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The Somerset Herald

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REST NOTICE, notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been appointed administrator of the estate of Joseph R. Slade.

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THE WOMAN WHO WAS "SOMEbody's MOTHER."

The woman was old and ragged and gray. And bent with the chill of the winter's day.

The street was wet with the winter's snow. And the woman's feet were aged and slow.

She stood at the crossing and waited long. Alone, unwept for, amid the throng.

Of human beings, who passed her by. Nor heeded the glance of her anxious eye.

Down the street with laughter and shout. Gled in the freedom of school let-out.

Came the boys like a flock of sheep. Hasting the snow piled white and deep.

Past the woman so old and gray. Hastened the children on their way.

Nor offered a helping hand to her. Nor a word, save that which she heard.

She looked at the carriage wheels or horse's feet. Should crawl her down in the slippery street.

At last came one of the merry troop. The gayest ladzie of all the group.

He passed beside her and whispered low: "I'll help you across if you wish to go."

Her aged hand on his strong young arm. She placed, and without word or harm.

He guided the trembling feet along. Then back again his friends he went.

His young heart happy and well content. "She's somebody's mother, boys, you know. For she's old, and poor, and slow."

"And I hope some fellow will lend a hand To help my mother, you understand."

"I'll ever see her old and poor and gray When her own dear boy is far away."

"Somebody's mother" bowed her head In her home at night, and a prayer she said:

Who is somebody's son and pride and joy?

A STORY OF THE PLAINS.

Jack Slade was one of the most remarkable men who ever lived on the plains of the West.

Slade, laughing at his own heartedness, daring and politeness, his character was one nobody could understand.

All feared and many loved him. Slade was born in Illinois, of quiet and respectable parents, and was reared on a farm.

When about twenty years of age he had a quarrel with a man, and in a fit of uncontrollable anger shot him.

He then fled West, and at St. Joseph, Mo., joined an overland train. His courage, address and ability soon brought him to the head of the train, and he was made train-master.

One day he quarreled with the driver of one of the wagons and both men drew their revolvers, but the driver was first, and covering Slade, declared that he would shoot him dead if he stirred.

Slade said it was a pity they should waste life about so trifling a matter, and proposed to the trainster that they should throw away their revolvers and fight it out with the fists.

The unsuspecting driver threw his revolver on the ground, and Slade, laughing at him for his simplicity, shot him.

The authorities of Illinois sent a sheriff after Slade and he fled into the Rocky Mountains, and there engaged in killing Indians. In one battle he killed three savages with his own hand, cut off their heads, and sent them to the chief of their tribe.

He soon gained a wide notoriety for courage, and the horse thieves and desperadoes having become quite bad on the overland stage route, the company employed Slade to hunt them down.

He was made a division superintendent, and stationed in the Rocky Mountains. It was not long until a desperado who was suspected of being a horse thief aired his insolence before "Gentleman Jack" as he was called, when Slade rose and killed him without a word.

So great a terror had Slade become to the horse-thieves that, no matter whose horse was stolen, the overland stage company's animals were never touched.

Having restored order on his division, Jack sent to another further East. Here he relieved a man named Jules, who was inefficient.

Jules hated Slade because he had superseded him, and it was not long before the men fell out. War was declared, and they watched for each other.

Jules, seeing Slade coming down the street, hid behind the door of a store and poured the contents of a shot-gun into his enemy, Slade returning the fire with his revolver.

Both men were badly wounded, and for a long time lay on the beds. Jules recovered first and fled to the mountains, Slade having declared that he would kill him as soon as he was able to be on his feet.

For a long time the men did not hear of each other, but one day Slade, learning that Jules was in a mining-camp, offered a reward for him. Some of Slade's minions captured Jules, who was an old man, and brought him to Slade's house, Jack tied him to a post in the back yard and left him there all night, the weather being quite cold.

In the morning he went out and amused himself by making a shooting party of Jules. He wounded the old man purposely in several places, until he begged Slade to kill him, which he did by shooting him through the head.

Hearing one day two men had stolen one of his horses he followed them, caught them and hanged them with his own hands.

On one occasion some desperadoes took the stock of a few poor emigrants, who complained to Slade of the outrage. Slade, hearing that the desperadoes were at a house near by took a single companion, rode to the ranche, and bursting in the door commenced firing, killing three and wounding the fourth.

On the road Slade was absolutely master, and his word was law. He was addicted to drinking, and when in liquor was very ugly. One day in a drunken fit he killed the father of a little boy, and his feelings of remorse were pitiable to see. He wept bitterly over the body and adopted

the little boy, raising him tenderly and educating him.

Slade was a matchless marksman with the revolver. One morning, a dispute having arisen as to his skill, Slade pointed down the road to where a man was coming up, and said:

"Gentlemen, you see that man? It is a good fifty yards. I will fire and you go and look at the body and you will find the bullet-hole in the left eye."

Suiting his action to his words he drew his pistol and fired, and the man dropped dead.

The crowd rushed off to examine the body, and sure enough, he was shot in the left eye.

"This shot was greatly admired by all who saw it, and the frontiersmen, with common consent, declared it to be a most remarkable exhibition of skill."

One day Slade went into a saloon and asked for a drink of whisky. The bar-keeper, who did not know Slade, said something to anger Slade, and threatened to put him out. Stopping to look under the counter for a stick or revolver, when he raised up the bar-keeper was looking down the muzzle of Slade's pistol, and a moment afterwards was one of the dearest bar-keepers that ever came West.

But a day of reckoning was coming for Slade. The people of the West were becoming tired of his acts of violence, and determined to abate them. His wife was a beautiful and accomplished woman, and as brave as her lord.

One day a party of citizens went to Slade's house, disarmed him and took him to prison. His wife came to him, and they let her enter without searching her. Throwing two revolvers on the bed and whipping out a third, she leveled it at the jailor's head and told him to march out.

Jack was not long in taking in the situation, and picking up the revolver he followed his wife. He mounted on the horse she had ridden and, taking her up behind him, they galloped away undisturbed.

Slade and his wife fled over the mountains to Montana and took up their abode near Virginia City, then a great mining camp. Slade worked in the mines, and they let her enter without searching her. Throwing two revolvers on the bed and whipping out a third, she leveled it at the jailor's head and told him to march out.

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speeding over the rough mountains, urged by love and fate.

She loved her husband passionately, and her brave, loving spirit was constantly with him. It is said that Mrs. Slade made the distance from her home to Virginia over the mountains, twelve miles, in a little over half an hour.

Meanwhile, Slade had been led forth to execution. He asked that he might be allowed to see his wife before he died; and although it seemed hard to refuse such a request, the committee, knowing the kind of a woman Mrs. Slade was, desisted at her best, and she was allowed to see her.

For five years he was employed catching wharf rats in New York for the well known dog fancier, Harry Jennings. Twice in New York he won money by picking up rats within a given time. On one occasion he won \$50 by picking up twenty-five of the little animals in ten minutes. They were rats he had hunted before and he escaped without being hurt. The exhibition on Saturday night occurred in Frankford and a party men paid one dollar each to witness it. After the match ended it was hinted that its managers had put up no stakes and that the receipts for admission were divided between Lewis, his alleged backer and the proprietor of the house in which the affair took place.

THE SCENE OF THE CONTEST.

In the centre of the room a space eight feet square was surrounded by a tight board fence four feet high. The floor was covered an inch deep with sawdust. In the centre of a pen stood an empty whisky barrel, the upper head of which was replaced by a piece of canvas, with a hole in the centre. The rats were confined in three tin-lined, wooden cages, which stood in the yard. As the visitors entered the front saloon they were introduced to Lewis, who touched the flowing bowl so frequently that before ten o'clock, when the audience began to grow impatient at the delay. There was no disorder, however, at any time during the night. Two men were selected to act as judges and timers. One judge had no watch and owners of time pieces in the crowd were invited to offer to lend their chronometer.

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RATS.

While the judge was trying to borrow watch Lewis climbed into the pit. He wore a sleeveless shirt, dark pantaloons and brogans. The legs of his trousers were tied around his ankles so as to prevent the rats from taking refuge therein. His hands and arms were covered with marks, which he believed would prevent the rats from biting him. Forty rats were dumped from the cage into the pit. The rats darted wildly and made vain endeavors to scale the fence. Finally they huddled into a wriggling mass into one corner and the judge gave the word to begin.

He stepped over to the pile of rats and without an instant's hesitation thrust his naked hands and arms in among them. He caught five fat fellows and dropped them into the barrel. He next picked up three, then four, then two, and so on until he had placed twenty-one of the rodents in the barrel. The rats that remained in the pit were wild and he was compelled to catch them one at a time. The first single rat he picked up bit one of his fingers thro' the nail to the bone and hung there. Lewis was bitten twice on the right arm. He received four more wounds before the forty rats were imprisoned in the barrel.

A LITTLE TARTAR CAUGHT.

The judges announced that the forty were picked up in twenty-three minutes. Lewis wanted the remaining sixty placed in the pit at one time, holding that it was unfair to drop in small lots, as he lost time picking up stragglers. The judges held that as forty had been pitted on the first occasion the number would have to be dropped in again, leaving twenty to form the last batch. Lewis worked with great agility, and after rat was lifted and dropped into the barrel with amazing rapidity. The fifty-seventh rat he attempted to catch sprang into his face as he stooped and let the man remain lowered. Without flinching he grabbed the little brute and tossed it through the canvas cover. He lost five minutes standing the blood that flowed from his lip. In picking up the other twenty-three rats he was bitten slightly five times. Eighty rats were in the barrel and Lewis had but seven minutes to pick up the remaining twenty. The time was too limited and Lewis gave up the job and got out of the pit. The spectators were satisfied with his efforts, however, and a collection amounting to \$23 was taken up for his benefit.

"Father," he suddenly remarked, as he looked up into the paternal face, "you are awful good to me. Am I? Well I hope I treat a husband should a devoted wife."

"And it's all over now how liberal you are to her?" "Now, what do you mean?" "Why, I heard three or four men on the cars say that you had in the world was in her name!" "Yes—ahem—yes—you go to bed, sir; and next time you hear people lying about me don't listen to what they say!"