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"NEVER FOOL WITH A FOOL"

By MAX COLEMAN, LUBBOCK, TEXAS

Reprinted from the Frontier Times, at Amarillo.

A few people know that Billy the Kid, noted outlaw here of New Mexico, was started on his outlaw career, which resulted in his killing twenty-one men and finally being killed himself, from an attachment to a law enforcement officer and in doing what he thought was duty. Fewer still know that the death of a ruddy cheeked Englishman named Tunstall and the killing of a Texan known as Bill Roberts, neither one of whom knew the other, contributed to his career.

In 1877 with the passing of the buffalo and Indians the first running of law and order began to be felt in Texas. Restless spirits, who acknowledged no law except that of the gun, began migrating to New Mexico. All leaving, however, were not gun men. There were a few of all types and temperaments, some being mere hangers on of the more bold and uncontrollable ones. Others migrated, not from a desire to be lawless, but to get away from their fellow men and to be left alone.

Among the latter was one Bill Roberts. The majority leaving were more or less on the gun man order and many left. "Wanted" notices were posted. But Bill Roberts was a sample of those living in a rut in law, merely tolerated by their neighbors and not considered at all. They were just there, they were there by a ranch at meal time, come in and eat if you want to, if you don't go to hell. The rustlers and outlaws did not even lower their voices when talking in a room or almost non-existent.

So plain Bill Roberts drove his few head of cattle up the valley from Roswell and established a camp on the Rio Grande. He always rode an old bay mule that was the pride of the hard-riding cowboys who prided themselves on their horsemanship. His mule was an old, old, old, hardly held together by the leather. But there was one thing noticeable. He always carried a well-kept Winchester and had bullets in his saddle.

One day, a station in Roswell had drunk cowboys reeled over to him and started.

"What do you care that gun? You afraid to use it?"

He drew back his hand to slap Roberts, Frank Coe, who lived near Roberts, caught the enraged cowboy arm. Returning the gun, Coe said to Roberts:

"You had better get out of here. Some of these boys might hurt you."

Gratefully, Roberts took his rifle and departed. Before stepping out the door he turned and looked straight at the cowboy.

"What's the matter with that fool," said Coe.

They all lined up at the bar and the incident was forgotten.

Events were now transpiring in

him to leave town rather than to stay. He had come up from there the year before with Baker and after the year he had brought a herd of cattle, acquired by dubious means, from the Mexican border, and disposed of them for a good price. He had come up from there the year before with Baker and after the year he had brought a herd of cattle, acquired by dubious means, from the Mexican border, and disposed of them for a good price.

New Mexico On the Rio Pecos, the Englishman, Tunstall, fresh from London, had established a ranch. Under the guise of serving an attachment on Tunstall's property for a debt owed by his partner, a sheriff's posse, consisting of twenty-five men, rode to Tunstall's ranch. Some were good men, others were bad. Roberts, who was a lawman, was among the good men.

He continued riding at a walk. He was unarmed. Brewer and the cowboys made of up the side of his saddle to die by the side of the road. The posse then began gathering his cattle, putting on their return on the writ of attachment.

Be it said to the glory of some of these men, that they immediately left and returned to their ranches and refused to have anything to do with the Lincoln County War.

Dick Brewer and his cowboys reached Lincoln that night, a Mexican having brought in young Tunstall's body. A conference was held in the office of the lawyer, and it was interrupted by the arrival of another Tunstall cowboy. He was 17 years old and wore his hair down to his shoulders. He had a winning and appealing manner, and a good-looking except for two prominent front teeth, which, when he was excited, snapped and gnashed together. He had a particular liking for Indians. The wounded man, trying to induce the wounded man, was interrupted by the arrival of another Tunstall cowboy.

"My God! What have I done?" he exclaimed. "Hey, Roberts, come back here. You bet a job."

"I'm a job, too," always have been," answered Roberts.

A bullet sang dangerously close to Frank's head. The posse scattered for shelter and Coe began trying to induce the wounded man to get up. Standing behind the wall he reached forth and on his finger, Coe caught a bullet and took off hat and finger. Tunstall

"Tunstall," said the cowboy from Roswell, "I can get up to

corner of this room and stand on the shoulders of two of you. I can look through a crack over the door and see what he is doing. He can not see me for the shade."

They raised him up.

"He is packing cotton from an old mattress in his wound," he reported. "Now he is bucking his belt around it. He is lying back against the mattress propped on the bunk. He looks white and sick. Must be dying. Now he is raising his rifle."

Plank! There was a shot from Bill Roberts. The cowboy fell, his neck broken, a bullet catching him just under the chin.

Dick Brewer now ordered the posse to capture the injured man, no matter what the result. Bullets poured in the little hut. An hour later, the only result was one posseman lying with a bullet through his breast. They slipped the door and the hut stood slightly open. But no one cared to look in. Time wore on.

"Tell you what," said Dick Brewer, "just back of the hut is an old pine tree leaning against another one. I'll slip around and crawl up that and look in the back window and see if he is dead. The rest of you stay here and wait for me."

Cautiously Brewer raised his head. Crash! A bullet from Bill Roberts' rifle drilled him squarely between the eyes. The posse held a council. For a leader they chose William Bonney, the youngest one of the bunch.

"Smoke him out," he ordered. A fusillade of bullets was poured into the hut. It seemed inconceivable that anything could live in such a hail of shooting. Then stopped. The posse waited. Nothing happened. Then another and all the posse were in front of the door. And there was the man, a bullet through his head, the last bullet he had extracted from his saddlebag and bleeding from numerous wounds. Coe frequently called "The Kid."

The Kid stated to Tunstall's partner that the Englishman was the only person who had ever broken square with him and that he intended to hunt him down. And the posse rode away, following their prey. The next day they, by a ruse, captured Baker and

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lived by the gun must die by the gun. He and two out of his former numerous followers rode on the outlaw trail. The rest were freed by the courts of New Mexico in less than a year's time.

Charlie Bowdrie and Tom O'Fallen chose to follow their leader and were allowed to depart un-
molested.

The next day was published the first official edict, outlawing Billy the Kid. Peace officers were instructed to kill him on sight, and that his arrest was warranted by anyone, either dead or alive, and preferably dead.

From then on, Billy the Kid led the life of a hunted man. As he had about as many friends as enemies, he managed to escape capture. Finally a man named Pat Garrett was elected sheriff of Lincoln County with the express understanding that he would arrest the outlaw. Many of his henchmen

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"NEVER FOOL WITH A FOOL."
(Continued from Page Two)
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The OX Ranch at Tascosa, Texas, had sent a gang of cowboys by Jim East to scout the New Mexico country for stock reported stolen from their range by Billy the Kid. Pat Garrett ate dinner at this wagon.

"I think the Kid has your cattle," he said. "And if you help me, we will get the Kid also."

They all eagerly volunteered. Accordingly they rode northwest from Fort Sumner. A passing Mexican was sent with a message to the Kid informing him that Pat Garrett was coming after all stolen cattle. "I'll be there," he said. "I'll be there," he said. "I'll be there," he said.

And then Pat Garrett proved his mettle as a true man tracker. Horses were saddled and they followed the tracks of the fleeing horseman. A cold norther had blown up. Snow began to fall and the thermometer was dropping rapidly. Finally the tracks were obliterated. Some of the posse suggested stopping. But Pat Garrett, knowing the country, took a chance.

"Just one place for shelter in all this country," he said. "That's a little rock cabin at Stinking Springs."

Daylight was just showing as they reached there. The place had no windows and only one door. The snow was now three feet deep and the cold 20 degrees below zero. During the night a renegade had joined the party. He had formerly been a friend of the Kid but seeing the signs of the times, had switched his allegiance and to return for immunity for past offenses wanted to assist in hunting him down. He urged Pat Garrett to riddle the cabin with bullets and rush it.

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