

# HOW I KILLED MY FIRST INDIAN

BY BUFFALO BILL

FROM "TRUE TALES OF THE PLAINS"

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IN 1857 I was barely eleven when I shot my first Indian. He was a chief. I knew that from his headdress. His name I never learned. Here is the story:

My parents, with their seven children, had moved from Iowa to Kansas three years earlier. My father had taken up a claim in Salt Creek valley and built a comfortable home. But he was not to enjoy the good days that seemed to be dawning for us.

Kansas just then was torn by the slavery feud, and in the bitter strife of the time my father, after making an antislavery speech at a nearby post trader's store, was mobbed and his life threatened. On this occasion one of my father's irate audience—a man, Charles Dunne by name—stabbed my loved parent in the side. At the time of the attack I stood unarmed over my wounded father's body and tried with childish strength to fight off his assailant; but, though he escaped with life in him from the place where he was assaulted, he subsequently succumbed to his injuries, and in the following spring he died. This calamity deprived my mother and our family of a worthy and esteemed head of the household, his death being an incident in the horrid internecine strife that eventuated in the tragedies of the civil war. I was then ten years old.

I could ride any horse alive. I had a knack of shooting straight, and I knew something about herding cattle. I thought these qualities might earn me a living. They did.

A firm of overland freighters—Russell, Majors & Waddell—were at Leavenworth. One of them, Mr. Majors, had been a friend of my father. I asked him for a job as "extra" on one of his wagon trains. The pay was \$40 a month—a fortune it seemed to me then. The work was the sort usually entrusted to a grown man, and it meant not only perpetual hustling, but a lot of danger as well, for the plains in those days were anything but free from Indians. This latter thought frightened even my brave mother. Boylike, I was delighted at the idea.

Mr. Majors said he would take me on as extra for one trip. If I did well I could have a regular job. I resolved to do miracles as an extra. The "train" was made up of twenty-five loaded wagons, each carrying 7,000 pounds, each drawn by six yoke of oxen and guided by a "bullwhacker," a driver with a long, loud cracking whip. Then there was a bunch of loose cattle. On this occasion the train was made up of only three wagons, and we were driving a large herd of beef cattle to Fort Kearny for the use of Colonel Albert Sydney Johnston and his command, who were on their way to Salt Lake to fight the Mormons. I was only one of several extras. Though we always set guard no Indians had appeared.

One noon, however, when we stopped for dinner and were loading about on the grass waiting for the pot to boil we heard a scathing volley of shots from a cove. Some bullets and a dozen or more arrows whistled into camp. Everybody had jumped up at the first shot. But three of our men tumbled over at once, as if they had been tripped up. Then a number of things happened almost too quickly to describe.

Two bands of Indians were galloping toward us. One band stampeded and ran off our cattle, while the other "rushed" us. Our men gave them a warm welcome and sent them back on the run. But the fight was not over. The "braves" only cantered out of range. They outnumbered us eight or ten to one. We could not hope to stand against such a multitude. We bolted for the South Platte river with the savages at our heels and found shelter behind the steep banks. From there we opened fire again and drove the following redskins once more out of range.

Frank McCarthy, our boss, said our one chance was to follow the Platte river to Fort Kearny, keeping out of sight under its banks. So the thirty-five mile march began through knee deep water and quicksand. Half a day we kept it up. I was dead tired, but it was no time for rest or complaining. Just the same, by nightfall my short legs wouldn't keep up with the procession. I dropped back, little by little, still plodding on as fast as my aching feet could move. We thought we had given the Indians the slip, but I still lagged my short, heavy rifle. It was a muzzle loading "Mississippi Jaeger" and carried a slug and two buckshot to each charge.

The moon had risen, and I was trying to catch up with the rest. Suddenly, in front of me and at the top of the high bank, I saw against the moon the head and high war bonnet of an Indian chief. He was bent double. The men ahead could not see him, but he had his gun leveled at them. I knew if he fired he could scarcely miss at that range. Some one of my friends must be killed. I had halted at sight of him, and he didn't see me. I had no time to think out the situation.

I brought up my rifle and took what aim I could in the deceptive moonlight. When my sights were just below the war bonnet's feathers I

pulled the trigger. The stillness of the river was split by a roar as the report echoed from bank to bank. Down tumbled the chief over the edge, rolling over and over like a shot rabbit till he landed plump in the water.

A yell from the band he had led, and a score of Indians swarmed up to the bank. But our men drove them back and they gave up the attack as a bad job. At dawn we limped worn out into Fort Kearny. The soldiers there started on a wild goose chase for the Indians. They were never caught. The slashed, scalped bodies of our dead were found beside the wrecked, looted wagons.

When I was thirteen my mother was building a hotel for the use of passing gold hunters, for this was late in 1859, when the gold fever swept America and all roads led to Pike's peak. Our Salt Creek valley home lay on one of the most traveled routes.

Hotel building and furnishing are not on the free list. So I wanted to help raise money for our Valley Grove House. With an older boy name, Dave Phillips I planned a trapping trip. Winter was setting in when we started.

We bought an ox team and wagon to transport the traps, camp outfit and provisions and took a large supply of ammunition, besides extra rifles. Our destination was the Republican river. It courses more than 150 miles from Leavenworth, but the country about it was reputed rich in beaver. I acted as scout on the journey, going ahead to pick out trails, locate camping grounds and look out for breakers. The information concerning the beaver proved correct. The game was indeed so plentiful that we concluded to pitch a permanent camp and see the winter out.

We chose a hollow in a side hill and enlarged it to the dimensions of a decent sized room.

We had seen no Indians on our trip out and were not concerned in that quarter, though we were too good plainsmen to relax our vigilance. There were other foes, as we discovered the first night in our new quarters.

We were aroused by a commotion in the corral where the oxen were confined, and, hurrying out with our rifles, we found a huge bear intent upon a feast of beef. The oxen were bellowing in terror, one of them dashing crazily about the inclosure and the other so badly hurt that it could not get up.

Phillips, who was in the lead, fired first, but succeeded only in wounding the bear. Pain was now added to the savagery of hunger, and the infuriated monster rushed upon Phillips. Dave leaped back, but his foot slipped on a bit of ice, and he went down with a thud, his rifle flying from his hand as he struck.

A bullet from my rifle entered the distended mouth of the onrushing bear and pierced the brain, and the huge mass fell lifeless almost across Dave's body. The ox had to be killed.

Dave's chance to square his account with me came a fortnight later. We



"I saw against the moon the head of an Indian chief."

were chasing a bunch of elk when I fell and discovered that I could not rise.

"I'm afraid I have broken my leg," I said as Dave ran to me.

Phillips had once been a medical student, and he examined the leg with a professional eye. "You're right, Billy; the leg's broken," he reported.

Then he went to work to improvise splints and bind up my leg, and, this done, he took me on his back and bore me to the dugout. Here the leg was stripped and set in carefully prepared splints and the whole bound up securely. He made a pair of crutches for me.

"Tell you what I think I'd better do," said he. "The nearest settlement is some eighty miles away, and I can get there and back in twenty days. Suppose I make the trip, get a team for our wagon and come back for you?"

The idea of being left alone and well nigh helpless struck dismay to my heart, but there was no help for it, and I assented. Dave put matters into shipshape, piled wood in our dugout, cooked a quantity of food and put it where I could reach it without rising and fetched several days' supply of water. Mother, ever mindful of my education, had put some school-books in the wagon, and Dave placed these beside the food and water. When Phillips finally set out, driving the surviving ox before him, he left behind a very lonely and homesick boy.

During the first day of my confinement I felt too desolate to eat, much less to read. But as I grew accustomed to solitude I derived real pleasure from the companionship of books. Perhaps in all my life I never extracted so much benefit from study as during



"A bullet from my rifle entered the mouth of the bear."

ing that brief period of enforced idleness, when it was my sole means of making the dragging hours endurable.

A fortnight passed. And one day, weary with my studies, I fell asleep over my books. Some one touched my shoulder, and, looking up, I saw an Indian in war paint and feathers.

"How?" said I, with a show of friendliness, though I knew the brave was on the warpath.

Half a score of bucks followed at the heels of the first, squeezing into the little dugout until there was barely room for them to sit down.

With sinking heart I saw them enter, but I plucked up spirit again when the last, a chief, pushed in, for in this warrior I recognized an Indian that I had once done a good turn.

Whatever Lo's faults, he never forgets a kindness any more than he forgets an injury. The chief, who went by the name of Rain-in-the-Face, at once recognized me and asked me why I was in that place. This chief was the father of the Rain-in-the-Face who in a later year killed General Custer at the memorable battle of the Little Big Horn. I displayed my bandages and related the mishap that had made them necessary and refreshed the chief's memory of a certain occasion when a blanket and provisions had drifted his way. Rain-in-the-Face replied, with proper gravity, that he and his chums were out after scalps and confessed to designs upon mine, but in consideration of auld lang syne he would spare the paleface boy.

Auld lang syne, however, did not spare the blankets and provisions, and the bedizened crew stripped the dugout almost bare of supplies, but I was thankful enough to see the back of the last of them.

Two days later a blizzard set in. I took an inventory and found that, economy considered, I had food for a week, but as the storm would surely delay Dave I put myself on half rations.

Three weeks were now gone, and I looked for Dave momentarily, but as night followed day and day grew into night again I was given over to keen anxiety. Had Phillips lost his way? Had he failed to locate the snow covered dugout? Had he perished in the storm? Had he fallen victim to the Indians?

The twenty-ninth day dawned. Starvation stalked into the dugout. The wood, too, was well nigh gone. But great as was my physical suffering my mental distress was greater. I sat before a handful of fire, shivering and hungry, wretched and despondent.

Hark! Was that my name? Choking with emotion, unable to articulate, I listened intently. Yes, it was my name and Dave's familiar voice, and with all my remaining energy I made an answering call.

My voice enabled Phillips to locate the dugout, and a passage was cleared through the snow. And when I saw the door open the tension on my nerves set go, and I wept "like a girl."

"God bless you, Dave!" I cried as I clasped my friend around the neck

## NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS

This will be the last warning to you. As you well know that the penalty is added, and I have been forced to settle, and under the new law will have to force you, and I would much rather you would come and settle without any further cost or trouble. I am going to treat every one alike, and if you owe any 1906-7-8 taxes pay them before January 1, 1909, or your property will be advertised and sold. Don't ask me to wait longer.

Very truly,

MILT MILLER, S. B. C.

### AVERTED A TRAGEDY.

Nerve Displayed by Daniel O'Connell at a Critical Moment.

Daniel O'Connell, the famous Irish agitator, had a contempt for physical danger. On a certain occasion a meeting had been convened, and a large crowd assembled in a room on the first floor of a building in a small city in Ireland.

O'Connell was about to address the people when a gentleman, pale with fear, made his way to the platform and hoarsely whispered:

"Liberator, the floor is giving way! The beams that shore it up are cracking, and we shall fall through in a few minutes!"

"Keep silent," said O'Connell. Then, raising his voice, he addressed the assembly: "I find that the room is too small to contain the number who desire to come in, so we must leave it and hold the meeting outside the building."

At this a few rose and went out, but the majority retained their seats. Then O'Connell said:

"I will tell you the truth. You are Irishmen, therefore brave men. The floor is giving way, and we must leave this room at once. If there is a panic and a rush to the door we shall all be precipitated into the room below, but if you obey my orders we shall be saved. Let the twelve men nearest the door go quietly out, then the next twelve, and so on till all have gone. I shall be the last to leave."

His instructions were obeyed to the letter, and he waited, patient and calm, till all had gone out in safety. Then he walked quietly across the sundering, cracking floor, reaching the door just as the shattered beams gave way. And thus, by the force of his strong will, a terrible accident was averted.

For a mild, easy action of the bowels, a single dose of Doan's Regulents is enough. Treatment cures habitual constipation. 25 cents a box. Ask your druggist for them.

### Called Him In Writing.

A tourist in an out of the way region of England put up one night at an amiable old lady's cottage, the village inn being full. Now, the tourist was very deaf, which fact he took pains to impress upon the old lady, together with instructions to wake him at a particular hour in the morning. On waking a good deal later than the time appointed he found that the amiable old lady, with commendable regard for propriety, had slipped under his door a slip of paper on which was written:

"Sir, it is half past 8!"—Harper's Weekly.

### Marked For Death.

"Three years ago I was marked for death. A grave-yard cough was tearing my lungs to pieces. Doctors failed to help me, and hope had fled, when my husband got Dr. King's New Discovery," says Mrs. A. C. Williams, of Bac, Ky.

"The first dose helped me and improvement kept on until I had gained 58 pounds in weight and my health was restored." This medicine holds the world's healing record for coughs and colds and lung and throat diseases. It prevents pneumonia. Sold under guarantee at Severs drug store. 50c and \$1.00. Trial bottle free.

### Lived Up to His Belief.

Hobo—No, madam, I am neither a Socialist nor an anarchist. I am a passive altruist. Housekeeper—And what in the name of common sense is that? Hobo—I believe in being helped all I can.—Boston Transcript.

Nearly everybody knows DeWitt's Little Early Risers are the best pills made. They are small, pleasant, sure Little Liver pills. Sold by all druggists.

### An Easy Task.

"Johnny, I will give you a quarter if you can get me a lock of your sister's hair."

"Gimme 4 bits, an' I'll git you de whole bunch I know where she hangs it nights!"—Houston Post.

### The Outcome.

The Doctor—Now that you are going to school, Johnny, perhaps you can tell me what happens when an irresistible force strikes an immovable object." "People send for you, doctor!"—Life.

### THE NEW NECKWEAR.

Collars and Stocks That Clever Women May Make.

The new neck ruffles give a somewhat choked appearance, but they are meeting with popular approval nevertheless. It cannot be denied that of the two the high, choking affairs give much more style than the low, round-necked ones which were formerly worn. The new separate stocks are made with wide ruchings at the top. Some smart models of this kind are shown here. The ruff with bow and long streamers is made of satin in any desired shade. The folds of satin for the stock itself are mounted on a shaped erinoline band, which is a lit-



### SMART STOCKS AND COLLARS.

tle larger in the back than in the front. A double plaited frill is the same width both above and below the stock, and the bow is made with eight loops and very long ends.

A pretty and stylish stock is made of folded net with a strip of Irish crochet at the top of the stock just below the very wide plaiting of the net. A lace edged jabot with a stiff little bow of ribbon is placed in the top to the left, a new French notion. The Irish crochet may be real or imitation, as much of the imitation is very effective for this purpose.

Another pretty stock is made of silk or net folded toward the middle, making the folds meet down the middle of the stock in V shape. The plaited jabot is held by two little ties of silk.

## Easy Confinement

If you have cause to fear the pains of childbirth, remember that they are due to weakness, or disease, of the womanly organs, and that healthy women do not suffer, like weak ones.

The specific, medicinal, vegetable ingredients, of which that famous, female medicine and womanly tonic

## WINE OF CARDUI

### WOMAN'S RELIEF

is composed, will build up the womanly organs to a healthy state and thus prevent needless suffering.

"Before my confinement," writes Mrs. Rose Schubarth, of Monument, Colo., "I had such bearing-down pains I didn't know what to do. Cardui quickly relieved me. Some months later I had a fine 12-lb. baby, was sick only thirty minutes, and did not even have a doctor."

### At All Druggists

WRITE FOR FREE ADVICE, stating age and describing symptoms, to Ladies' Advisory Dept., The Chattanooga Medicine Co., Chattanooga, Tenn. B 25

### HEALTH AND BEAUTY.

Take exercise in the open air daily. Air is all essential.

Tight sleeves and tight finger rings are a frequent source of red hands, and the only remedy for this is to remove the irritating cause.

The secret of standing and walking erect consists in keeping the chin away from the breast. This throws the head upward and backward, and the shoulders will naturally settle backward in their true position.

Sleeplessness is often caused by the head being exposed to the cold while the rest of the body is warm. In nine cases out of ten if the head is covered with a silk handkerchief it will induce the much desired sleep.

The skin taken out of an eggshell is a simple but good remedy for sore eyes. Just put on top of lid and bandage over it, and you will be surprised how soon the swelling will go down and the pain will leave the eye.

### Beware Of Ointments For Catarrh That Contain Mercury.

as mercury will surely destroy the sense of smell and completely derange the whole system when entering through the mucous sur ace. Such articles should never be used except on prescriptions from reputable physicians, as the damage they will do is ten fold to the good you can possibly derive from them. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, O., contains no mercury, and is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. In buying Hall's Catarrh cure be sure you get the genuine. It is taken internally and made in Toledo, Ohio, by F. J. Cheney & Co. Testimonials free. Sold by Druggists. Price, 75c per bottle. Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

### Friendly Advice.

A very matter of fact Scotchwoman called to see a neighbor, an elderly woman, who had been ailing for some time.

"And how do you find yourself today, Janet?" was the greeting.

"Ah, Martha, I'm very bad. This cold, damp weather 'll be the end of me. 'll be a dead woman before very long."

"Hoobs, toots, woman! You've been saying that any time these last twenty years. I've no patience with you. 'll tell you what it is. You want firmness of mind. Fix a day for your dying—and stick to it!"

### Had Poor Sight.

New Boy (rather inquisitive)—What did the other lad leave for, sir?

Master—For having defective eye sight at times, my boy.

New Boy—Why, sir, I have seen him since. Apparently, then, his eyesight was all right. It seems rather curious, sir.

Master—Well, my boy, at various times when taking money from customers he could not see the till.—London Answers.

## YOUNG MEN LEARN TELEGRAPHY.

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