent with his mother, grew tired of hearing nothing but French and German, etc., spoken. One morning, hearing a rooster's cock-a-doodle-do, he exclaimed: "Thank goodness. There's something that speaks English, anyway."