

JANUARY 2010

EPITAPH

CHORRO VALLEY
REGULATORS
2nd & 5th Sundays

I'd like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and hope that this year will be as good at CVR as was 2009. There are certainly many exciting things in the fire.

JOHN WAYNE
SHOOTOUT XIV
Sept. 9-12, 2010

Sadly we lost another cowboy, Berkeley Johnston AKA Pickles McRae. Our thoughts go out to his family.

KINGS RIVER
REGULATORS
3rd. Sunday

We had few out at the range on Saturday for work day. *Conestoga Traveler* did some serious mowing and weed whacking. *Mad Dog Jack* decided to kill what *Conestoga* didn't whack. *Marshal Chance* made some bird holders which we tried out on Sunday. The rest of us, *Sinful*, *Mad Dog McCoy*, *Two Turtles*, *Myself*, *Bones Brannon* and *Wobbling Bob* set up the stages and painted.

PRVC
4th. Saturday

We need volunteers to work the score shack every match and to write stages. All the stages and targets are available on a flash drive to put on your computer. It's fun.....Til ya get hung!

PRVC ANNUAL
May 21-23,2010

5 DOGS CREEK
ANNUAL
April 29-May2, 2010

We had 50 shooters on Sunday for a fun match. Thanks to *Sinful* for writing the stages. It was the final match in the Black Powder Triathlon. We shot Frontier Cartridge Duelist. Lacy beat all the guys. Last time she borrows my guns.

5 DOGS CREEK
1st. Weekend

As of Sunday, if you come first in your category or shoot a clean match you will be given a card, which, after collecting 5 card you get a free shoot. Win your category and shoot clean and ya get 2 cards.

END OF TRAIL
June 21-27, 2010

ARROYO GRANDE
HARVEST FESTI-
VAL

To be announced

At the next shoot (5th Sunday) we will have a bay dedicated to practice. It will mostly on the newly named "Doc Bodie" stage.

PASO GATHERING
To be announced

Thanks to El Lazo for his demonstration of the correct way to start at Cowboy Port Arms. More demos to come.

Highlights from the January General Meeting:

CVR Dues will remain the same.

Camping on the back pasture is not allowed at this time.

There will be a Cowboy Swap Meet March 13 & 14th, weather permitting.

Match stage designs for 2010- Safety approval, submit the month prior to Filthy Lucre.

The Blacksmiths will be Shooting Bullseye & Francisco Garcia and the Carpenter will be Darlin Dave. Any work to be approved by the executive board.

Cody Collee would like to have a Cowboy sponsors Cop shoot. Maybe June 26-27th or July 24-25th. More details to come.

2 day shoots will be held in the following months. May, June, July or August.

Mad Dog McCoy will make a sign for the barber shop to be re-named "Doc Bodie"

Winchester Jack brought out plans for the new registration building. The monies to pay for it will be from the Billy Brooks Fund. The new building will be called the "Billy Brooks Social Club". The Jan 30th work party will consist of removing all items from the old trailer and begin tearing it down.

Cody Collee to order new timers for the club.

JWSO XVI

Bucket of Blood will do stage design and submit them to the executive board for approval.

Cody Collee and Sinful will be co-match directors for the 16th Annual JWSO.

Sinful will be ordering medals.

The next JWSO meeting will be held at PRVC on Jan 23rd. Following the match.





CHAPTER 9

IT'S NOT HERE, I HAVE IT, COME AND GET IT FROM ME.

His girl had sand, a lot of sand. The cabin is closed up tight and they are ready to ride. The morning ride through Bear Valley was met with crisp mountain air, sunlight shining off the frosty crystals clinging to the native grasses, and all the beauty these mountains had to offer. Catherine's little cattle dog 'Mikey' was trotting alongside her horse looking up every now and then to make sure she was there. Usually whenever you would see her, that little dog wouldn't be too far away from her. There was that big 4 point buck near the base of the mountain and there was a small herd of cattle feeding in the lush grasses of the alpine valley. It wasn't long though until they would be headed into the Mojave. It was bitterly cold as the winds whipped against their winter coats. The horse's muzzles would be covered in frost until mid morning each day. In Barstow they would lay in a few supplies and spend the night. The cook let it slip that Laylow had been through about a week before and had headed east across the Colorado. So, they are behind him, now at least they knew which direction he and the gang were heading. They sat in the boarding house and chatted happily as two rough looking men came in. The riders were hard bitten Texas men who looked to be on the prod. They glanced towards the couple and whispered to themselves, something indiscernible. Mikey saw the men looking their way and started growling that low guttural growl he had when he sensed something or someone was no good. Catherine had learned to trust the dog for he had kept her out of many a scrape while riding alone in the wild country.. The men ate quickly glancing towards them many times before they left. There would be trouble with those two later on she thought. She knew it too.

After Barstow was the miserable ride across the windswept desert to the Colorado River crossing near Needles. The animals were holding up well given the sparseness of available feed for them. They rode the last mile swiftly, slowing as they entered the little settlement. Those same two men , from Barstow, were loafing around the saloon when they arrived but mysteriously disappeared before they crossed the river. After a day's rest at the Colorado, they headed east across the hills following the stage road for a while. Each day he would ride out and check the progress of the herd. It was still headed southeast towards Phoenix . He didn't want to follow directly on the trail so they wouldn't think they were being followed. They were catching up to the herd and fast. They would stop at Beale's Springs for a day to rest the horses and get some decent feed into them before they continued on. After resting a day at the makeshift settlement, they rode east out of Beale's Springs then after traveling about 10 miles, turned southeast towards Wickenburg.

Icy winds blasted their tent at night in that cold lonely desert but they are warm in the buffalo robe blankets as they lie together. Miserable as the weather was, these long cold nights were some of the best these two will ever experience together. They caught up on many nights

spent alone longing for the company of the other and talked of hopes and what the future held in store for them until the wee hours of the morning. It wouldn't be long now before they caught the herd. Until then, they could live a relatively uncomplicated life and relish their time together. It would be soon enough they would speak to the desert scum who stole their property and desecrated their cabin. The trail toward Wickenburg was through a series of shallow canyons. It was rocky, dry, covered with cactus and sparse brush. The trail had been well used though for it was the main road from the northern end of Arizona to Phoenix during the winter. The herd was being pushed at about 45 miles a day which, for horses, is a pretty slow drive. Were the rustlers trying to save the animals or were they waiting for someone or thing close by? Time alone will tell but he was starting to get a feeling that time was almost here. He was checking the trail daily now for the sign was only a couple of days old. He came up on the herd suddenly and unexpectedly. The herd was being held in a box canyon about 5 miles outside Wickenburg.

They made camp some 5 miles away from the herd in a hidden cave far off the stage road. He brushed out all signs of their travel leading off the main trail and to the cave. There was water in the cave and some sparse grass for the animals to feed on in a hidden draw just past the cave entrance. Brush growing around the edge of the draw formed a natural fence that not only kept the animals in, it kept the predators out, four legged and two legged. The field of fire from the cave entrance was good but he built up a parapet of rocks and sand at the mouth of the cave for a more defensible position and where they would be safe from ricochets. At sunup and again at dusk, he slipped up to a low ridge above the herd to reconnoiter the rustler's camp.

Several riders were seen coming and going at random and it looked as if horse traders were being brought in to look over the herd. Thinking back to the trail though, there were only two riders pushing the herd at any one time. Where did these other riders come from? From the looks of the camp, it had been there longer than the herd. There was something else going on here besides stolen horses. From what he could tell, it appeared there were never more than seven riders, including one woman, near the camp at any one time, long odds for one man even with an uncommon woman to try to take that camp alone.

He would slip down to their camp tonight and check brands to see just who these riders are. Until dark, he would wait, watch, calculating his odds which never seem to get any better. After the light was gone, he slipped into his moccasins, and ghosted down a shallow depression where the rustler's horses were picketed. As he eased up to the animals he spoke them softly so as not to spook them into giving his position away. He felt each horse's brand. Dammit, these are Dooley horses but why are they here? Why were they resorting to rustling and why are they rustling California horses? This was not normal for them to rustle that far from their home base in Texas. Mexico yes, Colorado maybe, Arizona yes, California, definitely NO. He slipped back into the brush to think this out. All this seems to be an elaborate act in something infinitely more far reaching than stealing a few horses. Well he was not going to be a pawn in their game.

CHAPTER 10

STAMPEDE

Suddenly, as he watched the camp and the herd, he had an idea. The camp was not well guarded at all as if they weren't expecting anyone to try anything. That Texas attitude will bite them this time for sure. If he could spook the horses straight down into and through the rustlers camp then into Wickenburg where he could expect help from the Sheriff, he would throw their camp into total chaos. No one cottoned to horse thieves in western country so they wouldn't try to follow him into town and into a rope. He slipped down to the rustler's remuda, picked out a long legged sorrel gelding, and threw a saddle on him. He stepped into leather and eased around the herd looking for the nighthawk. He finally spotted him and rode up as if to be relieving him. The nighthawk's eyes flared as the Colt came crashing down on his forehead. He went down and out, one less hombre to worry about. He tied the man with knots which could be loosed after a little fight. Taking the rustler's guns and his horse, he eased around behind the herd and got ready. He started riding around the herd slowly getting them turned towards the outlaw's camp. There was little movement in the camp so they wouldn't be suspecting anything was amiss.

Using the nighthawk's rifle, he began firing into the air, stampeding the horses out of the canyon down into and through the rustler's camp. There was absolute pandemonium in the camp as the horses came thundering through. Men and horses were running in every direction. Somewhere on the ridge a rifle was firing into the camp pushing the men out of their concealment. The men in camp were shooting at horses and shadows while running around in their long handles trying to dodge horses and the bullets coming off that ridge. Two more men were downed by the herd as he raced through their camp. As another man leveled a Winchester at him, he snapped a shot off splintering the stock and shattering the rustler's hand. Four down. A tent is knocked over by the herd and there is mad scrambling inside for the sleeping rider didn't make it out before the herd hit the camp.

A knife comes through the canvas and out steps the woman he had been watching dressed only in a nightshirt with the knife in one hand and a six shooter in the other. He could tell that girl was mad clean through as he went racing by. She was awful purty up close though even when she was mad. He couldn't place her face but would be reminded later just where he had seen this woman before. He shook out a loop of his lariat and tossed it over the ridgepole of another tent dragging it over. There must have been a lantern burning inside for the tent suddenly began burning, flames licking at the tattered shreds of canvas.

He circled back around and cut the line holding the remuda between two trees. The horses were panicking from the stampede already so it didn't take much to get them to follow the big herd. Dust was hanging over the camp like a fog. The remnants of tents were nothing more than crumpled piles of rags strewn hither and thou with disoriented men stumbling about looking as if still in a daze, their thoughts of the easy score dashed into the torn earth.

Two men were dead and one had a nasty flesh wound to his hand filed with splinters from the gunstock. There were a couple of lame horses standing three legged near camp, useless for any type of pursuit of the raider. The woman was barking orders at the man to catch some horses so they could mount a chase but her orders were met with a look of defeat from the faces of her men.

As soon as it began, it was over. He raced behind the horses until they began to tire. He circled them outside Wickenburg and waited for dawn. As the sun lifted its shining face over the mountain to look into the valley, he drove the horses through town shaking many of the town loafers out of their drunken stupor from the sound of thunder from the galloping hooves. The horses went into corrals willingly while he closed the gate behind them. The Sheriff had come over for it was unusual for herds to be driven through town at that hour. "Sheriff, I've been trailing this herd, my herd, from California. It was taken by a band of men riding Dooley horses. You'll find their horses mixed in here and what's left of the rustlers in that box canyon northwest of town." The Sheriff looked a little more than angry. Not only did he have to arrest a bunch of horse thieves, Dooleys at that, he was going to miss breakfast too. He stomped off in the direction of the hotel. He was at least going to have his breakfast first.

CHAPTER 11 NIGHT ATTACK

Red and the drovers had set down for a good meal of beef and trail stew. Everyone was happy to be heading back to Texas soon so the mood was very upbeat. After supper, the men sat around and smoked while Red turned in. She wanted to be up early tomorrow and be ready for Bean Pot when he came in. One by one the blankets drew the men under them until there was no one left awake in camp. Somewheres around 2.00 a.m. there was a whoop and several rifle shots. All of a sudden there was the deafening thunder of horse's hooves as the herd tore through the camp. Horses were tearing through the camp running through tents and pulling up guy lines for others. Red's tent was down with her still in it. All that could be seen was some mad scrambling under the canvas until a knife cut through the material with Red emerging in her nightshirt holding a knife in one hand and a Colt in the other screaming wildly at the men to catch the horses. Two men went down under the horse's hooves while others were firing and dodging for cover. Searching rifle fire from the ridge kept the men moving from concealment back into the path of the stampeding horses. Red's tent was in shreds and another was on fire with everything else in shambles. It was over in a minute, almost as quickly as it started.

Red was barking orders at the men but there was nothing they could do. Their own horses were being run off with the herd and they could only catch horses that were already lamed up. All they could do was to watch the dust fly into the air. Even if they did follow the herd, they were going towards Wickenburg. There would be questions as to the brands and that bill

of sale. Red was looking around at the destruction with a look scary enough to melt gold. This should not be happening to her. There was nothing to be done now but wait til dawn and try to pick up what they could. The horses were gone and most of their traps destroyed by the stampede. One of the men found a dented coffee pot and began to start a fire to at least have some hot coffee to start the morning with. Most of their food was trampled but he was able to find a partially spilled bag of coffee and a little sugar in the mess. Little enough but it would get their day started.

If matters weren't bad enough, the Wickenburg Sheriff rode into their camp come mid-morning as they were trying to gather up anything that wasn't torn up, trampled or dead. Red had seen him coming from afar and had changed into a pretty blue gingham dress to look more presentable to the western man. As the Sheriff rode into the disaster that once had been their camp, Red stepped up real close to him as he dismounted from his horse. In her best southern belle voice she said, "Why Sheriff, what brings y'all out to this place? Did you come up here to go after those thieves who stole our saddle horses last evening?" The Sheriff looked into those purty eyes and innocent looking face thinking, how can that other rider accuse this gal of being a horse thief? She sure has the look of southern grace, breeding and the dignity of a lady even under the adversity of her predicament. After some light conversation, the Sheriff decided he wasn't going to arrest her for even if she was involved in some part of the horse incident, she had plenty of her own worries in getting home and the owner had gotten his horses back. After the Sheriff left, there was a huge sigh of relief. One problem side stepped at least, Now, the next issue, where were they going to get some horses? Wickenburg wasn't going to be a good choice because of last night and the visit from the Sheriff. Phoenix was the next best bet so they gathered up some canteens and the lame horses for the long walk into the city.

After they had walked several miles a wagon pulled up alongside them. Adam Cartwright was driving the team Fortunately, none of the Dooleys knew what he looked like so he was in no immediate danger. He offered the weary hikers a ride on into the settlement and chatted happily with Red all the way, very wary of what he said in front of her. Adam knew who the Dooleys were and what they had done to him, even if this gal Red didn't know.

NEXT MONTH THE FINAL CHAPTERS.....





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