

Original Story for Screen

OREGON TRAIL

By

-WINNIFRED REEVE-

Original Story for Screen based on novel by
Winnifred Reeve.

T H E O R E G O N T R A I L

By

WINNIFRED REEVE

SEQUENCE A

FADE IN:

An Indian Village.

From out of the sky vaguely and hazily, swooping down over the village comes the emaciated and ghostly figure of FAMINE.

The Village itself is revealed in a state of destitution and misery.

Against the skyline appear four fiery columns of smoke, and at the same time is heard the arousing beat of Indian drums. This is the Indian summons to a counsel.

There is a stir in the village and the Indians are seen leaving their tents and wigwams. Like a swarm of shadows they plod and push dumbly along toward a hill slope.

On the crest of the hill a young Indian chief stands silhouetted against the sky. His arms are extended, his face is passionate and exalted. Below him, on the slope of the hill, is the great congregation of silent Indians. The young chief addresses them.

He tells them that unless the white men are driven from the Indian hunting grounds the Indians will not live throughout the coming winter. Already they are dying like flies from starvation and plague. No longer do the buffalo roam the plains and prairies. The deer have gone from the forests. The white men have slaughtered the natural food of the Indian for their fur and hides. Now a horde of white people have gathered at Independence and are preparing to invade the Oregon lands in overwhelming numbers. They are forerunners of the hosts of whites who seek to rob the Indian of the land of his forefathers. Unless they are driven back the Indians will starve to death or be forced out of his own lands. The time has come when the Indian must repel the advance of these white people. They must be prevented from crossing the Cascades.

His words are greeted by savage cheers. Through the clamoring throngs a very old chief pushes his way to the fore until he comes alongside the young chief on the brow of the hill. He raises his hands to command silence.

Old Chief

*I have hung the scalps of many
white men upon my belt - but
always came more white men!*

Young Chief

They shall come no more!

Old Chief

*They are rich! We are poor!
They are many! We are few!
Their government is powerful
and remorseless. The Indian
has no friends but his brothers.*

Young Chief

*Are our hearts those of rabbits?
Shall we lie down and permit the
white man to trample upon us?*

The old chief tries to raise his voice above the roar.

*The young chief places his arm about the old chief's shoulders
and commands silence - old age must be respected.*

Old Chief

*War is terrible! Let us deal
with the chiefs of these white
people! Let us demand justice!*

Young Chief

*For justice they will give -
promises! Who can believe
the word of a white man? We
must drive them back!*

Old Chief

*We cannot dam up the ocean
with our hands.*

YOUNG CHIEF

(shouting)

The Thunder God fights within us!
Ee-yah! Eeii---ya-a-a-a!

*The Indians take up the cry. They begin to circle,
screaming and shouting and yelling, as they move in a
savage war dance.*

FADE OUT.

SEQUENCE B

FADE IN

A trail winding around the side of a precipitous canyon wall.

Two riders are loping along. Their outfit consists of their horses, surefooted, swift and tough Indian ponies, and two pack mules, in charge of an Indian who plods along behind. The older of the two men is Ren Bullock. He is tall, long-legged, with hair the color of corn-shuck and a long lean body. His eyes are clear and his face tanned. He has a look of intelligence and honesty and is as strong as a young ox. He is a Missourian. His speech is slow and drawling. He hesitates before speaking as if weighing his words. He never hurries, yet, at the right moment, seems literally to spring like lightning into vivid action and life.

His companion is of a totally different type. A happy go lucky, light-hearted, careless, pleasure-loving and likeable young chap with a natural quality of refinement about him. He goes by the name of Thad Jones. The two men are close pals, and partners.

As they ride along, Ren sitting loosely ahorse, and looking out silently before him and Thad whirling his lariat and whistling the night begins to fall softly around them. The wind sings in the pine tops and through the canyon walls. A silvery sunlight, a glow of fading red still lingers in the sky. Ren points vaguely.

REN

That's one plumb fine sight - that
thar sunset.

Thad laughs. It is natural for him to laugh.

THAD

I've seen prettier sunsets
than that in Kentucky.

REN

You come from Kentucky?
You never told me that
before.

THAD
(uneasily)

That's right - I've never told anyone.
Mebbe I had a reason.

Ren nods understandingly.

The shadows deepen about them. They top the brow of
a hill and draw rein to look down across a great sweep of
plain. There, in a wide valley below them, the flares of
a score of campfires are seen.

THAD

How many are there?

REN

Two thousand.

THAD
(Anxiously)

That's a considerable job
you've taken on. Think you
can pilot two thousand immi-
grants into the Oregon?

REN
(with a wry smile)

What me? Reckon I'll be lookin'
for a heap a help from you young one.

THAD
(chest swelling)

Well I reckon we can manage somehow.

Sound of music and singing comes floating upon the air.

THAD

Listen to them singing.
Sounds like gospel hymns.

REN
(nodding)

They's a powerful lot of religion 'mong them. Guess we better be driftin' along. They'll be lookin' fer us.

THAD

Let's go on into the town first. I got a parched throat and an empty stomach. And I'm aiming to stretch out on a real bed.

Ren gives him a good humored thump on the back.

REN

We'll ride on into the town and look up our friends down thar later.

They turn their horses heads and move off.

THE IMMIGRANT ENCAMPMENT.

This is a large field or plain on the outskirts of the town of Independence (now a part of Kansas City). Here a host of immigrants, hunters, trappers, voyageurs, traders, gamblers, adventurers, missionaries, teachers, farmers, as well as the rag tag and bobtail and outcasts of the frontier

town have gathered from all parts of the country to keep a rendezvous at the starting off place for the Oregon trail.

Vehicles of all manner and kind form an immense circle about a central point.

The flares of campfires, stream up, flooding the place with a mellow light, illuminating the faces of these hardy adventurers and pioneers.

In a way this scene should parallel the Indian scene in as much as the immigrants are addressed by their commander in chief Colonel Blair Appleton.

The Colonel is a man of striking appearance, six feet four, stalwart and strong in spite of his sixty-five years. His glance is keen and piercing from under beetling brows. His carriage is military yet his whole personality emanates a fine graciousness and cheer.

He thanks the immigrants for electing him commander in chief. He tells them that they are about to set out into an unknown country - a country reputed to be a land of Milk and Honey. In glowing words he paints Oregon - the richness of its soil - the trees loaded with fruit - the streams abounding in fish; the forest alive with game; to say nothing of the fabulous possibilities from trade with the Indians; the pelts of beaver, of silver-fox, of mink, of ermine and other fur-bearing animals. He declaires Oregon to be the greatest agricultural country in the world needing only the courageous pioneers to break its soil and dig from its bowels its mineral wealth.

The camera pans around the circle of faces of the pioneers. Nearly every man and woman there is inspired by hope and the desire to reach the "Promised Land." Their commander's words evoke the wildest enthusiasm and excitement and he is cheered to the echo.

We show Colonel Appleton's own wagon. This is an especially fine covered wagon, practically a moving household.

Standing up on the back step of the wagon looking out over the heads of the engrossed crowd is the Colonel's pretty daughter, Sally Lou. She is thrilled and excited and does not hesitate to join in the applause for her father.

From behind Sally comes out of the wagon Mandy, an old black nurse and mammy. Mammy beams at the loudly clapping Sally Lou but her attention is distracted by a less pleasing object. From around the side of the wagon a tall black boy with a bullet head and rolling eyes comes slouching lazily to the fore, a bucket of water in his hand which spills and shakes as Mose moves along. Just as he comes under where Sally is standing Mose puts his thumb and fore-finger into his mouth and lets out a most unearthly whistle.

Mandy casts one enraged glance at Mose and then reaching out her left foot she gives him a hard prod on the head knocking him over and the pail of water spilling as he falls.

SALOON AND DANCE HALL

This is in the town of Independence.

The atmosphere of the place is smoky and sultry.

Rough men of all sorts and kind are about the place gambling, making love to the girls, drinking and lining the bar.

Here are dark French Canadian Voyageurs, long blonde Missourians, Mexicans, Swedes, Yanks, Jews, Englishmen, big fellows from the frontier towns.

Handsfull of silver are thrown or slapped down upon the bar. All comers are treated regardless.

The fiddles scrape and the music rises above the discordant murmurs and imprecations. Buxom girls of all colors spin out upon the floor. They are grabbed by the men, whooping with delight, and they thumping or spinning with them across the floor. Near fights or real ones are precipitated and averted.

One black eyed girl - she is known as Black Eyed Susan is the center of a group of men all clamoring to dance or drink with her. Sue has large, bold, roving eyes. Everyone is asking her where Bull is and she says he's somewhere in town. One fellow says; "Well don't tell on me!" He pinches her on the backside and gives her a good smack on the lips. Susan though she laughs gives him a push.

The one subject of conversation everywhere is - OREGON. Everybody is talking of Oregon, and the immense train of Immigrants starting out for the Oregon lands. Even the dancing girls talk Oregon to their partners. Some of them ask the men if they are going too, and when the men nod,

they pretend to bid them mock farewells, saying that the man who goes into Oregon never comes out. They make jokes about not liking baldheads, and the Indians always get their men. They think it funny to suggest that 2000 scalps will make a splendid carpet for Indian wigwams. They say that Immigrant scalps are especially soft.

In one of the rooms of the saloon, Bull Doreen and his men are also discussing the Immigrants. Bull is a huge, brutal looking customer. He wears a red flannel shirt and buckskin breeches. His knife is stuck in his belt, his gun on his hip.

Bull has done a profitable and illicit trade among the Indians, supposedly as a trapper; in reality as a vendor of corn whiskey and rum. The Indians have cached away immense quantities of valuable silver fox and beaver pelts. Bull is anxious to get up into the country to trade his booze for this fur, before the immigrants pour in. If once they settle upon the land; if in fact they reach the Willamette valley ahead of Bull's outfit, his business will be ruined. Already too many immigrants have gone through. Now this largest of all trains - 2000 strong - will spread over the Indian lands like locusts. It will mean the end of Bull's trade with the Indians.

In the saloon, some commotion and stir is occasioned by the arrival of the two young scouts Ren and Thad. They are popular and well known, and their entrance is greeted with whoops. The young fellows goodnaturedly set up the drinks for the crowd.

Bull and his men have also come into the saloon, and at a signal from Bull Susan speeds to his side. He gives her some orders, and she nods and hurries to obey him. Susan insinuates her way through the crowd till she manages to come alongside Thad and slips her hand through his arm. Thad has had a couple of drinks and is in high good humor. He looks down his shoulder and meets Susan's black seductive eyes.

SUSAN

'Lo Thad! Gee, I'm sure glad to see you. Where you been?

THAD

I'm glad to see you too, Susy.
I've been up in the woods for sometime.

SUSAN

Pretty lonesome, ain't it? You wuz always fond of good times.

THAD
(uneasily, yet affected)

Well, I got into a peck of trouble with good times.

Ren, leaning against the bar, with a couple of girls interposing between him and his partner. Ren gives a wry squint across at the pair, and then as the bartender puts another drink before Thad, and as Thad picks it up, Ren reaches a long arm across and takes the glass from his hand. His action is good humored, but firm. There is a squall of protest.

REN

Guess we better be driftin' along

partner. Them immigrants is waitin' fer us.

The girls and men make remarks:

"Let 'em wait."

"What's the hurry?"

"You'll be a long time on the trail
with those psalm singing folk. Wait a bit!"

And so forth. Susan is hanging tight onto Thad, and her body is pressed against him. Thad's glance shifts from his pal to Sue. He feels a bit sheepish.

SUSAN

Gee, I've missed you! The town's not been the same since you left.

Ren's attention is turned from his pal, by Bull's greeting.

BULL

How're you -- Ren Bullock?

Ren slowly turns, and still leaning up against the bar he looks with a queer, quizzical slowly sizing up glance at Bull Dorien.

BULL

What you doin' in Independence?

REN

What me?

BULL

Thought you was up in the Oregon.

REN

What me?

BULL

How's tradin' and trappin' up to the North?

REN

You oughter know. You wuz up there recent - talkin' with your Indian friends, wasn't you?

Bull glares. Ren grins. His grin is not without a touch of boyish malice. Almost lazily and reluctantly he slouches a bit nearer to the black browed Bull. Bull's glance goes by Ren. His eyes bore like gimlets into Susan's. Hers reflect their momentary fear.

Thad, as his pal moves toward Bull, half starts to follow. The bartender has set another glass before Susan. She lifts it first toward her own lips and then coaxingly toward his. Thad holds back a moment; but the liquor and Susan's eyes are too much for the weak Thad. He swallows, licks and smacks his lips. Another glass slid across the bar. Thad glances at it wistfully out of the tail of his eye. Susan lifts it to his lips. He holds back a moment, and then, his eyes on Susan he downs it. Susan plucks at his sleeve. She puts her lips against his ear and whispers. Thad's drowsy eyes glean with awakening desire, for Susan's body is pressed against his. He swallows, his head nodding. They move off.

Ren does not see them go. Elbow on bar, his back against it, Ren's wry glance is on Bull. Bull shifts his tobacco, spits, waits for the smiling Ren to speak. Ren says not a word.

BULL

Hear tell yo're plannin' to steer
them Immigrants up to the Willamette.

REN

What me?

BULL

What trail you aimin' to go by?

Ren pushes back his wide hat, scratches his head
thoughtfully.

REN

Which would you take if you was me?

BULL

You'll never get across the Divide
with them wagons.

REN

Reckon you're right.

BULL

And there ain't a chance of them green
tenderfeet crossin' the Columbia neither.

REN

Now you got me worried.

Bull slouches nearer to him. He lowers his voice to
a husky whisper.

BULL

That ain't no man's job -- playin'
nursemaid to a hunch of soft immigrants.

Ren considers this, screwing up his eyes thoughtfully.

REN

Mebbe you're right.

BULL

What're they payin' you?

REN

We--cl-- the price ain't exactly
set yet.

Bull comes back quickly this time.

BULL

Whatever they offer -- I'll
double -- see?

Ren raises his eyes wide with apparent surprise
and unholy joy.

REN

Thought you knew the Oregon Country
better than I did.

BULL

So I do. I ain't hirin' you for a
guide.

Ren's manner is guileless and friendly. His eye now
lifts unquestioningly. He lets the other do the talking.

BULL

Without guides them Immigrants can't
get beyond the Dalles. They'll never
get across the Columbia. There ain't no
other guides to be had.

REN

That so?

BULL
(confidentially)

You know it. What's more we don't want
them Immigrants up in the Oregon. They
ain't good fer nothin'. They'll spread

all over the land like lice.

Ren appears to be impressed.

REN

I hadn't thought a that.

BULL

The Oregon ain't no country fer
the likes a them. The Indians
aren't lookin' for no religion.
What they want is booze.

REN

I'm thinkin' what the Indians need
is -- food.

BULL

Well where they gonna get the food
if them Immigrants settle on their
land?

REN

It ain't the Immigrants that's poison
to the Indians. They'll do a fair and
honest trade with them. It's the fellows
with the Booze that ---

He stops abruptly and smiles at Bull.

REN

Fergot all about that bein' ye're
game, Bull.

BULL
(angry)

It don't make no difference what my
game is. I put a proposition up to
ya. Is it yes or no?

REN
(considering)

I'll talk it over with my pardner --

He glances toward where Thad had been, and straightens up.

Ren

Well guess I'll drift. See you later.

He moves away, strolling lazily along, good-naturedly pushing aside the girls that come around him, or pausing to joke, throwing a handfull of silver on the bar and treating all hands except himself, and "drifting" off gradually till he comes to a door, giving upon an alley way and exits.

Once outside, his careless lazy manner changes. He is alert, as he looks swiftly about him. With a hand to the side of his mouth he gives forth a peculiar whistle three times. At first there is no response. Ren whistles again.

From a room at the far end of the alley, where a dim light shows comes somewhat waveringly Thad's answering whistle. Ren wheels about, and is off in the direction from which the whistle has come.

THE IMMIGRANT ENCLAMPMENT

The camp presents a cheerful appearance. Groups of cattle, horse and other stock are grazing on the prairie hardby, while the numerous white tents, the wagon covers and the flares and glow of the brightly burning campfires give almost the appearance of a village, or a homelike community. The music of the fiddle and guitar are heard, and around

the Colonel's wagon, a number of young folks are gathered, some of them dancing a gay measure on the greensward.

Sitting by the fires, on the steps of their wagons, on boxes, or camp stools, the older people look on indulgently.

Gayest of all the young people and the most sought after is Sally Lou, laughing as she dances, and having her hands full keeping pace among the young blades of the party already contesting for her favor.

Over the brow of a hill, that lies between the encampment and the town of Independence, a party of horsemen are seen. They ride down toward the Immigrant camp, dismount outside the circle and come into the enclosure. They are Bull Dorien and a couple of his men. Bull inquires who is in charge of the expedition and is directed to Colonel Appleton. Bull's manner is all affability as he holds out his hand to the Colonel and explains that he is a trader and trapper up in the Oregon country; that he is returning there the following day and thought possibly he could be of some assistance to the train -- perhaps the Immigrants could use a couple of fine guides. Colonel Appleton thanks him but replies that they have already arranged to employ two well known scouts - Ren Bullock and Thad Jones. The two men have been highly recommended by the Hudsons Bay Company at Fort VanCouver with whom the Colonel has been in correspondence and he has been informed that they know every inch of the country and are absolutely reliable.

BULL

You ain't speakin' of Ren
Bullock and Thad Jones?

COLONEL

Those are the names of our guides,
sir.

Bull whistles.

BULL

Well that's too bad!

COLONEL

What do you mean?

Bull pretends to hesitate and shakes his head as if worried.

COLONEL

Kindly explain yourself, sir.

BULL

We-el ya see - them two fellows are up in town on a spree. There ain't a chance of them bein' able to pull out for several days.

This statement causes immense excitement among the Immigrants, who are crowding about the Colonel's wagon. Sally runs up beside her father and takes his arm. Everyone around is talking at once, and the word soon spreads right and left throughout the camp that their guides are on a drunk. The Immigrants are opposed to trusting their fortunes to a couple of drunkards.

While the matter is being heatedly debated and argued, a curious little cavalcade rides into the encampment. Sitting straight and easy in the saddle is Ren Bullock. He is leading

another horse across which is the dead drunk Thad, clumsily concealed by a great burlap spread. He brings his horse to a stop, puts back his wide hat and scratches his head as if puzzled. As he raises his voice the Immigrants turn and look toward him. Ren rides right into the circle.

REN

Can any of you folks tell me who all is in charge here?

Colonel Appleton steps forward. He bows a bit stiffly. Ren looks down at him from his place on his horse, and then quite by chance his glance goes beyond the Colonel, and he sees Sally Lou. Sally is standing by her father's side. She is watching the new arrival with tense interest. For a moment the two young people look at each other, and then with an embarrassed motion, Ren awkwardly removes his big hat and dismounts. He stands between the two horses, holding their heads by the reins. He has not heard a word of Colonel Appleton's dignified explanation, to the effect that he has been elected commander in chief; that there are three divisions each with its individual captain, and that every man in the outfit has been assigned to some special duty. He pauses to ask Ren who he is and what he wants. Ren replies; "I'm your guide, sir."

During the foregoing a certain inquiring spinster has been suspiciously looking at the burden on the other horse's back. She has edged near to it, and has begun to lift the

burlap, when her hand touches something and she emits a squeel of terror.

SPINSTER

What's that?

REN

Jes a piece of no account
baggage, maam.

The spinster looks at him in suspicion. She edges over to the Colonel and says in a hollow whisper;

SPINSTER

Colonel -- it's a corpse!

Bull, who had kept in the background, gives the wink to one of his men. The latter is a skinny, foxy little one-eyed man named Lefty. Left slips over and pulls the burlap from the sprawled over figure, revealing Thad, lying face downward, his head dangling over one side of the horse, his legs on the other. There are screams from some of the women.

REN

It's just my pardner.

(slightly embarrassed)

He's takin' a little sleep.

LEFTY
(cackling)

He's drunk.

The Immigrants by now are thoroughly opposed to being guided by such a disreputable pair. Colonel Appleton tells Ren that the deal is off. Ren is disposed to argue the matter. He and his pardner have come all the way from the Willamette Valley to take on the job. They are good guides -- none better

in the country. What's more the Immigrants will have a hard time finding guides who know the Oregon Trail. Col. Appleton tells him they have already engaged other men, and he indicates Lefty and Pete. Ren stares at the two men, and then his glance rests on Bull. A wry smile twists his features.

REN

I'm powerful sorry for you, sir.
Guess me and my pal'll drift.

He throws his leg over his horse's back, and moves off. He has barely reached the side of the encampment when he is hailed by a curious looking man, who comes running after him. Ren pulls up, and looks down at the bespectacled little man, with rifle slung on his shoulder, and helmet on his head, a portfolio under his arm, and his pockets bulging with various articles. Ren's face lights with a friendly grin.

DIGGINS

One minute! I'll have a word with you.

REN

Yes sir?

DIGGINS

My name's Diggins - Prof. Alonzo Diggins. I'm going into Oregon by the mountain route to make a practical study of geological strata and flora of that interesting region. I need a guide.

REN

Fine. I'm your man, sir.

DIGGINS

You're engaged.

REN

How many are you?

DIGGINS

Just myself, sir. "He travels
the fastest who travels alone."

REN
(smiling)

Reckon ye're right. Me and my
pardner was engaged to take two
thousand so I reckon we can handle your
outfit of one.

DIGGINS

That's my wagon over there. It's
completely outfitted with every
scientific instrument and implement
necessary for such a trip.

They are moving along toward Diggins wagon.

REN

I hope it's outfitted with plenty of
food, sir. It takes a powerful lot of
food for a four months' trip to the Oregon.

DIGGINS

Yes, yes, food of course -- the necessary
evil I suppose. But as I was saying, the
scientific importance --

They are now at Diggins wagon. Diggons is proudly
opening the flap and has crawled into the wagon but Ren does
not follow him. Ren has made the delightful discovery that
the next wagon to Diggins is none other than the Appleton
wagon, on the steps of which sits Sally Lou.

Ren stands perfectly still, smiling at Sally. Sally,
forgetting herself, starts to return the smile and then her
face becomes very cool as she tosses her head and looks over
the head of Ren as if he were not there at all.

SALLY

Mandy!

MANDY'S VOICE
(inside wagon)

Yes, Miss Sally Lou.

SALLY

I'll be right in, Mandy.

She stands up. Out of the tail of her eye she manages to see that the young man is still standing looking at her and then Sally goes inside.

Ren gives a big blissful sigh and turns to Diggin's wagon.

SEQUENCE C

The Immigrant train is now on its way. The long line of wagons, horses, mules, herds of cattle and other stock move like an army in review. Wide-horned oxen yoked eight to a wagon. These wagons moving households in which the family life is carried on.

Hickory shirted teamsters roaring "Whoos" or cursing the oxen. Singing, shouting niggers; corn-crackers in homespun and high boots "gee-hawing" their mule teams. Teamsters, cracking eight foot bull whips and squirting yellow tobacco juice from bulging jaws; wagons milling in their dust. Some of the owners of the outfits driving in light sprung wagons; others ahorse. Men plodding afoot at the side of each wagon.

Healthy children, rosy faces, peering from the wagons.

Buxom damsels in sunbonnets and cotton dresses on the front seats of the wagon, beside the driver, or driving themselves. Others riding horseback, with a youngster or two behind them.

Some of the women knitting and sewing as the wagons move along. Others idly strumming on banjo or guitar.

In the rear of the caravan the droves of cattle and an endless army of mules.

Immediately following the guides, at the head of the long parade comes the fine covered wagon of the Commander in Chief, Col. Appleton. It is driven by the drawsy Mose, and

sitting beside Mose is Sally Lou. Occasionally Sally Lou takes the reins in her own competent hands, and once she orders the sleepy Mose off the wagon, and the latter tags on afoot, yawning.

Riding alongside the Appleton wagon on a fine Kentucky horse is the Colonel. He looks very splendid and important and Sally is proud of her father. Occasionally the Colonel forgets his dignity, in so far as to ride to the tail of the wagon, from whence Mandy's big black hand issues with some favorite edible or delicacy. The Colonel bites into a luscious doughnut or piece of Johnny cake. Then he clears his throat wipes the crumbs from his vest, straightens up in his saddle and looking very stern and serious, canters down the line of wagons, on a military tour of inspection.

The train is broken up into three companies, each in its way distinctive. The companies are divided from each other by the pack mules, but none the less they are within close touch of each other and then they go into camp all three companies are on hand.

The first of the companies and the largest is made up mainly of the farmers. The second includes the missionaries, teachers and others. The third is made up of a bold congregation of adventurers, gamblers, hunters, trappers and traders. Bull Dorien and a number of his men have cast their lot with this third company. Although each company has its individual captain they are all under the head of the expedition Commander

in Chief, Col. Appleton.

Travelling over a hill trail comes the little train in charge of Thad and Ren. The two young guides are on horseback, but Prof. Diggins sits on the front seat of the prairie schooner, and ever and anon almost gives the driver heart failure, as he leaps agilely out in search of some particular specimen in flora or to examine, on the edge of some steep precipice, certain rock formations.

Once the little professor gets out of the wagon and slides down a cliff to examine some bright specimens he had seen through his field glasses. He seems to have a charmed life, and by clinging to stumps and roots, actually returns with his portfolio of pressed flowers still under his arm and his hand clutching the specimens he went after. Ren and Thad who have dismounted, assist him to the top, but are in no mood to listen to his excited rhapsodies over his find. Ren picks up his field glasses. As he looks off across the skyline, great clouds of dust or sand seem to be arising. Ren puts the glasses to his eyes, and focuses them.

REN

Here they come!

On the lower trail the Immigrant train is coming into sight. Ren watches intently, but his glass moves along the line till it picks out and stays turned on the first wagon of the train. Then he sighs and smiles.

THAD

What are you looking at, Ren?

REN

There's a powerful fine girl in that
first wagon and she's pretty as a daisy,
an' she's different from other gals --

THAD
(laughing)

Well, you old, long-legged cayuse you!

REN

Well take a look fer yerself an' give
yer eyes a treat.

Ren hands the glasses to Thad. Thad focuses them upon the first wagon. The girl in the driver's seat turns her face so that he sees it clearly - she is Sally Lou Appleton. The glasses almost drop from Thad's hands, his lips are quivering, his face has turned pale. Ren gives him a sharp look then he smiles.

REN

Thought you'd get a shock! They
ain't many girls as pretty as that one.

Thad does not reply. His glance shifts nervously about.

REN

What say we go down an' make a
neighborly call?

THAD

One of us ought to stay with the
Professor and the outfit.

REN

Never knew you to be so concerned
with the Professor before.

He turns around in his saddle and gives a beaming look at Thad.

REN

*That's darn handsome of you, Thad.
All right then I'll be driftin' along.*

Twilight is falling. The western sky is like a sea of Mother of Pearl. The inescapable charm of the desert pervades the land.

The caravan of the Immigrants is seen rising and dipping along its course, men, wagons, horses, mules, cattle. Occasionally voices rise and can be heard over a vast distance because of the clearness of the air. Men speak to their horses; shout to each other. The crack of whips is heard. Someone whistles. There is the sound of the clear notes of a bugle, calling for a halt. The train has reached a suitable place for encampment. Now a movement that is almost military ensues. The train is wheeling into three circles, the leading wagons circling along individual tracks, till an almost perfect formation results. As each wagon is brought into position, with their tongues turned toward the center, the teams are unjoked. The cattle turned out to graze. Horses are hobbled. The men fall to work making fires and setting up the rude tents for the night, while the teamsters and mule boys take care of their charges. The women, both in the wagons, and on the ground prepare the evening meal.

Ren is disclosed riding toward the camp. He goes directly to the first wagon, dismounts and stands hesitating-

ly outside for a moment. As he hesitates, Sally Lou's voice inside, calls out;

SALLY LOU

Is that you, darling?

REN
(outside wagon)

Yes--no--that is--er--yes.

There is silence for a moment. Inside the wagon, Sally Lou, who has been setting the table, pauses as she looks at Mandy busy at the stove.

SALLY

That doesn't sound like daddy --

She opens the flap at back and stands looking down at Ren. The latter removes his hat and tries to appear at his ease. Sally gives him a very severe look however.

SALLY

I thought I was speaking to my father.

REN

I was hopin' you might be speakin' to me.

SALLY

You certainly have most extraordinary hopes.

She is about to go inside, when Ren makes an impulsive movement toward her.

REN

*Excuse me, Miss, but I come on down
to pay you all a little neighborly
visit.*

SALLY

*Now I recall you. You were the guide
who got drunk and ---*

REN

*Not me. That was my ornery pardner.
You see I reckoned that mebbe you all
would be needin' real guides.*

SALLY

*We've got along very well with the ones
we have, thank you.*

*Colonel Appleton, who has been on a tour of inspection
over the camp, rides up and dismounts. He does not immediately
recognize Ren, and Sally for the moment forgets that she has
told Ren that all has gone well with them. She asks anxiously;*

SALLY

Well, daddy? Have they found the stock?

APPLETON

*No. Most remarkable and mysterious matter.
Sixty head now -- to say nothing of the
mules.*

SALLY (*distressed*)

*That's dreadful. If this keeps on -- if
we lose any more stock, we won't have
enough to --*

*She stops, recalling Ren. Her father too looks at
the young man inquiringly.*

SALLY

Daddy, this man was to have been
our guide and --

Appleton frowns now.

APPLETON

Rumph!

REN

I'm travelin' over the Mount Hood route,
and I come down thinkin' mebbe you'd be
needin' help --

APPLETON
(curtly)

We are not in need of your services.
I do not believe in swapping horses
amid stream --

SALLY

Oh, Daddy -- er -- maybe this gentleman
could help us find some of our cattle.

REN

You losin' your stock, sir?

APPLETON

Not at all -- nothing to speak of.

He glares grouchily, and then moves to go into the
wagon bellowing:

APPLETON

Mandy!

MANDY (inside)

Ya-as--sir?

APPLETON

Is dinner ready?

MANDY

He's in a shake, Marse Appleton.

Sally Lou steals a rueful glance from her father to Ren. Ren looks at Sally. He smiles. Sally starts to return the smile and then tries to look very dignified and haughty. Ren mounts his horse and rides off.

Sally stands looking after him a moment and then she flashes around on her father.

SALLY

Daddy, I think you were horridly rude.

APPLETON

Now Sally, I know what I'm about. With sixty head of our cattle and any number of mules missing we can't afford to take up with any strangers that come to our camp.

SALLY

He came over to see if he could help us, and that's all the thanks he got.

She runs up steps of wagon and exits inside.

She appears a few minutes later in the front of the wagon where Mose is dosing. She gives him a shake.

SALLY
(in big whisper)

Mose! Mose --you lazy nigger you -- wake up!

MOSE

Ya-as-sum, Miss Sally Lou. What you all want?

SALLY
Look-a-here Mose.

She shows him a generous portion of a chicken and a big piece of cornbread. They are rolled up in a snowy napkin. Mose's eyes roll, and he swallows.

SALLY

Now listen to me Mose. You see that horseman travelin' yonder ----?

MOSE

Yassum, Miss Sally Lou.

SALLY

Well, I want you to ketch up with him. Run your hardest Mose - and I want you to take this chicken to him and you can mention the fact that it's sent with the compliments of Col. Appleton's wagon.

The more Mose looks at the chicken the wider awake he becomes. He takes the napkin with its precious contents from Miss Sally, jumps down from the wagon and is off.

We show Mose. Ahead of him, loping slowly and disconsolately along is Ren. Mose's nostrils dilate. He slackens his pace. Mose lifts the chicken to his nose - sniffs. He begins to go shower and shower. Now he licks his lips. His eyes shift and roll. He stops. He turns back a bit of the napkin, and succumbs to temptation. He takes first a nibble, and then a bigger bite. Finally he swallows the whole of the meal.

SEQUENCE D

A series of dissolve shots should mark the passage and reveal the gradual deterioration of the Immigrant train.

In the beginning it was smooth going. The trail is excellent; the weather clear and fine. Hearts are light and hopes high. The train moves along like a great, well captained army.

Then begins the hazards.

First the almost daily loss of cattle and stock. This, we will bring out, is the work of Bull and his gang, but with the loss of their stock, and the mysterious destruction of harnesses and other equipment, a panic spreads throughout the companies. Arguments and dissensions arise; fostered by agents of Bull. Many are in favor of turning back.

The morale of the companies is weakened. Everyone looks to Col. Appleton for a solution. He has his hands full maintaining order and keeping the peace.

Sally watches wistfully for the return of Ren Bullock. That little olive branch sent by Mose has not proven fruitful. Sally is hurt.

Ren, never having received Sally's gift, (demolished by the hungry Mose) has struck out over the hill route.

Meanwhile, as the Immigrant train proceeds more hazards and hardships were their lot.

Mosquitoes and flies and gnats and ants swarmed in clouds about them. Rattlesnakes and rats got into their wagons. Axels give way. Tops of poorly built wagons were blown off.

Cholera broke out in the camp, taking its heavy toll.

After a vicious sandstorm, when for hours the cutting blasts of hot sand beat back the travellers, filling their nostrils, burning their eyes, with alkali dust, the morale of the train is so affected that a faction arises demanding that they give up the expedition and return. Delegations wait upon the Commander, and when Appleton refuses to accede to their demands, large groups of the Immigrants begin to desert in growing numbers, carrying away with them, not only their own stock and supplies but quite often the property belonging to the others.

Miles over a desert country - no water. A long trek and at last a pool of water. Thirstily the Immigrants dip their cups into the water only to find it alive with squirming tadpoles.

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SEQUENCE E

Indian drums.

Three hundred Indians beating their drums, singing and shouting and circling in a savage war dance. Their dresses simulate wild buffalo and wolves. Their padding feet seem to become louder with every step. As they circle, their women and old men and children, squatting on the ground, wail and screech.

Suddenly from over the hill resound other wild war whoops. A crowd of horsemen appear and ride full speed toward the circling Indians. Another tribe has come to join. As they ride, each warrior sings his war song. They are in war regalia, antelope skins and eagle feathers, and around their tunics they carry the scalps of their enemies. On their backs are bows and arrows, and some carry long lances. Their advent is greeted with savage zeal and joy. They join the circling warriors, themselves forming an outer circle on horse.

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SEQUENCE F.

A thickly wooded glen.

Here we find encamped, Ren and his outfit. It is midday, and their horses are saddled; their mules yoked to the wagon, yet they are not moving. The delay is caused by the absence of Diggins who has wandered off, in his usual way. Ren is a bit uneasy, and sends his Indian off to look for Diggins.

There will be dialogue here between Ren and Thad bringing out that they are now in Indian territory, and have been about three months on the trail. The train had left in mid-July. It is now mid-September. Ren, a thorough woodsman, and knowing the country well, has taken excellent care of his outfit. They show no signs of hardship. Thad is bored.

We cut to another part of the woods, and show the wandering Diggins. Magnifying glass in hand he is absorbedly peering through it at some specimen.

Watching him from behind the interlacing shrubbery is an Indian. He drops on his knees, crawls a few paces on the ground, kneels up, takes his quiver and bow and aims.

The arrow comes in and barely grazes the cheek of the abstracted and absorbed Diggins. The latter merely blinks makes an absent motion with his hand and continues to examine

specimen.

The Indian in the woods has been joined by others -- five of them. They are creeping silently and stealthily toward the unconscious Diggins. Now they are on their feet, in a semicircle behind him. One of them brings his two hands down on Diggins shoulders, and the latter is swung around. One of them knocks the helmet off Diggins head which is revealed as practically bald, save for a tuft of hair in front. Startled, but not terrified, the little scientist looks up at the Indians, and then guilelessly smiles. The Indians are puzzled. Diggins makes a confident, friendly motion, and says he'll show them something very remarkable. He holds the magnifying glass over an ant. It becomes enormously enlarged under the glass. The Indians are astonished. They look under the glass - start to touch it and then draw back, afraid. Diggins, pleased with their interest, shows them his other treasures - the portfolio of pressed flowers; the microscope, etc. The Indians are really amazed. They look at Diggins with respect. Undoubtedly he is a magic man and these are his talismans and charms. Diggins traps the heat from the sun with his magnifying glass and burns the hand of first one then another Indian. The Indians are divided between fleeing or taking the magic man. Diggins decides for them. He is extremely interested in the Indians and has set his glasses more firmly on his nose to study them. Making signs to them, he suggests that he

would like to accompany them. One of the Indians speaks English and interprets. The others nod vigorously. They are now very friendly. The leader takes off his moccasins. Diggins asks what this means, and the interpreter replies:

INTERPRETER

*It is the peace sign of our tribe,
and means; "May I forever go barefoot,
if I deal not truly by thee."*

So pleased is Diggins to hear this, and anxious to study the Indians at close quarters in their own village and wigwams, that he takes out a real treasure, in the shape of a gold watch. This he dangles by the chain before the chief, holds it to his ear and presents it to him. Then stooping he takes off his own shoes. The Indians raise their hands, circle him in a dance of peace.

During the foregoing, Ren's Indian is seen watching from behind a screen of bushes.

REN'S CAMP

The sound of muffled Indian drums is heard. Ren, concerned, is listening. His Indian, Bowlegs, comes on. Ren asks him where Diggins is and Bowlegs explains that he has made friends with the Indians and gone with them.

REN

*I reckon that's the last of little
Diggins --*

INDIAN

Indians think him magic man.
They no harm him.

REN
(grimly)

Well, they'll have a hard time
scalping him anyway.

INDIAN

He only got small piece of hair
in front.

The drums seem to be coming louder.

REN

I been hearin' them drums all day.
What do they mean?

BOWLEGS
(somberly)

They speak the language of war.
Many braves of many tribes gather
a moon's journey to the east.

Ren is startled.

REN

What are they gathering for?

BOWLEGS

Maybe perhaps they attack white men.

Ren turns about sharply. Thad, who has been stretched
out on the ground half asleep, raises himself on his elbow.

THAD

Think there's any danger?

REN

There's always danger.

He speaks to the Indian. He decides to dispatch him with a message to Hudson's Bay at Fort Vancouver, asking them to send down boats and supplies so that the Immigrants may make the passage down the Columbia River unmolested and safely. Leaving Thad in charge of the outfit, Ren rides off to scout the neighborhood for signs of Indians and a possible truce of Diggins. Bowlegs, mounted on Thad's horse, is off to the Hudson's Bay Fort. Thad left alone is in a bad humor and sulky.

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SEQUENCE G

Dawn is breaking over the Snake River.

It discloses the Immigrant encampment at the base of a great canyon wall. Of the 2000 souls that had left Independence, but two hundred remain.

The bugle summons everyone to the morning council. Col. Appleton, calls the roll of his people. There is a brief summing up of the resources of the train, and then the old Colonel breaks some painful news. During the night, their two guides have deserted the train, taking with them the best of the mules and raiding the supply wagons.

This is the crowning blow. Their supplies are depleted, their best mules gone; they have no guides to lead them. It is characteristic of these hardy pioneers however that after the first consternation and shock, they swiftly rally, and in a short time, men are picked for a posse to go out in search of the renegade guides and carry out without mercy the punishment decreed by the crude little court.

Riding through a thickly wooded mountain trail, Ren stops suddenly, as he sees coming up over the circuitous canyon route the two guides, Lefty and Pete. They are driving a number of mules and are riding Appleton's Kentucky horses. Ren dismounts. From behind a giant rock, thickly overgrown with brush, Ren watches the men as they come up around the circling trail, passing one by one over the peak

of the foothill. For a moment Ren, puzzled, and at the same time having his suspicions aroused, pauses, and then he follows.

When the last mule goes over the crest and dips down to the other side, Ren realizes that he is taking a chance if he follows, as he will be clearly seen from below. So he takes a perilous trail around the edge of the cliff that comes out presently into the same canyon for which the guides are making.

He sees, then, camped in a glen halfway down the mountain, near the falls, the company of trappers and others who had left the Immigrant train with Bull Dorien. After watching the camp for a few moments, Ren remounts and rides back along the trail over which he had come.

Ren returns to his camp. He sees no sign of Thad. Giving his customary whistle, he receives no reply. A survey of the wagon and the hobbled mules show, everything more or less shipshape, though one mule is missing. Again he sends out the three whistle signals that the two men are accustomed to give. No reply. Ren whistles again, and this time, there is an answering shout, but not of the sort he had expected. It sounds as if someone were hollering with hands to mouth. It is not an Indian call.

While Ren looks about him puzzled the Immigrant Posse ride into sight and dismount.

Ren hears their story, and his own face becomes as grim as theirs.

It is now getting toward sundown. The men of the posse are weary. Their horses are watered and turned out, hobbled to graze. Ren builds a fire, and soon has bacon and potatoes sizzling over it. The Immigrants eat ravenously. Ren learns that for days the entire train has been on rations.

BULL'S CAMP

The flares from the campfires light the circle of rough faces. It is about ten o'clock at night.

Sprawled on the ground, is Thad. He is half drunk and tossing dice with a number of men.

Prominent in the circle about the fire are the two guides from the Immigrant train. They are talking to Bull, who grunts with approval. Occasionally the men guffaw and slap their sides. There are about a dozen or more men in the outfit - some of them from the original train, hunters, trappers, voyageurs and others, as well as Bull's own rum sellers.

Suddenly three whistles are heard from out the bush. Thad lifts his head and half unconsciously he replies to the whistles. Bull starts up;

BULL
(furiously)

Who you signalling to?

From outside the circle comes the answer from a quiet drawling voice, as Ren lazily strolls toward the fire.

REN

What me?

Thad has partly recovered from his fright, and his shaking hand reaches for the booze. Bull whirls around and sees the coolly smiling Ren.

BULL

Well you, then - who you whistlin' to?

Ren has come up at the back of Thad and, as if by accident, his knee knocks the drink from Thad's hand. The latter looks about him uneasily. Bull strides over till he is facing Ben.

BULL

Thad has joined up with my outfit.

REN

What -- Thad?

BULL

Ye-eh - Thad.

Thad squirms miserably as Ren's keen glance rests on him a moment.

REN

That so?

BULL

Ye-eh - thas so. Ask him.

Come on, Thad - speak up.

THAD

I -- I -- th-think ---
(gulping)

BULL

I got enough on him to put the
rope around his neck.

Thad crouches back.

REN

'Less it gits round your own
first.

As if unaware of the menacing movement toward him,
Ren turns around and his eyes sweep the circle. A sardonic
smile breaks over his face, as his glance becomes fixed on
the two guides.

REN

Thought you wuz packin' along
with the Immigrants.

LEFTY

Aw -- they're on their way back.

REN

You don't say. (guilelessly)

And are they leavin' their horses and
mules behind?

BULL (raging)

What business is that of yours?

REN

Oh, I wuz jes mildly interested.

BULL

You're the only white or red man in

BULL continued

these parts wants to see them
immigrants git to Oregon.

REN (thoughtfully)

I reckon it wouldn't be so good for
some folks. Here tell the Immigrants
are takin' through ploughs and threshers
instead of RUM.

Bull pulls off his hat and sends it sailing into the dark. He peels his buckskin shirt over his head and flings it to the ground. The group fall back, making a wide circle, their excited faces lighted by the camp fire flares.

Ren, who out of the tail of his eye, has watched the action of the other, but has made no stir, suddenly takes a step forward and drives in with a right swing. Bull ducks back, tries to run in and catches Ren's left with the side of his head. He falls a dozen feet away, but comes up spluttering and cursing, with blood trickling down the side of his face. He circles the other warily. Bull is bigger and a gorilla for strength, though Ren is half a head taller and strong as a young ox. He waits for Bull with knees and hands lifted. Bull spits curses, and calls him vile names challenging him to come on. Ren has a slight smile on his face - a cool, amused look, and his left eyebrow lifts quizzically. The infuriated Bull springs suddenly, driving with a lifted knee and hard left. Ren sidesteps and gives him a terrific jolt in the belly. The blow lands with a

great thud. Bull stops in his tracks, while Ren throws a long right at his mouth that splits it open. Bull sits down, spitting blood and nearly mad with rage.

The crowd is yelling and roaring.

From out of the darkness and shadows of the encircling woods, step the Immigrants, their guns cocked. Involuntarily hands are up.

Lefty and Pete are nearly petrified with terror. Pete makes a dive for freedom but finds an iron grip upon his neck, as he is jerked back. Lefty, shaking and stuttering tries to explain that they'd only come for a visit and to get some help for the train. The Immigrants say nothing. They are doing their work competently. While a couple of them round up the lost mules, hobbled hardby; place packs of supplies upon their backs, others keep their guns cocked on the company, while the group about the now screaming, squealing guides deliberately place nooses about their necks, and prepare to hang them then and there within sight of the camp.

A hunter hoarsely demands to know what the men have done, and Ren's quiet, incisive voice answers for the Immigrants. They have committed the crime of crimes in that country. They had taken on the job of guiding two thousand people into the Oregon country. They have misled and finally deserted them. As a last act of cruelty, they

have stolen the Immigrants mules and most of their chuck.

The men are hanged in the presence of the entire camp.

The little company of Immigrants and Ren, with their mules and supplies, are leaving. Several of the hunters are returning with them. They prefer to cast their fate again with the Immigrant train rather than continue with Bull's outfit. Ren is on his horse. He looks dead serious; almost sad, as he throws a last look at the now almost deserted camp. A figure comes staggering toward him. It is Thad.

THAD

Ren!

REN

Yes - pardner.

THAD

I'd like to go with you ----
b-b-b-but--I d-d-d-don't dare.
He's found out ----

REN

Git on that horse!

He reaches down a long arm and helps Thad onto the saddle of one of the horses on which the late guides had ridden. The little cavalcade is off.

SEQUENCE H

The Immigrant camp on the banks of the Snake River.

The Immigrants are in a state of tense anxiety. Their men, three days gone, have not yet returned. Their chuck is reduced to the lowest ebb.

A line of men, women and children, are passing with tin plates and tin cups before a chuck wagon. Sally is passing out the meagre rations.

Inside the wagon Mandy discovers that they have come practically to the end of their supplies. She warns Sally to hand out the stuff sparingly and to be sure and keep enough for her father and herself.

Some human stuff here, of Sally going among the women and children, cheering them up, and assuring them their men will be back soon with the lost chuck.

We cut to the top of the steep canyon wall. Crouched down behind a boulder we see three Indians. One of them has just shot an arrow into the Immigrant camp directly below them.

Dissolve to two of the Immigrant sentries. They are patrolling the encampment. The first one comes around the side of the cliff. An Indian leaps on him from behind. We see the hand of the Indian grasping the sentry's hair, and we know the hideous scalping operation is in force.

The second sentry has patrolled a portion of his beat

and has paused to listen to some unaccustomed sound. He starts to move on, when we see the shadow of an Indian cast before him. For a moment he is petrified with fear. Then he leaps forward but not before an Indian knife plunges into his back. He whirls around. A death struggle ensues between Indian and whiteman. The white man is the victor.

Fearfully wounded he none the less leaps over the cliff to the river bank. Staggering to his feet he tries to run to warn the Immigrants; but his life is ebbing. He plunges face downward; tries to rise again; holds himself up by his two hands on the ground and gives forth his last cry;

INDIANS! INDIANS!

Five or six scenes to show the Indians. Huge lines of them are topping the knolls and hills and seem to be plunging and charging down toward the River. As they come their savage yells and war whoops rise above the beating of their drums and the pounding of their horse's feet.

The Immigrant Train. It is strung out in a long line on the River bank. The custom was to form the wagon in a circle. This cannot be done in the narrow space, for on one side are the towering walls of the canyon, and on the other the river. Women and children are under the wagons. The men are behind barricades at the front and the rear and the side of the train. To advance upon them the Indians must

come from either side of the trail. They are met with a fusilade of shots.

The Indians failing to charge the train, on account of its position, have been examining the top of the boulder lined canyon walls. They discover that it is possible to uproot some of the stupendous boulders and roll them down upon the train below.

While covering their purpose with a continual barrage of firing, yells and shouts and the beating of war drums, numbers of them work to shatter the top part of the natural wall of stone.

Open up on an Iris long shot.

Away in the distance in center of the Iris can be seen a black dot, moving rapidly toward the camera.

The black dot dissolves itself into Ren Bullock riding at the head of the Immigrants and hunters. They seem to be plunging literally into the camera.

The Indians have nearly achieved their purpose. A colossol boulder is about to be loosed. It hangs, trembling on the edge of the cliff, above the camp of the all unconscious Immigrant train.

Drunk with war fever, the Indians begins a monster war dance, circling and tramping in front of the great boulder, raising their lances to the skies, yelling and chanting and shouting, while their war drums are pounded. They do not see

the company of horsemen coming down from the higher hills, and forming into a regulation battle line behind a natural rock wall. Ren and the Immigrant posse have arrived.

Suddenly multiple shots bark out. Half a dozen Indians throw up their arms and drop. The others from the sheer momentum of their war dance tramp over them. More Indians fall. Pandemonium and fright seize the Indians. The shots are coming from the opposite direction of the Immigrant camp. They cannot see their new antagonists. Screeching wildly they flee. Ren and the others fire after them, and more fall. Others slip down the sides of their horses bellies, and ride off, clinching by their bare heels.

In the camp below, the Immigrants begin to realize that help has come to them from an unexpected source. With the panic stricken flight of the Indians, the Immigrants come out from behind their wagons. They scan the cliffs above. They are half mad with apprehension. They scan the trail on either side of the camp, and then presently they hear a sound that changes their fears and apprehensions to wild joy. The clear sound of a bugle is heard, followed by three shots. The Immigrants know what that means. Their men are coming back.

Half beside themselves with relief and joy the entire camp sweep down to meet the oncoming little company of horse-

men. Ren is riding at the head of the troop. Thad is next to him, and the Immigrants, hunters and traders follow. In the rear of the horsemen, a long file of mules and horses, some of them with heavy packs upon their backs are being driven along.

Crying, laughing, cheering, the Immigrants can scarcely wait for their people to reach the camp. They surge all around the posse, dragging the men literally from the saddles, embracing and kissing and heaping blessings on them. One excited woman runs from one man to the other kissing each in turn. Col. Appleton is shaking hands with each and every one of them. The men are telling him of the fate of the other guides; but that now they have real scouts to take charge of the expedition. The Col. turns to thank and shake the hands of the scouts.

Thad, who has ridden along behind Ren, has drawn his horse to an abrupt stop. He sees whom Ren is looking at. Over the heads of the Immigrants Ren is looking at Sally Lou, whose eyes are luminous. When Thad sees Sally Lou he is powerfully moved and startled. His glance goes swiftly about; he sees Mandy, and coming directly toward him Col. Appleton.

Thad's hand unconsciously goes to the beard that has grown on his face. He tugs his big hat down over his face and half turns away, as Col. Appleton strides up to him, his hand held out. Thad does not give the Colonel a chance to say much, for with a rough rejoinder, he turns to speak to

one of the men. Col. Appleton looks at him uncertainly, as though puzzled and then a woman runs up to the Colonel and cries hysterically;

"Oh, Colonel Appleton, isn't it wonderful! A miracle! We would all have been scalped but for these brave men! -- and that wonderful young scout!"

She indicates where moving slowly toward the camp Sally Lou and Ren are walking.

They seem to be oblivious to everyone else there.

Sally Lou is looking up at Ren. And Ren is looking down at Sally. They both start to speak at once, and stop and laugh. Then after a moment Sally says;

SALLY

I'm sorry you didn't like that -- chicken.

REN

Chicken?

SALLY

Yes -- I sent it to you -- thinking -- well -- thinking -- you'd understand.

REN (bewildered)

Understand? Ma'm -- I don't even understand now.

SALLY

But I thought if Mose gave you my special message with the chicken -

REN

Mose? I never saw Mose -- did you send him to me?

Sally stops abruptly. She begins to realize that Mose had eaten the chicken himself. She is very angry.

SALLY

That wicked nigger! He must've eaten it himself. Oh-h! I'm going to skin him alive.

Colonel Appleton comes into the scene, and Sally turns to him.

SALLY

Daddy -- that no account ornery nigger ate the chicken I sent to Mr. --- er --- Mister ---

REN

Ren Bullock ---

Colonel Appleton holds out his hand. The two men shake.

COLONEL (smiling)

This is the first I've heard about a chicken (smacking his lips and sighing) Most any kind of food would taste good to me now.

SALLY

We shouldn't talk about food -- when we're so hungry.

REN (eagerly)

But we've brought your chuck, as well as other stuff back with us.

SALLY

Oh Hurray! That's why they're building the fires. Come along - I'm starving.

REN (gravely)

I'd like a word with your father first.

Sally runs off to where the men and women are beginning the preparations for a meal. The men are building the fires. The women tearing food out of the bags, and slipping stuff on the frying pans and thrusting them over the plazas.

Ren tells the Colonel that the Indians will undoubtedly return. This time, probably in greater numbers. It will be necessary for the entire train to get to the other side of the river. The waters are rough - of unknown depths, but they must take the chance. And the sooner they leave the better. He tells the Colonel that he has sent for help to the Hudsons Bay at Fort Vancouver. He feels sure that boats will be sent up the river to convey the party on its journey, and that supplies and firearms will also arrive. As soon as the party is landed on the opposite shore, Ren will go on a scouting sortie down the river and if there are no signs of the Hudsons Bay boats, Ren will continue on to the Fort. Meanwhile, the train will be safe in the hands of his partner, and although the main trail is this side of the river, they must build rafts and bateaus, cork up their wagons and prairie schooners, and on these make the rest of the journey.

Incident of the crossing of the Snake River.

The wagons are all fastened together in one long

string; the strongest in the lead. The women and children and weaker and older men are also in the wagons.

As soon as the teams were in position, Ren ties a rope around his waist, and starting his horse into the current, swims over to the other side. Others follow, until a number of the men are on the opposite side of the river. When they have force enough to pull the rope, the lead team is started in. All are drawn over safely.

As soon as the leading teams are able to get a foothold all is well. Guided by the strong arms of the men pulling the rope, the weaker ones are helped and drawn along.

They have barely reached the opposite side of the river when the Indians come swooping down in overwhelming numbers, around the trail on to the beach, where but recently the Immigrant train had been. On the opposite side of the river, the Immigrants have begun to cut a trail through the thick brush.

- - - - -

SEQUENCE L

Four or five scenes of the Immigrants cutting the trail through the dense woods bordering the river.

This is pioneer work -- the real work of the first pathfinders. No moose, nor bear, nor Indian trails to follow now. The Immigrants are hewing their way through, their intent being to keep along the river, till they reach a place where they can build rafts and trust their fortunes to the swift river itself; a fearfully dangerous undertaking and fraught with inconceivable dangers.

As the men cut the passage, the lumbering wagons, drawn by the wide horned oxen, and the long train of pack mules, follow slowly.

Work stops only with the setting of the sun. Then camp is made for the night.

THE ENCAMPMENT

There is a redness still in the sky, though it is long past sunset. The river runs along one side like a streak of dancing quicksilver. On the other are the deep mysterious woods, from whose depths come occasionally the call of wild things.

Stretched or crouched upon the ground by the camp fires, the tired Immigrants are resting. Some of the younger ones are singing.

OUTSIDE THE APPLETON WAGON

Ren stands uncertainly, twisting his hat in his hand and looking longingly at the door of the wagon. Finally he summons the courage to knock. There is a somewhat startled sound within as if someone inside has cried out something and then quickly muffled the sound. Then the flap door is pushed aside, and Sally Lou stands looking down at Ren. Sally Lou is breathing swiftly, almost as if she were frightened about something.

REN

Miss Sally--c-could I have a word
w-w-with you?

SALLY

Why certainly.

She looks back and then closes the flap behind her. She hesitates a moment and then sits down on the step of the wagon. The moonlight is on Sally's hair turning its darkness to a glorified bronze. Ren feels a dryness in his throat. He does not know how to begin. Sally looks at him curiously, but her eyes are starry and luminous. Ren points to the tumbling stream.

REN

They's a powerful lot of rainbow trout in the shallow parts of that there stream.

Ren is finding it more difficult than he had thought.

SALLY

Was that what you wanted to speak to me about?

REN

Yes -- no -- yes -- I mean -- no --

Sally laughs. Her laughter is tender, with a teasing quality to it. She leans a bit nearer to the young man, and her lovely young face so close to his own fills him with a panic of ecstasy. His words rush on:

REN

I got a homestead over to the Oregon -- finest part of the Willamette Valley -- a whole section of land.

SALLY

A section of land's an awful lot, isn't it?

REN

Six hundred and forty acres, and I'll have it fenced and a quarter of it broke by this time next year.

SALLY

That will be wonderful!

REN

And I'm amin' to put up a little snug cabin --

Sally bent still lower. One little hand steals out, almost as if seeking his. It wavers on his shoulder a

moment and then rests on his arm. Ren feels as if he were in heaven.

SALLY

You like me a lot -- don't you, Ren?

REN

Yes, Maam.

SALLY

Then why don't you tell me so. A girl likes to hear a man say that.

Ren's hands unclinch. His voice is husky. He finds he has no control of his actions.

REN

I'll be telling you in this way -- Miss Sally.

He reaches up, lifts her clear down from the step of the wagon and holds her in his arms. Closer and closer. And closer and closer Sally clings to him; her face upturned, her eyes and lips inviting his that closed upon her own. Presently, gently, Sally, her hands on his shoulders holds him back from her.

SALLY

I must go. There's someone -- someone waiting for me inside.

REN

Sally, I'm leavin' first thing in the morning.

SALLY (startled)

Leaving!

REN

*I'm ridin' for Fort Vancouver. I
sent my Indian on ahead, and he never
come back.*

SALLY

But we can't get on without you!

REN

Someone's got to go.

SALLY

But I can't bear to see you go. Not now!

REN

*I'd be a poor sort of man if I didn't
take the proper means to protect the
girl I love.*

SALLY

*A poor sort of man! You're the most
wonderful man in the world. The only
man in the world!*

*They go into an embrace again, from which they are
brought to earth by the sound of coughing of someone in
the wagon. Sally breaks away. She is now the prey to
nervousness and fear.*

SALLY

I must go -- good-night.

REN (huskily)

Good-night.

Sally goes into the tent.

*Ren, like one in a blissful dream moves away, but
turns and stands in the shadows, just looking toward where
Sally had gone into the wagon.*

Suddenly he tenses. His gaze becomes fixed.

The flap door of the Appleton wagon has been pushed aside and Sally followed by Thad Jones comes out of the wagon. They pause a moment on the step. Then Sally speaks;

SALLY

I'm glad Daddy didn't see you.

THAD

Guess he's got enough to worry about without havin' me on his mind.

SALLY
(in little shaking voice)

Thad, Ren's leaving in the morning.

THAD

That's good. He'll get help - and I'll be here.

SALLY (wearily)

Yes -- you'll be here.

THAD

Goodnight.

SALLY

Goodnight, dear.

They kiss. Thad jumps down from steps of wagon and runs out of scene. Sally turns and goes into wagon.

Ren, who has witnessed the scene between Sally and his pardner, stands for a moment as if rooted to the spot. His world seems to be tumbling about him; his dreams shattered his illusions destroyed. He makes a passionate, almost savage motion toward the wagon. Then he stops short. His

hands clinch. His head drops between his shoulders. He moves away with a shambling, almost staggering gait.

The following morning.

The first pale streaks of the rising sun are seen in the sky. There is the murmur and stir of small live things in the bush. The camp is still wrapped in silence and slumber, for it is but four o'clock in the morning. As the scene proceeds, the light of morning spreads, and over the horizon the sun raises an inquiring ruddy eye.

At first, only the shadowy outline of tent and wagon top are visible in the grey dawn. Then we see to one side of the camp a man with a horse, which he is saddling, tightening the cinch, and throwing heavy saddle bags on either side. On the ground is other travelling gear, and he kneels on one knee to sort and pack them.

The man is Ren Bullock. He wears a white blanket coat (for it is now October) a broad felt hat, moccasins and deer skin trousers. His knife is stuck in his belt. Bullet pouch and powder horn are hanging at side. A rifle rests on high pummel of his saddle in front of him; for he is now a-horse.

Suddenly from the Appleton wagon, Sally appears. She pauses a moment, and then comes running toward where Ren is on his horse.

Ren is sitting very still and straight. His wide grey

eyes are dead ahead. His thoughts are bitter. To hell with everything!

His fists are clinched so tightly that the reins feel hard against his palms.

Sally, breathless with the long run, her hair flying about her, comes into the scene. She stands by his saddle, looking up at him appealingly. Ren gives one look at her, and then again he looks dead ahead.

SALLY

Ren -- you weren't going without saying goodbye first.

Ren does not answer. Ren cannot answer. Sally, puzzled, troubled, peers up at him. The dawn is breaking all around them. Ren's face seems carved like a statue, so unmoving and stern is it. Sally's little hand goes up, rests upon that clinched pair on the pommel.

SALLY

I couldn't sleep all night. All I could think was -- Ren is going away -- Ren is going - Ren is going --

Ren's face contorts. His voice is almost loud. It is harsh.

REN

But -- Thad'll be here!

His heel presses sharply against his horse's flank. Before Sally can comprehend, he is off at a stiff canter.

She stands for a moment startled, shocked, and then she starts running after the now flying horse. As she runs she calls;

SALLY

Ren -- Ren -- Ren -- my Ren ---

She tries to make her voice carry, by putting her hands to her mouth, and she keeps on calling, frantically;

Ren! Ren!

Her voice breaks in an hysterical gasp.

The sunrise is wide over the heavens now. Over a bit of rising ground, the flying horseman is seen for a moment, and then he disappears from sight.

- - - - -

SEQUENCE J

This is about a month later.

The immigrants have literally cut and hewed their way around the Cascades, from the Upper to the Lower, and now they are halted at the Columbia River, for lack of boats. Their situation is a desperate one. They dare not attempt the passage of the Columbia, with its treacherous rapids and whirlpools merely by the pairie schooners (wagons) and they are hard at work constructing rafts and a canoe, hewn out of the trunk of a giant tree. The canoe is to go ahead of the train, and scout down the river, to discover whether it is navigable.

A steady rain, which has been falling for days, has turned to snow, bringing with it penetrating chill and cold. A cutting wind comes out of the North, driving all the women and children and the weaker and older men to the wagon for shelter.

Sally is not to be daunted so easily. She stays with the workmen, herself weilding a hammer. Thad, no longer the lighthearted youth who had sung on the trail, but feeling the heavy burden of responsibility on his young shoulders, urges her to go with the women. Sally shakes her head.

THAD

But father needs you.

SALLY

No -- I'm afraid to be with father.
He asks so many questions.

THAD

About --me?

SALLY

About everything. I think his mind
wanders. Sometimes he thinks we're
back home and --

She breaks off, her eyes filling. Thad goes on
hammering. They are both at work on one end of a raft,
in process of building.

SALLY

Thad, when he's well again, we
must tell him.

Thad shakes his head and continues to hammer.

Farther down the Columbia River.

A good sized steamboat is moving up the river. Her
upper deck is covered with sacks and boxes filled with
blankets, arms and munitions, bales containing merchandise.
medicines, meal, pork, dried flesh and other provisions,
and its hold is crammed with supplies for the Immigrants.
It is a Hudsons Bay vessel, and Ren Bullock is on deck
at the rail with the captain.

Ren points to the banks of the river, where groups
of Indians are standing, excitedly gesticulating. Ren does
not believe they are friendly. The Captain assures him
that they have nothing to fear from the Indians.

As the boat moves along, more and more Indians seem to be gathering along the banks. Their drums are beating. War dances are enacted. The Indians are yelling;

"The Immigrants are coming!

They will drive the Indian off his lands

They will eat the Indian's food

The Indian will starve

It is good to kill the white man before the white man kills the Indian."

And so forth.

Parties of the Indians ride off disappearing from the banks of the river, and reappearing on higher land, still following the river.

- - - - -

SEQUENCE K

FADE IN:

On a heavy mist and fog. At first it is hard to see anything, but we hear the sound of the wind blowing, the ripple of waters, the sough of the waves. Through the mist the outlines of a canoe is seen, with three people in it. One of the men, Thad, is wielding an oar. He is to the fore of the unwieldy little craft that the Immigrants have made. The other man seems crouched down, and Sally Lou is also wielding an oar. Her head is wrapped in a small shawl, tied under the chin. Thad looks back, sees Sally and speaks sharply:

THAD

Take that oar, Charlie. What do you mean by letting Miss Sally work.

SALLY

But Thad I wanted to. I made him give it up. His hands are all torn and --

THAD

Never mind about his hands - here you -

The other man takes the oar. He is a middle-aged, painfully thin and undernourished immigrant. Though he tries conscientiously to work the oar, it nearly tears him to pieces. Sally kneels in the boat, her shoulders slightly hunched. There is no sound for awhile, but the waves beating against the boat, and the whistling wind, blowing. They seem to be alone on the river. It is lighting up, but the drizzling rain has turned to sleet. After awhile, Sally asks:

SALLY

Thad --d' you suppose Ren
reached Fort Vancouver?

THAD

If Ren Bullock set out for Fort
Vancouver - he got there. Ren
always does what he says he will do.

The boat drifts on. The wind is dying down. The
overcast skies gradually lighten.

Suddenly an exclamation escapes Sally. She almost
stands up in the canoe in her excitement. Thad tries to
steady the boat and calls out sharply:

THAD

Look out! We'll go over.

SALLY (bated excitement)

Oh, Thad - look--look - off there --
She points. Thad stares off.

THAD

I don't see anything

SALLY

B-but--Oh Thad am I dreaming?

In a very long shot we see at a great distance, what
looks like the shadowy outline of a ship. The Immigrant in
the back of the boat stops paddling. His eyes seem to be
starting from his head, as he too peers through the mist
of the early day. Then he shouts:

CHARLIE

Praise be to God!

The oar drops from his hands and into the river. He kneels in the bottom of the boat raising his hands in prayer, and half singing, half praying, he rocks in an ecstasy. He has gone temporarily out of his mind. Thad, too, sees the vessel. His care now is all for the little craft with its one paddle oar, and he has his hands full steadyng it, for they are in a rough part of the river.

Medium long shot of the ship. Ren is pacing its deck, restlessly.

Suddenly he stands stock still, his hands gripping the rail. From somewhere up the river, he hears a whistle. It is repeated three times. Three clear, familiar notes. For a moment Ren cannot believe he hears aright. His first reaction is one of powerful joy and exhilaration. His next - he remembers the last time he had seen his pal. Sally Lou raising her face to kiss him goodbye. Ren's face hardens. He stares out before him.

Again the three long whistling notes. The man by the rail remains unmoving, but a curious change is breaking over his face. Something soft, tender, gentle, makes it as fine as the face of a mother. He leans forward. He purses his lips. Three times he sends back that whistling signal. Then,

as if springing to electrical life he rushes toward the Captain.

REN

Do you hear that?

CAPTAIN

Yes--some wild bird.

REN

No--not a wild bird. It's my partner--my pal, Captain. He's out there somewhere--in the river.

A few minutes later everything is activity aboard the vessel. Full steam is put on. As the ship proceeds, the sunshine breaks through the clouds, and in the glow far up the stream, tossing ^{upon} the turbulent water, they descry the canoe.

There is the business of taking Thad, Sally and the Immigrant aboard. Though cold and wet through, Sally's eyes are luminous with happiness. The Captain, much concerned that a girl should have been exposed to such hardship and weather, begs her to go immediately to the cabin, but Sally is looking past the captain at the now sombre and stern Ren. Though he has helped them aboard he is standing back. Thad holds out his hand to him, and after a moment, Ren, without a word grasps it. The two men silently shake. Then Thad's hand clasps the other on the shoulder. Thad starts to explain how they came to be on the river, and to tell about the plans of the Immigrants, but Sally comes up

beside him. She tries to entrap Ren's glance, but Ren is afraid to look at her.

SALLY

Thad---tell him later. I-I want to say something now. Ren!

REN

Yes maam.

SALLY

I ran after you--the morning you left--Oh--ran and ran-- and I called to you--didn't you hear me?

Ren does not answer.

I had something terribly important I wanted you to know.

Still Ren does not answer.

You see----you see-----

Now Ren can no longer avoid looking at her, for Sally has put one little hand on either of his arms, and her face is directly under his.

SALLY

You see---Thad's my brother---

Ren takes this big. So big that Sally catches her breath as she laughs.

Yes---my brother--my big, bad brother.

Ren gulps. Waves of contrition are rolling over him of remorse; of powerful joy. He longs to take Sally in his arms; he wants to cry like a child. His voice is hoarse;

REN

*Miss Sally---I reckon, I'm the
most powerful dunce in Oregon.*

*Sally, looking at him, catches her breath in a
laugh that breaks, and suddenly her eyes fill with tears --
tears of a long hurt, and of utter physical strain and
exhaustion. She sways. With an incoherent murmur Ren
takes her into his arms.*

*Further up the river a fleet of Indian canoes are
coming. Each canoe contains about eighteen men, dressed
in skins and sea otter, their hair powdered with the white
dawn of birds and their faces befogged with paint.*

*The Chief occupies a place in the middle boat and
is distinguished by his high cap, ornamented with a tuft of
eagle feathers. As they come down the river they beat time
against the gunwhale of the boats with their paddles. They
are chanting a war song, and at the end of each verse, they
point with extended arms to the North and the South. There
is no yelling or whooping; just the monotonous chanting,
triumphant and bold. There are probably two hundred braves
in the canoes, as well as the squaws who shriek in accompan-
iment, beating their hands together fiercely.*

On board the Hudsons Bay ship.

In the cabin Sally and Thad and the Immigrant are having their first meal since they set out in their crude canoe. Across the table from Sally sits Ren, his elbows on the table, his chin in his hands. He looks only at Sally, and his gaze is tender, devouring, adoring.

A sort of suddering motion of the boat, and then it stops. A couple of the ship's men run past. The Captain's voice is heard shouting orders. There is the clink of chains, etc.

Ren has started up. He is about to go on deck, when the Captain comes to the door.

CAPTAIN

Nothing to worry about. We've gone aground; but we'll get her off. Hello-- what's that?

Off - the voices of the Indians can be heard. Ren looks at the Captain; the latter, an old pilot of the Columbia says that they are probably to have some visitors. He exits on deck followed by Ren. Thad starts to go also, but Ren bids him remain with Sally; Thad walks about restlessly, moodily. He is apprehensive and worried.

The Indian canoes are now parading in a circle around the ship. The Captain and Ren are at the rail. The

Captain points out that these are Cayuse Indians, friendly to the whites. However, they are standing up in their canoes, their hands raised in the peace sign.

One of the Indians, who speaks English, calls out that a delegation of the chiefs would like to come aboard to trade buffalo hides for brass metals and knives.

The Captain, pleased, in spite of Ren's uneasiness and suspicion, tells them to come aboard, and soon about fourteen of the braves climb aboard.

All unsuspecting the captain examines their buffalo hides, and gives them in exchange the desired brass buttons and knives.

Suddenly one of them lets out a terrifying war whoop. This is immediately echoed by the others, while an answering roar comes from the men in the canoes below.

They rush upon the whites. The clerk is stabbed in the back. The Captain, sitting on the taffrail is clubbed and falls overboard, there to be knifed by the Indians in the canoes. One big burly sailor fights for his life with his bare fists, before he is clubbed and stabbed to death.

Ren, his gun spitting fire leaps for the companionway and reaches the cabin. There he and Thad and the other men barricade themselves in.

The Indians pour down the passage way. Ren and Thad cut holes for their fire arms in the walls of the cabin, and pour out a withering fire of shot, that has deadly effect

Leaving their dead and wounded, the Indians flee back up the companionway.

It is now dusk, and the thin snow storm has become a dense one. The Indians scuttle across the deck, and go over the rail making for their canoes.

IN THE CABIN

Sally is asleep. The Immigrant too is stretched out on the floor, dead to the world. Ren lights a ship's lantern. He sets it on the table. In this flickering light he and Thad sit opposite each other. For a long time no word is spoken. Then:

REN

Indians never attack or fight at night. We can get away in one of the ship's boats; they are all well-stocked.

THAD

I'm thinking of our people. They'll be on their way down the river. Those red devils know it. They're waiting for them.

Thad's head drops on his arms on the table. Ren reaches across and pats him on the head.

REN

Brace up. This is no time to lose your nerve. I'm leanin on you, Thad.

Thad gives him a singularly boyish look at that.

THAD

Are you, Ren?

REN

Of course.

Thad swallows.

THAD

You see, I never did amount to anything, and I've given my father all kinds of worry. Why--I'm to blame for the fix we're all in now.

REN

How do you figger that out?

THAD

If I hadn't gone on that drunk in Independence we'd 've been the guides for the Train, and we'd've got through two months ago.

REN

They'll get through yet.

THAD

Not if the Indians can stop them. I got a lot to answer for--a lot upon my conscience. Killing one man when we were in a fight is nothing compared to what's happened to -- those Immigrants.

While the men have been speaking the shadows have been steadily deepening. Thad gets up, paces. Ren sits at table, his fine young face lighted by the lantern. He speaks quietly;

REN

Come back here, Thad. Sit down again. I want to speak to you.

Thad sits. Ren gives him an intent look. He lowers his voice as he slightly leans across the table, fixing the other with his steady regard.

REN

I been doin' a powerful lot
of thinkin'.

On the couch, Sally stirs. Her eyes half open. At first she listens almost unconsciously; and then with tense interest and fear.

REN

There's a big powder magazine
aboard this ship ---

THAD (breathlessly)

Ye-eh---?

REN

We gotta get rid of them Indians!

THAD

Yeh!

REN

If we don't they'll massacre our people! I say we gotta get rid of them Indians!

THAD

How can we! How can we!

Ren lowers his voice.

REN

You all are goin' on the ship's
boat as soon as it's dark enough.
I'm stayin' here.

THAD
(swallowing hard)

Stayin' - her - alone you mean?

Ren nods.

THAD

What for?

REN

Soon as it's day break, those
Indians'll be comin' back - they'll
be comin' aboard - well then -

THAD

Yes?

REN

If I touch that powder magazine off -
the whole ship and everyone aboard
it will be blown to pieces.

Sally is now sitting up. Thad is staring at Ren,
his eyes widening with horror as he comprehends what
Ren intends to do.

THAD

Whoever lights that powder magazine
will be blown up himself, won't he?

REN

I'll take care of that.

THAD

No, by God! I will!

Both men have started to their feet.

REN

I'll handle my own job.

THAD

Not this time. I'll do it.

REN

No, you won't. You're goin'
back to take care of your
father. He'll be needin' you --
and your sister--- Sally ---

THAD

Nobody needs me. I can't go back.
Sooner or later they'll get me.
They's a price on my head-- they're
lookin' for me in every border town.
I'd rather go this way-- than--by the
rope.

Suddenly Sally screams. She comes screaming in
between them. She cannot speak. She can only cry. She
clings to Ren. She clings to Thad. She keeps crying and
sobbing. Ren, holding her in his arms, looks across at
Thad. His face is stern, grave.

REN

Sally, I'm goin' to take you down
the river a little ways. We'll be
meetin' up presently with our people--

Sally clings to him.

SALLY

I won't go without you!

REN

I'm aimin' to 'scort you.

SALLY

And Thad--my brother--he shan't
stay here either. Oh, what a
terrible thing to think of!

REN

It is terrible. We'll not talk
of it any more.

He soothes her. After awhile, he gently puts a
heavy coat about her.

REN

Come, we better be driftin'.
You go ahead, Thad!

Here, Charley--come on now--
wake up.

He shakes the Immigrant awake.

They all go out through the dark passage and up the
companionway to the deck. The men release the boat. It
is a big roomy boat, seaworthy, and well-provisioned and
stocked for an emergency. There is also in the rear a
place for shelter and it is propelled both by oars and
sail.

SEQUENCE L

FADE IN:

On the boat. They have a hoisted small sail, A stiff wind is billowing it out, but the current is against them, for they are going up stream, and they are making slow time.

It is still quite dark, though drawing toward morning. Occasionally the voice of the Immigrant rises in a gospel hymn. He sings like a madman.

The others are all silent.

Ren is at the helm. Sally is at his side, crouched close to him, her eyes never leaving his face. He bends to draw her wrap closer about her. She shakes her head dumbly. His arms are all she needs. He holds her close. Her arms go around his neck. She says passionately:

SALLY

Promise me--you'll never leave me now.

There is a long, deep pause. Then Ren in a hoarse, steady whisper, replies:

I must go back! It is the only way!

In the stern of the boat, Thad peers at the two in front. There is something very tense about him - something tense and cautious. He crouches farther down in the shadow of the sail.

The lovers are still in each others arms. Their faces are illuminated. Whatever may befall them, this moment is all their own.

Half kneeling, half crouching, in the shade of the sail, Thad looks at them, and a smile breaks over the boy's face making it singularly young and singularly poignant. Without a sound he swings over the side of the boat. He drops into the water.

Sally stirs in Ren's arms. They can see each other's faces now, for it is becoming lighter.

Suddenly Sally holds Ren back from her. A troubled look comes over her face--an expression of strange and almost psychic fear.

SALLY

Thad--Thad--I had a sudden feelin
that Thad was not ---

REN

Don't worry dear. Thad's asleep.

Sally breaks away from Ren. She is still under some restless spell. She call:

SALLY

Thad! Thad!

There is no answer. Now her fear has communicated itself to Ren.

He calls out roughly:

REN

Thad! Are you all right?

But Thad does not answer. Ren moves back to the rear of the boat. Sally comes behind him. She is holding to the side of the boat and half crawling, half climbing, over the impediments, the ropes, etc.

Ren, in a stunned silence, is staring down at the empty place where Thad had been. His voice sounds strange. He scarcely knows that it is he who is speaking.

REN

Thad---has gone back--for us!

SALLY

Oh, no-no-no-no! While we were there--while we were in each other's arms--he--Oh, Thad-- Thad!

Ren places her on the seat, covers her gently, and then springs for the sail. A few words to the half cracked Immigrant to hoist the sail, which he cannot do, though he sits gibbering there, holding the rope. Ren swings the helm around. The boat turns, slanting, as the wind slaps at the sail. Then it steadies itself and we - FADE

SEQUENCE M.

We fade in on the Hudsons Bay Vessel. It is still aground, and the waves are beating about it.

It is about five o'clock in the morning! The boat is entirely surrounded by Indian canoes. But the canoes are empty. The Indians are swarming over the deck. Not merely a delegation, but the entire tribe. They are going through the bales and sacks and boxes. They are eating and drinking and wrapping the stuffs about them, and there is great jubilation among them.

DISSOLVE to the powder magazine of the ship. Pressed up against the wall is Thad. He is listening to the Indians. Some of them are coming down into the hold. Thad shrinks back farther. There is a slight crackle as he lights the torch.

CUT TO - The ship's boat. It is coming along at considerable speed. Both Sally and Ren are at the helm, but they are not in each others' arms. Their faces are white and lined with fear. They are looking dead ahead.

Suddenly the air seems rent as by some tremendous shock. The roar of a monster explosion is heard from one end of the river to the other.

Note: (If desired, show the blowing up of the ship)

SEQUENCE N

This shows the Immigrant train. Down the river, on rafts, on boxes, on crude boats, with a few of the prairie schooners, the Immigrants are coming down the river.

No saga or illiad ever penned could do justice to their heroism, courage and valour; for despite their privations and sufferings, they are coming along on this, the last lap of their journey, their faces still radiant with hope. They are singing!

Farther down the river, in their boat, Ren and Sally are seen coming. Sally's face is illuminated - poignantly beautiful. Ren removes his hat. His head bows. FADE.

T H E E N D .