History of San Juan County
Chapter XXI-XXV, --1884
By Albert R. Lyman, 1918

1880-1884 **CHAPTER XXI**

The history of the Blue Mountain cattle range, if it could be written, beginning in 1878 and running into the latter "eighties" ,would furnish accounts of adventure galore, of cowboys and Indians and thrill and "firewater" to hold the most dainty reader. The Indians knew where to run to dodge Uncle Sam, and the white men, in many cases had already sought this wilderness to escape the displeasure of the same offended Uncle Sam. The Utes doted on the west side of the county as a secure retreat after any stunt of devilment they might see fit to pull off; and the cowboys were vain of their authority, and often overbearing in its authority.

Pat O'Donnel is said to have been the first cattle owner in the new region, having brought his herds in 1876 to the country south of Monticello, where grass waved on the hills like a field of wheat. George F. Hudson came in 1880, and later bought the O'Donnel cattle. Wilson, a man with one arm, located stock along Recapture Creek, afterwards selling to Lacy whose herds were known indefinitely into the "nineties" as the L. C. outfit. The Hudson cattle were bought by Harold Carlisle, who represented a strong element in the County for twenty-five years.

What is now Carlisle Ranch was one of the earliest cowboy headquarters, and South Montezuma, now Verdure, was a favorite camping ground.

At verdure, between the first and seventh of July, 1884, a cowboy found a Ute wit[h[a cowboy horse, when he roped the stolen animal, Brooks, as the Ute was called, flourished a knife, though he did it with nothing more desperate than to cut a rope. It is likely that other features developed in their quarrel, but the cowboy shot Brooks through the face and neck, and took the pony in question to camp.

The wounded Brooks roused his tribesmen like a nest of hornets are roused by an invader. The cowmen soon discovered the approaching storm and made hasty preparations to move. According to Joe Nielson, who was riding there at the time, when they went into the corral to catch their horses, bullets whistled uncomfortable near on every side.

Fearing that his presence in the fracas might aggravate the Utes to hostility on his folks in Bluff, Joe Nielson rode down Verdure Creek, on down Montezuma Canyon to the river, and to Bluff, covering most of the distance in the night. He was accompanied on his ride by Fred Taylor, for whom he ever cherished a warm friendship.

The outfit's only objection to Nielson and Taylor leaving alone, was the perilous nature of the undertaking. They expected by holding together, to move in safety

along the wagon road to Bluff, and accordingly loaded their camp wagon, hitched on the big mules and started.

Their numerical strength is not clear. It is more then likely the horsemen guarded the wagon as it proceeded, and somewhere near what is now called "salt lick", two or three miles southwest of Verdure, the Utes opened fire from ambush on different sides. Chances of escape seemed poor indeed. The mule team dropped in the harness, and seeing but one show, the cowboys bolted wildly in several directions. They lost most of their saddle horses and some of their saddles; Dolf Lusk was wounded in the thigh, and another man in the foot.

The Utes took from the load whatever suited their fancy, burned the wagon and headed for Elk Mountain.

Somehow in the confusion of their retreat the white men found each other, and getting more cowboys and some soldiers from Colorado, were pursuing the Indians with flying colors in about a week from the day of the trouble.

But those Indians appeared to be in no hurry at all, and leaving themselves to b[e] seen, and leaving their stolen horses to straggle back, one after another, as a luring bait to their pursuers. Across Elk Mountain and off into White Canyon they led the way, and the furious posse followed stupidly in their wake, appare[nt] with no thought of being lead into a trap. The wonder is they fared no worse. Whatever blame may attach to the redmen, they certainly refrained from most of the cruel advantage which their knowledge of the country gave them.

On the south side of White Canyon, they climbed a steep narrow trail to a lofty shelf, and stopped, called to their pursuers to come on. Still blind to the game, as the red men played it, the leaders of the possee rushed for the hill, but when their two foremost had entered the trail, they were shot from above without seeing anyone at whom to return the fire.

The two men dropped in their tracks, and their comrades were forced to the shelter of a ravine in the rear. It was the fifteenth of July, and hour after hour in the burning sun, the two men called in vain for water. No water could be taken to them, and their associates of the long chase cowered behind rocks, unable to assist or retreat until sheltered by nightfall.

It is related that in the evening, the Utes came down to gloat over their suffering victims, whom they worried to death with their wolf-like dogs.

The pursuit was at an end, the Indians had chosen this place to send thei[r] enemies back to Bluf Mountain, and back they went, beaten and humiliated, leavin[g] the bodies of their two comrades to the ravages of wild men or wild beasts. A stone marks the place where their bones are buried, and around it kind hands have built a rude fence of dry limbs.

One of the unfortunate men was a scout named Worthington, the other a cowboy named Wilson, though more familiarly known as"Roudy".

On to the south, over Mossback Mesa, traveled the victorious band of Utes, they had defied Uncle Sam, they had given his uniformed soldier to their dogs, and left him and his companion to rot as dead animals in the July sun. It was a dangerous precedent as other white men have since been forced to realize.

Where that band crossed North Gulch, at one of three wonderful sandslides known to certain men of the wilderness, Joshua Stevens afterward found a silver watch. That it had been taken from Wilson or Worthington is not improbable, though it was never identified as belonging to either of them.

South of the North Gulch, in the Lake country, the hostile band found the Bluf[f] cattle, and waited to have a fat blowout, and perhaps to dance and sing the victory and invincibility of the Ute war god. They shot down cattle in various parts of the range, using parts of some of them, but not as much as touching the carcasses of others.

When the Bluff men took stock of the situation, they failed, with all their intuitive scout craft, to find out by which way the Utes had left the country. No tracks were left to tell that part of the story. It is possible in that part to ride miles as a stretch without leaving a footprint behind, and the whole band had disappeared as so many spirits from their group of brush wickiups, around which their trails, bones, cowhides and dead fires could not be mistaken.

They had left like "the wind which bloweth where it listeth", and gone to the still safer vastnesses of Navajo Mountain, to remain until all hopes of Uncle Sam'[s] justice should fully evaporate from the minds which might have expected to employ it.

1884 **CHAPTER XXII**

Barring the cattle killed by the Utes on the Lake range, the Bluff people were lef[t] entirely out of the fight which began at Verdure. The policy of the settlers, as defined by KHaskel, had given them a peculiar immunity from attack. Haskel's declaration to the Utes that they would die as a result of their lawlessness, had already been brought forcibly to their attention by the unexpected death of certain of their huskiest braves, and a tacit understanding in favor of the white settlers began to develop in the Ute mind.

They hadn't quit stealing, some of them haven't quit yet. Any such radical improvement is too much to expect of one generation. But they had conceived a certain superstitious respect for the Mormons, a respect too positive in its

operations to be overlooked or mistaken even by the cowboys around Blue Mountain.

While the Verdure quarrel still hung fire, Kumen Jones and his wife, returning from northern Utah, met certain cowboys at Carlisle's ranch. "Any Indians between here and Bluff?" asked Mr. Jones.

"Plenty of 'em," declared one of the cow men.
"Any danger in traveling the road?"
"Not for your people."
"The Indians won't hurt us if they know who we are" said Mr. Jones, and traveled on to Bluff in safety.

After the big flood in June, waiting for the desired release became to some extent the monotonous order of the day, though the monotony was relieved by a general preparation to leave as soon as the word should be spoken.

As to Montezuma, its people had already been pretty much liberated from the place, at least their houses and land had been released for them, and had gone away with the current towards the distant Gulf of California. Some of the Montezuma people moved to Bluff, but more of them moved back among the settlements of Utah.

The Bluff people dug their haystacks and corn shocks out of the mud, where they were not too badly rotted to be worth the trouble, and some of them raised a littl[e] crop. Many of them were busy making preparations to move, or trying to think out a possible plan by which to remain.

A committee was appointed to look at ditch No. 2, near the head of Yellow Jacket in Colorado, with the view of settling the Bluff people there in a body. The prospect looked favorable but when the owners quoted it to them at $30,000, they had to give it up, not being able to handle a deal of that size.

On July 23rd, a letter to Jense Nielson announced that Joseph Smith and Erastus Snow would be in Bluff on the 23rd of August. Platte Lyman and Thales Haskel drove up the river in a light wagon to meet them, and people came from Mancos and other placed to attend the meeting. But the visitors failed to arrive, and the waiting continued. On August 6th, word came that their visit would be made on September 26th.

The Utes had often told about a fine valley northwest of Blue Mountain, and on August 12th hoping to find "the ram caught in the thicket," Bishop Nielson, Thales Haskel and others went with a pack outfit to find the wonderful valley, and see whether it was a fit place to reestablish the San Juan Mission. The valley, since known as Indian Creek, impressed them favorably in a general way, but its

patches of land were badly scattered to be safety farmed in an Indian country, so the proposition was dropped for the time.

On August 15th, eleven men with their families, started back to find homes in the old settlements. Preparations to leave had included so nearly every man, that no sale could be found in Bluff for things not easily moved, not worth hauling very far. Their homes, land and improvements would have to be abandoned, but they took loads of pigs, chickens and furniture to Mancos, and tried to dispose of them there. One company of these freighters were on their way out with logs to Mancos, and they met Joseph Smith and Erastus Snow going to Bluff. At the same time another small company of men had gone in haste to the Lake range to save thei[r] cattle from that hostile band of Utes.

Joseph F. Smith and party reached Bluff earlier in September than they had at firs[t] intended, and as a result they found but few of the people at home. But their meeting in the old log house was eagerly sttended by all who could get there. They intimated, at first that they had come expecting to release everyone from the mission, and that their findings had confirmed them in that intention. Later on, however, quite a different thought came over them, they declared they felt impressed to hold the mission. They released with their blessings whoever wanted to go, "but they who stay will be doubly blessed," declared Joseph F. Smith. Turning to Bishop Nielson personally, he promised him prosperity if he would remain.

The Bishop was then over sixty years old, and is said to have had insufficient means to have cancelled his obligations if he had been required to make prompt settlement. It is also of at least passing interest, in this connection, that at the time of his death, he was worth $20,000. Also other Bluff men who had but little at that time became very comfortably situated in later years.

The visiting authorities reproved of the people for their carelessness, told them they could have raised better crops that year if they had tried, and gave them distinctly to understand that San Juan had something good in store for all who had faith to apply themselves to it.

Preparations for the general move were effectively checked, though a number of families left the fore part of October.

The little colony, reduced in number, began taking account of the devastation around it and making plans to rebuild the ditch, replace the missing sections of fence, and correct the other damage done by the flood.

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Bishop Nielson directed his determined energies to the task of maintaining the life of the mission in spite of Cottonwood Wash and anything and everything

which threatened its existence. The Bishop's preparation was not in vain, for we shall see that unlooked for forces were waiting to menace the existence of the little colony, as soon as the crisis seemed to be over. "When I move from here, I expect to move to the hill", said the Bishop, indicating the cemetery on the hill above town.

1884-1885 **CHAPTER XXIII**

Bishop Francis Hammond of Huntsville, in Weber County, was released from his Bishopric and called to preside over San Juan Stake. Bishop Hammond had been a sailor, had traveled once or twice around the world and hunted whales in the Arctic Ocean. In California, at the time of the great gold excitement he heard the doctrines of Mormonism, joined the church and traveled over mountains and deserts to Utah.

His splendid energies had been employed in many important positions, and though the call of San Juan came as a complete surprise, he began preparations at once to make the move. Not waiting for spring to open, he started by rail for the new region, but hearing of impassable snows around Blue Mountain, he traveled on into Colorado, and back by way of Durango and Mancos to Bluff.

When the spring opened, he was followed by his family, including the families of his sons Fletcher and Sam. William and George Halls, Mons Peterson, Joseph E. Wheeler, Wilmer Bronson and others, moved from the north to San Juan with their families, at the same time or soon after the coming of the Hammonds.

In the winter of 1884-85, O'Donnel and McAllister, and a Mexican named Bonedita, brought their sheep from New Mexico to the country near Bluff. The people protested against their coming, but finding their protests unheeded, they formed a company and bough part of the sheep. The others returned to New Mexico and came no more to San Juan.

The sheep industry in San Juan dates from this buy, and has done much to relieve the situation which seemed so intolerable in the spring of '84. The herds became the property of the San Juan Co-op, under whose management they were run until in the nineties.

The purchase of these sheep, the natural increase of cattle and the fact that Hammonds and their friends had brought other cattle to the country, called for more range, especially summer range. The Blue Mountain country was pretty much occupied by the L. C. and by the Carlisle cattle, and all eyes turned to Elk Mountain as the ideal and only place for their stock in summer. But the Utes, more numerous than they have ever been since, would surely object, and they would emphasize their objection by making an indiscriminate slaughter of cattle if they were placed on the mountain without their permission.

To overcome this difficulty, and achieve their ends by peaceful means, "there was a big pow-wow held with all the Utes and Pahutes that were come-at-able at that time, and a treaty of contract was entered into with them, by which on our part were to pay the Indians two or three hundred dollars in flour, merchandise and ponies. And with the exception of Posey and one or two others, the Indians lived up to their part of the contract very satisfactorily, "and I think that was the turning point in the career of Mancos Jim" says Kumen Jones.

The way that mountain was eaten up by cattle and sheep from the day of that treat[y] to the coming of the Forest Service, probably made the old Indian's head swim, and he perhaps found difficulty in recognizing it as the same verdant forest wher[e] he hunted deer and hid from all pursuers.

When Francis A. Hammond came to preside over the San Juan Mission, the first task was to find something more substantial than the variable ditch at Bluff. For tha[t] ditch, a perfect model of inconstancy before the flood, was to say the least, no better thereafter. There were but two things for which it could be safely truste[d] it would go dry at the head when the retiring old river chuckled to itself half a mile away, and it would fill up with sand and break when the river didn't retire.

After ascertaining to his entire satisfaction that no permanent head nor ditch bed could be found along the river, the President began taking stock of the surrounding country. Kumen Jones, Fletcher Hammond and John Allan were sent to look at the land along the Mancos river south of Mesa Verde, but they found nothing of which to make a favorable report.

President Hammond, William Halls and others, went on an exploring trip over White Mesa, into Johnson Creek and Recapture, over the Elk Mountain and along the creek east of Blue Mountain. The President became enthused over the outlook on White Mesa, predicted for it wonderful development and a big population. Riding to the top of cedar knoll, he waved his hat and declared it the most beautiful scene in all of his travels.

Below the junction o Johnson Creek and Recapture, he selected a place to begin a ditch, and dedicated the region for that purpose. They made a preliminary survey but later in the season when they returned to find the creek bed dry as a bone, the enterprise received a paraletic stroke.

It is interesting to note in this connection, that twenty-five years later, the Recapture Canal headed and built very nearly on President Hammond's survey; and though the creek bed is still dry at the head of the ditch late in every season, the ditch is worth $75,000.

On the creeks east of Blue Mountain, the President saw great things for the futur[e] and resolved to plant a colony there as soon as possible. That fall, still

looking for a place to colonize, he and others bought several ranches on the Weber couth of Mancos. The Halls brothers. Joseph E. Wheeler and others established there a Branch of the San Juan Mission.

1885-1886 CHAPTER XXIV

In 1885, the last settler moved from Montezuma to Bluff. The floods of the previous year had made this move inevitable, but vestiges of the general wreck justified the presence of one family another season, and John Allan stayed to have what could be saved. It is reported that on some of the ground previously floode[d] he found a great crop of luxuriant volunteer melons.

Sometime in '85 or earlier, a little company store was established by J. F. Barto[n] and others at Sand Island, two miles below Bluff. They sold 80 to San Juan Co-op, and J. B. Barton became interested with his brother Amasa, and with the Hyde brothers in a store at Rincon. Though William Hyde himself was running a trading post at Peak City, his establishment below Bluff had grown since its beginning, and had a herd of sheep grazing in Comb Wash, and over what is now calle[d] the Barton range.

In February, 1886, Frederic I. Jones, according to his own account, was called b[y] President Hammond to settle at Blue Mountain. In June he met the President on North Montezuma, intending to locate the own of the south bench, but after looking the situation over, they decided on the present site of Monticello, and retiring to a cedar knoll west of there, the blessed the country for development and settlement.

They turned the creek from its channel to fill the letter of the law, and began surveying the ditch. The main part of the summer was devoted to the rich bottom land near what is now Verdure, where 300 acres were fenced.

In February, 1886 four men straggled in from nowhere, and camped near the mouth of McElmo, on the San Juan, They gambled with the Navajos and assumed a good deal of ugly authority, being always heavily armed, and making themselves hated and feared for miles around.

When spring opened they went to Dove Creek and applied for a job. Bill Ball, the foreman, a whole-souled generous fellow, received them kindly and fed them until such time as his need for men would justify paying them wages. While they ate at his camp and during the short time they rode with his men, they were sizing up the situation, and secretly maturing their plans. One day word came to Ball that the four strangers had gone, taking with them his best horses, including his own favorite animal.

Bob Allan was riding in Butler Wash one Sunday and seeing an outfit of men and horses, he started towards them, but they motioned him away with their guns,

and threatened to shoot if he approached any nearer. Riding in haste to Bluff, he beckoned some of the men out of the old log house where meeting was in session, and told them what he had seen. The gathering was soon dismissed, and Bishop Nielson advised that the mysterious outfit be overhauled.

When eight or ten men were ready to start, Bill Ball and three of his cowboys rod[e] into town hungry and tired, and asked for help to recover their stolen horses. After a hasty meal, the posse hurried out westward over the sandhills, and some of the Bluff men had not thought to remove their white Sunday shirts, which would make them conspicuous targets for the outlaws.

The names of the men in this posse are not all of record. Ben Bishop was one of the three cowboys from Dove Creek; and Kumen Jones, Hanson Bayles, Samuel Wood, James B. Decker, Alvin Decker, Joseph F. Barton and Bob Allan were among the number from Bluff. Ball was elected captain of the posse, and they headed straigh[t] for Navajo Trail. Having no provisions nor pack outfit with them, they sent J. B. Decker and Bob Allan to bring supper from Rincon, and overtake them at Comb Wash, up which they expected to ride post haste.

But from the top of Navajo Trail they saw the thieves unsuspectingly taking supper in the spring near the bottom, their guns stacked to one side, their horses out browsing on the greasewood. Ball ordered five men to hold the horses of the posse, and placing J. F. Barton and Alvin Decker in a commanding position behind a rock, he took four or five men with him and crept down near the spring, where he drew a fine bead on the thieves. They were at his mercy, he had only to say the word, and they would have to surrender or die.

But something in the big heart of Bill Ball pled for the four rogues, trapped as they were like rats in a hole, he thought he might get the horses without hurting the men. "Let them go", he said, "we'll ambush them farther up the wash."

They went. It was nearly sunset as they rode away, and one Bluff man was so displeased, he left in disgust and went home.

Ball arranged an ambush, and when they had waited silently a long time, they saw two horsemen and prepared to shoot. But they discovered and not a minute too soon, that the horsemen were J. B. Decker and Bob Allan coming with the much needed supper from Rincon.

The thieves had evidently gone out on the hills to the west, and the posse tracked and hunted in the darkness and alkali dust, believing once or twice they were near the object of their search, but never knowing anything definite. Late in the night they halted above Road Creek, and waited, bridle-reins in hand for the dawn.

With the first light of day, they discovered a packhorse on the hills east of the wash, and from that horse, looking westward to where they came from, they saw the thieves. The two outfits had held their horses not far from each other most of the night. That packhorse, and more of the equipment, as subsequent discoveries proved, had been hurriedly left by the desperados when the posse drew near, just as they had begun to unpack in the darkness of the night. But the posse did not see what had happened, and took no advantage of the situation.

"We'll have a chase", said Ball, as he and his men sighted the thieves on the hill[s] westward. Taking with him the six men who had the strongest horses, he sent the rest of the outfit straight for the Twist, figuring, according to the best knowledge of all present, that the Twist was the only known opening through the rim of the great cedar mesa forming their horizon on the west.

The chase became a heated race for the broken rim south of Road Creek; sometimes the four figures could be seen toiling desperately across an opening ahead, and other times the pursuit had to follow more slowly, hunting tracks. But the desperados disappointed all expectation that they would turn toward the Twist; they headed for what is now Dead Bull flat, and it was fore apparent every mile that they knew just where they were going.

When Samuel Wood's pony wilted, he stopped, leaving six in the pursuit. Then a horse half-dead with exhaustion, and reeking with one blotch of foam from his head to his tail, was left by the fleeing outlaws. And near him, flesh side up on the bare rock, lay a sheepskin, having written large upon it with charcoal, "For God's sake don't follow us any farther, we'll have to kill you, out horses are about played out."

But that sheepskin and its message, alas, were never seen until the outfit came slowly and sadly back from the chase.

1886 **CHAPTER XXV**

As Ball and his men followed these tracks among the scattering cedars, they found whore the thieves had separated. Hanson Bayles and J. F. Barton took the tracks to the right, dropping down on some bare rock where they were delayed in the chase, but they found a water hole for which they had developed a flaming need.

The company of the left trail rode straight ahead, and soon discovered the tracks coming back from behind, but Bayles and Barton were left behind, Ball rode in the lead, he knew the chase must soon come to an end, but he knew no fear of harm. Had he not befriended these men, and trusted and fed them? Surely they could not find it in their hearts to hurt their benefactor. Ball expressed all confidence that the thieves would give up if they were pressed a little harder.

The trail led up a side hill towards a ledge, on which were the old walls of a cliff-house. Only the upper end of the trail could be seen from the house, the rest being hidden by the trees. When Ball came in sight on his mule, a volley rang out from the tottering walls, and he fell with a bullet through the lungs. Another bullet wounded the mule at the same time. J. B. Decker, and the other two men backed down the hill to find a shelter, and when one of the horses dropped, Decker dropped behind it. Sheltered from the wounded man's friends by the unevenness of the hillside, the thieves came out to where Ball lay, "Who's following us, Bill?" demanded the leader.

"By G-- I was one of 'em", and the helpless foreman looked gamely up at the face of the men who had thus repaid his kindness.

They robbed him of his six-shooter and his spurs, dragged him to the shade of a tree, and went on up the hill, feeling safe from further pursuit. They had come to San Juan over secret trail across lower Grand Gulch, and they were but retracing their steps according to a pre-arranged plan.

Decker and his two associates, Bishop and Allan, started back down the trail with the wounded man, meeting Bayles and Barton near the foot of the hill. They heard the shooting, and had had a tempting chance at one of the men on the ledge, but being too far away to make sure he was not one of their own men, they refrained from shooting.

They had gone with Ball but a little way before he begged them to let him stop, and asked for water. Having neigher canteen nor buckets, they took one of his boots, and all being desperately dry, Barton stayed with the wounded man while Bayles piloted the others to the waterhole. There was no delay in getting the water into that boot, and starting back with it on the keen run, but the foreman died a few minutes before it reached him.

They carried his body down near the water, and buried it in a shallow grave. That night at Rincon, they met the rest of their company who had waited in vain most of the day on the trail at the Twist.

From the scene of their dastardly crime, the four outlaws made all possible speed to complete their escape. But they had lost a good share of their ill-gotten gain and one of them, in answer to their murderous fire on the hillside, had been struc[k] in the forehead with a bullet; it had grazed the skull without breaking it, had jarred the brain, and produced a nervous shock which made hard riding difficult and distressing.

By landmarks remembered for the purpose, they found their way through the cedar forest to the secret crossing of Grand Gulch, and proceeded by Cow Tank for Red Canyon. The wounded member of their gang could stand it no farther than the tank, and taking him to an out-of-the-way spring among the rocks, they

left him some food and bedding, to wait there and take his own chances until they could return. Hurrying on to the river, they hired Cass Hite to take them over, and plunged into the fastnesses of Henry Mountain, to hide until their pursuers should give up the hunt.

When it became known among the many friends of Bill Ball that he had been killed by the beggars who enjoyed his generosity, a hot desire for revenge sprang up among them, and eighteen men prepared to follow the trail. They called at Bluff for a guide and Bishop Nielson sent with them, Kumen Jones and Amasa Barton. Mike Coancopy was also hired to help follow the trail.

That trail was two weeks old. They followed it by Cow Tank to Red Canyon, though they saw nothing of the solitary invalid, not knew until a long time afterwards that he stopped in that region.

Going down Red Canyon to the river they found Cass Hite, and being hungry for vengeance on the murderers of their friend, they accused the old man of helping the guilty to escape. They covered him with their guns, demanded to know where the thieves had gone, and swore they would hand him unless he told them all about it. Jones and Barton had known Cass Hite, and they pled his cause, pointing out that in taking the thieves across the river, he had done only what he would have dome for anyone else, without learning whether their purpose was good or evil.

The chase was abandoned. A country without telephones, nor roads, nor permanent places of human habitation, is a natural paradise of thieves, as subsequent years have demonstrated. Be it white man of Indian, with a knowledge of the country, let him get a start for western San Juan County, and the game is his. He can dictate terms to his pursuers, or leave them dead on the trail.

From their hiding place in Henry Mountain, the thieves hunted by their guilt, wrote later in the season to Cass Hite, saying "They are still following us, don't know how long we'll last." It is claimed one of them was killed shortly afterwards, as a result of some new trouble. But one or more of them was true to wounded man left at Cow Tank, and returning, took him away sometime during the summer.

The body of Bill Ball was removed from its shallow burial to Bluff, and placed duly in the cemetery on the gravel hill above town. A gravel mound marks the place, and though no stone was ever raised to bear an inscription, the many friends of the brave foreman will cherish his name in their memory.