

SHORT STORY AMERICA

A MEMORANDUM OF SUDDEN DEATH

FRANK NORRIS

The manuscript of the account that follows belongs to a harness-maker in Albuquerque, Juan Tejada by name, and he is welcome to whatever of advertisement this notice may bring him. He is a good fellow, and his patented martingale for stage horses may be recommended. I understand he got the manuscript from a man named Bass, or possibly Bass left it with him for safe-keeping. I know that Tejada has some things of Bass's now--things that Bass left with him last November: a mess-kit, a lantern and a broken theodolite--a whole saddle-box full of contraptions. I forgot to ask Tejada how Bass got the manuscript, and I wish I had done so now, for the finding of it might be a story itself. The probabilities are that Bass simply picked it up page by page off the desert, blown about the spot where the fight occurred and at some little distance from the bodies. Bass, I am told, is a bone-gatherer by profession, and one can easily understand how he would come across the scene of the encounter in one of his tours into western Arizona. My interest in the affair is impersonal, but none the less keen. Though I did not know young Karlake, I knew his stuff--as everybody still does, when you come to that. For the matter of that, the mere mention of his pen-name, "Anson Qualtraugh," recalls at once to thousands of the readers of a certain world-famous monthly magazine of New York articles and stories he wrote

for it while he was alive; as, for instance, his admirable descriptive work called "Traces of the Aztecs on the Mogolon Mesa," in the October number of 1890. Also, in the January issue of 1892 there are two specimens of his work, one signed Anson Qualtraugh and the other Justin Blisset. Why he should have used the Blisset signature I do not know. It occurs only this once in all his writings. In this case it is signed to a very indifferent New Year's story. The Qualtraugh "stuff" of the same number is, so the editor writes to me, a much shortened transcript of a monograph on "Primitive Methods of Moki Irrigation," which are now in the archives of the Smithsonian. The admirable novel, "The Peculiar Treasure of Kings," is of course well known. Karlake wrote it in 1888-89, and the controversy that arose about the incident of the third chapter is still--sporadically and intermittently--continued.

The manuscript that follows now appears, of course, for the first time in print, and I acknowledge herewith my obligations to Karlake's father, Mr. Patterson Karlake, for permission to publish.

I have set the account down word for word, with all the hiatuses and breaks that by nature of the extraordinary circumstances under which it was written were bound to appear in it. I have allowed it to end precisely as Karlake was forced to end it, in the middle of a sentence. God knows the real end is plain enough and was not far off when the poor fellow began the last phrase that never was to be finished.

The value of the thing is self-apparent. Besides the narrative of incidents it is a simple setting forth of a young man's emotions in the very face of violent death. You will remember the distinguished victim of the guillotine, a lady who on the scaffold begged that she might be permitted to write out the great thoughts that began to throng her mind. She was not allowed to do so, and the record is lost. Here is a case where the record is preserved. But Karlake, being a young man not very much given to introspection, his work is more a picture of things seen than a transcription of things thought. However, one may read between the lines; the very

breaks are eloquent, while the break at the end speaks with a significance that no words could attain.

The manuscript in itself is interesting. It is written partly in pencil, partly in ink (no doubt from a fountain pen), on sheets of manila paper torn from some sort of long and narrow account-book. In two or three places there are smudges where the powder-blackened finger and thumb held the sheets momentarily. I would give much to own it, but Tejada will not give it up without Bass's permission, and Bass has gone to the Klondike.

As to Karslake himself. He was born in Raleigh, in North Carolina, in 1868, studied law at the State University, and went to the Bahamas in 1885 with the members of a government coast survey commission. Gave up the practice of law and "went in" for fiction and the study of the ethnology of North America about 1887. He was unmarried.

The reasons for his enlisting have long been misunderstood. It was known that at the time of his death he was a member of B Troop of the Sixth Regiment of United States Cavalry, and it was assumed that because of this fact Karslake was in financial difficulties and not upon good terms with his family. All this, of course, is untrue, and I have every reason to believe that Karslake at this time was planning a novel of military life in the Southwest, and, wishing to get in closer touch with the *milieu* of the story, actually enlisted in order to be able to write authoritatively. He saw no active service until the time when his narrative begins. The year of his death is uncertain. It was in the spring probably of 1896, in the twenty-eighth year of his age.

There is no doubt he would have become in time a great writer. A young man of twenty-eight who had so lively a sense of the value of accurate observation, and so eager a desire to produce that in the very face of death he could faithfully set down a description of his surroundings, actually laying down the rifle to pick up the pen, certainly was possessed of extraordinary faculties.

"They came in sight early this morning just after we had had breakfast and had broken camp. The four of us--'Bunt,' 'Idaho,' Estorijo and myself--were jogging on to the southward and had just come up out of the dry bed of some water-hole--the alkali was white as snow in the crevices--when Idaho pointed them out to us, three to the rear, two on one side, one on the other and--very far away--two ahead. Five minutes before, the desert was as empty as the flat of my hand. They seemed literally to have *grown* out of the sage-brush. We took them in through my field-glasses and Bunt made sure they were an outlying band of Hunt-in-the-Morning's Bucks. I had thought, and so had all of us, that the rest of the boys had rounded up the whole of the old man's hostiles long since. We are at a loss to account for these fellows here. They seem to be well mounted.

"We held a council of war from the saddle without halting, but there seemed very little to be done--but to go right along and wait for developments. At about eleven we found water--just a pocket in the bed of a dried stream--and stopped to water the ponies. I am writing this during the halt.

"We have one hundred and sixteen rifle cartridges. Yesterday was Friday, and all day, as the newspapers say, 'the situation remained unchanged.' We expected surely that the night would see some rather radical change, but nothing happened, though we stood watch and watch till morning. Of yesterday's eight only six are in sight and we bring up reserves. We now have two to the front, one on each side, and two to the rear, all far out of rifle-range.

[The following paragraph is in an unsteady script and would appear to have been written in the saddle. The same peculiarity occurs from time to time in the narrative, and occasionally the writing is so broken as to be illegible.]

"On again after breakfast. It is about eight-fifteen. The other two have come back--without 'reserves,' thank God. Very possibly they did not go away at all, but were hidden by a dip in the ground. I cannot see that any of them are nearer. I have watched one to the left of us steadily for more than half an hour and I am sure that

he has not shortened the distance between himself and us. What their plans are Hell only knows, but this silent, persistent escorting tells on the nerves. I do not think I am afraid--as yet. It does not seem possible but that we will ride into La Paz at the end of the fortnight exactly as we had planned, meet Greenock according to arrangements and take the stage on to the railroad. Then next month I shall be in San Antonio and report at headquarters. Of course, all this is to be, of course; and this business of to-day will make a good story to tell. It's an experience--good 'material.' Very naturally I cannot now see how I am going to get out of this" [*the word "alive" has here been erased*], "but of course I will. Why 'of course'? I don't know. Maybe I am trying to deceive myself. Frankly, it looks like a situation insoluble; but the solution will surely come right enough in good time.

"Eleven o'clock.--No change.

"Two-thirty P. M.--We are halted to tighten girths and to take a single swallow of the canteens. One of them rode in a wide circle from the rear to the flank, about ten minutes ago, conferred a moment with his fellow, then fell back to his old position. He wears some sort of red cloth or blanket. We reach no more water till day after to-morrow. But we have sufficient. Estorijo has been telling funny stories en route.

"Four o'clock P. M.--They have closed up perceptibly, and we have been debating about trying one of them with Idaho's Winchester. No use; better save the ammunition. It looks...." [*the next words are undecipherable, but from the context they would appear to be "as if they would attack to-night"*]"...we have come to know certain of them now by nicknames. We speak of the Red One, or the Little One, or the One with the Feather, and Idaho has named a short thickset fellow on our right 'Little Willie.' By God, I wish something would turn up--relief or fight. I don't care which. How Estorijo can cackle on, reeling off his senseless, pointless funny stories, is beyond me. Bunt is almost as bad. They understand the fix we are in, I *know*, but how they can take it so easily is the staggering surprise. I feel that I am as courageous as either of them, but levity seems horribly inappropriate. I could kill Estorijo joyfully.

"Sunday morning.--Still no developments. We were so sure of something turning up last night that none of us pretended to sleep. But nothing stirred. There is no sneaking out of the circle at night. The moon is full. A jack-rabbit could not have slipped by them unseen last night.

"Nine o'clock (in the saddle).--We had coffee and bacon as usual at sunrise; then on again to the southeast just as before. For half an hour after starting the Red One and two others were well within rifle-shot, nearer than ever before. They had worked in from the flank. But before Idaho could get a chance at them they dipped into a shallow arroyo, and when they came out on the other side were too far away to think of shooting.

"Ten o'clock.--All at once we find there are nine instead of eight; where and when this last one joined the band we cannot tell. He wears a sombrero and army trousers, but the upper part of his body is bare. Idaho calls him 'Half-and-half.' He is riding a---- They're coming.

"Later.--For a moment we thought it was the long-expected rush. The Red One--he had been in the front--wheeled quick as a flash and came straight for us, and the others followed suit. Great Heavens, how they rode! We could hear them yelling on every side of us. We jumped off our ponies and stood behind them, the rifles across the saddles. But at four hundred yards they all pivoted about and cantered off again leisurely. Now they followed us as before--three in the front, two in the rear and two on either side. I do not think I am going to be frightened when the rush does come. I watched myself just now. I was excited, and I remember Bunt saying to me, 'Keep your shirt on, m'son'; but I was not afraid of being killed. Thank God for that! It is something I've long wished to find out, and now that I know it I am proud of it. Neither side fired a shot. I was not afraid. It's glorious. Estorijo is all right.

"Sunday afternoon, one-thirty.--No change. It is unspeakably hot.

"Three-fifteen.--The One with the Feather is walking, leading his pony. It seems to be lame." [*With this entry Karlake ended page five, and the next page of the manuscript is numbered seven. It is very probable, however, that he made a mistake in the numerical sequence of his pages, for the narrative is continuous, and, at this point at least, unbroken. There does not seem to be any sixth page.*]

"Four o'clock.--Is it possible that we are to pass another night of suspense? They certainly show no signs of bringing on the crisis, and they surely would not attempt anything so late in the afternoon as this. It is a relief to feel that we have nothing to fear till morning, but the tension of watching all night long is fearful.

"Later.--Idaho has just killed the Little One.

"Later.--Still firing.

"Later.--Still at it.

"Later, about five.--A bullet struck within three feet of me.

"Five-ten.--Still firing.

"Seven-thirty P. M., in camp.--It happened so quickly that it was all over before I realized. We had our first interchange of shots with them late this afternoon. The Little One was riding from the front to the flank. Evidently he did not think he was in range--nor did any of us. All at once Idaho tossed up his rifle and let go without aiming--or so it seemed to me. The stock was not at his shoulder before the report came. About six seconds after the smoke had cleared away we could see the Little One begin to lean backward in the saddle, and Idaho said grimly, 'I guess I got *you*.' The Little One leaned farther and farther till suddenly his head dropped back between his shoulder-blades. He held to his pony's mane with both hands for a long time and then all at once went off feet first. His legs bent under him like putty as his feet touched the ground. The pony bolted.

"Just as soon as Idaho fired the others closed right up and began riding around us at top speed, firing as they went. Their aim was bad as a rule, but one bullet came very close to me. At about half-past five they drew off out of range again and we made camp right where we stood. Estorijo and I are both sure that Idaho hit the Red One, but Idaho himself is doubtful, and Bunt did not see the shot. I could swear that the Red One all but went off his pony. However, he seems active enough now.

"Monday morning.--Still another night without attack. I have not slept since Friday evening. The strain is terrific. At daybreak this morning, when one of our ponies snorted suddenly, I cried out at the top of my voice. I could no more have repressed it than I could have stopped my blood flowing; and for half an hour afterward I could feel my flesh crisping and pringling, and there was a sickening weakness at the pit of my stomach. At breakfast I had to force down my coffee. They are still in place, but now there are two on each side, two in the front, two in the rear. The killing of the Little One seems to have heartened us all wonderfully. I am sure we will get out--somehow. But oh! the suspense of it.

"Monday morning, nine-thirty.--Under way for over two hours. There is no new development. But Idaho has just said that they seem to be edging in. We hope to reach water to-day. Our supply is low, and the ponies are beginning to hang their heads. It promises to be a blazing hot day. There is alkali all to the west of us, and we just commence to see the rise of ground miles to the southward that Idaho says is the San Jacinto Mountains. Plenty of water there. The desert hereabout is vast and lonesome beyond words; leagues of sparse sage-brush, leagues of leper-white alkali, leagues of baking gray sand, empty, heat-ridden, the abomination of desolation; and always--in whichever direction I turn my eyes--always, in the midst of this pale-yellow blur, a single figure in the distance, blanketed, watchful, solitary, standing out sharp and distinct against the background of sage and sand.

"Monday, about eleven o'clock.--No change. The heat is appalling. There is just a--
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"Later.--I was on the point of saying that there was just a mouthful of water left for each of us in our canteens when Estorijo and Idaho both at the same time cried out that they were moving in. It is true. They are within rifle range, but do not fire. We, as well, have decided to reserve our fire until something more positive happens.

"Noon.--The first shot--for to-day--from the Red One. We are halted. The shot struck low and to the left. We could see the sand spout up in a cloud just as though a bubble had burst on the surface of the ground.

"They have separated from each other, and the whole eight of them are now in a circle around us. Idaho believes the Red One fired as a signal. Estorijo is getting ready to take a shot at the One with the Feather. We have the ponies in a circle around us. It looks as if now at last this was the beginning of the real business.

Later, twelve-thirty-five.--Estorijo missed. Idaho will try with the Winchester as soon as the One with the Feather halts. He is galloping toward the Red One.

"All at once, about two o'clock, the fighting began. This is the first let-up. It is now--God knows what time. They closed up suddenly and began galloping about us in a circle, firing all the time. They rode like madmen. I would not have believed that Indian ponies could run so quickly. What with their yelling and the incessant crack of their rifles and the thud of their ponies' feet our horses at first became very restless, and at last Idaho's mustang bolted clean away. We all stood to it as hard as we could. For about the first fifteen minutes it was hot work. The Spotted One is hit. We are certain of that much, though we do not know whose gun did the work. My poor old horse is bleeding dreadfully from the mouth. He has two bullets in the stomach, and I do not believe he can stand much longer. They have let up for the last few moments, but are still riding around us, their guns at 'ready.' Every now and then one of us fires, but the heat shimmer has come up over the ground since noon and the range is extraordinarily deceiving.

"Three-ten.--Estorijo's horse is down, shot clean through the head. Mine has gone long since. We have made a rampart of the bodies.

"Three-twenty.--They are at it again, tearing around us incredibly fast, every now and then narrowing the circle. The bullets are striking everywhere now. I have no rifle, do what I can with my revolver, and try to watch what is going on in front of me and warn the others when they press in too close on my side." [*Karslake nowhere accounts for the absence of his carbine. That a U. S. trooper should be without his gun while traversing a hostile country is a fact difficult to account for.*]

"Three-thirty.--They have winged me--through the shoulder. Not bad, but it is bothersome. I sit up to fire, and Bunt gives me his knee on which to rest my right arm. When it hangs it is painful.

"Quarter to four.--It is horrible. Bunt is dying. He cannot speak, the ball having gone through the lower part of his face, but back, near the neck. It happened through his trying to catch his horse. The animal was struck in the breast and tried to bolt. He reared up, backing away, and as we had to keep him close to us to serve as a bulwark Bunt followed him out from the little circle that we formed, his gun in one hand, his other gripping the bridle. I suppose every one of the eight fired at him simultaneously, and down he went. The pony dragged him a little ways still clutching the bridle, then fell itself, its whole weight rolling on Bunt's chest. We have managed to get him in and secure his rifle, but he will not live. None of us knows him very well. He only joined us about a week ago, but we all liked him from the start. He never spoke of himself, so we cannot tell much about him. Idaho says he has a wife in Torreon, but that he has not lived with her for two years; they did not get along well together, it seems. This is the first violent death I have ever seen, and it astonishes me to note how *unimportant* it seems. How little anybody cares--after all. If I had been told of his death--the details of it, in a story or in the form of fiction--it is easily conceivable that it would have impressed me more with its importance than the actual scene has done. Possibly my mental vision is scaled to a larger field since Friday, and as the greater issues loom up one man more or

less seems to be but a unit--more or less--in an eternal series. When he was hit he swung back against the horse, still holding by the rein. His feet slid from under him, and he cried out, 'My *God!*' just once. We divided his cartridges between us and Idaho passed me his carbine. The barrel was scorching hot.

"They have drawn off a little and for fifteen minutes, though they still circle us slowly, there has been no firing. Forty cartridges left. Bunt's body (I think he is dead now) lies just back of me, and already the gnats--I can't speak of it."

[Karlsruhe evidently made the next few entries at successive intervals of time, but neglected in his excitement to note the exact hour as above. We may gather that "They" made another attack and then repeated the assault so quickly that he had no chance to record it properly. I transcribe the entries in exactly the disjointed manner in which they occur in the original. The reference to the "fire" is unexplainable.]

"I shall do my best to set down exactly what happened and what I do and think, and what I see.

"The heat-shimmer spoiled my aim, but I am quite sure that either

"This last rush was the nearest. I had started to say that though the heat-shimmer was bad, either Estorijo or myself wounded one of their ponies. We saw him stumble.

"Another rush----

"Our ammunition

"Only a few cartridges left.

"The Red One like a whirlwind only fifty yards away.

"We fire separately now as they sneak up under cover of our smoke.

"We put the fire out. Estorijo--" [*It is possible that Karlake had begun here to chronicle the death of the Mexican.*]

"I have killed the Spotted One. Just as he wheeled his horse I saw him in a line with the rifle-sights and let him have it squarely. It took him straight in the breast. I could *feel* that shot strike. He went down like a sack of lead weights. By God, it was superb!

"Later.--They have drawn off out of range again, and we are allowed a breathing-spell. Our ponies are either dead or dying, and we have dragged them around us to form a barricade. We lie on the ground behind the bodies and fire over them. There are twenty-seven cartridges left.

"It is now mid-afternoon. Our plan is to stand them off if we can till night and then to try an escape between them. But to what purpose? They would trail us so soon as it was light.

"We think now that they followed us without attacking for so long because they were waiting till the lay of the land suited them. They wanted--no doubt--an absolutely flat piece of country, with no depressions, no hills or stream-beds in which we could hide, but which should be high upon the edges, like an amphitheatre. They would get us in the centre and occupy the rim themselves. Roughly, this is the bit of desert which witnesses our 'last stand.' On three sides the ground swells a very little--the rise is not four feet. On the third side it is open, and so flat that even lying on the ground as we do we can see (leagues away) the San Jacinto hills--'from whence cometh no help.' It is all sand and sage, forever and forever. Even the sage is sparse--a bad place even for a coyote. The whole is flagellated with an intolerable heat and--now that the shooting is relaxed--oppressed with a benumbing, sodden silence--the silence of a primordial world. Such a silence as must have brooded over the Face of the Waters on the Eve of Creation--desolate, desolate, as though a colossal, invisible pillar--a pillar of the Infinitely Still, the pillar of Nirvana--rose forever into the empty blue, human life

an atom of microscopic dust crushed under its basis, and at the summit God Himself. And I find time to ask myself why, at this of all moments of my tiny life-span, I am able to write as I do, registering impressions, keeping a finger upon the pulse of the spirit. But oh! if I had time now--time to write down the great thoughts that do throng the brain. They are there, I feel them, know them. No doubt the supreme exaltation of approaching death is the stimulus that one never experiences in the humdrum business of the day-to-day existence. Such mighty thoughts! Unintelligible, but if I had time I could spell them out, *and how I could write them!* I feel that the whole secret of Life is within my reach; I can almost grasp it; I seem to feel that in just another instant I can see it all plainly, as the archangels see it all the time, as the great minds of the world, the great philosophers, have seen it once or twice, vaguely--a glimpse here and there, after years of patient study. Seeing thus I should be the equal of the gods. But it is not meant to be. There is a sacrilege in it. I almost seem to understand why it is kept from us. But the very reason of this withholding is in itself a part of the secret. If I could only, only set it down!--for whose eyes? Those of a wandering hawk? God knows. But never mind. I should have spoken--once; should have said the great Word for which the World since the evening and the morning of the First Day has listened. God knows. God knows. What a whirl is this? Monstrous incongruity. Philosophy and fighting troopers. The Infinite and dead horses. There's humour for you. The Sublime takes off its hat to the Ridiculous. Send a cartridge clashing into the breech and speculate about the Absolute. Keep one eye on your sights and the other on Cosmos. Blow the reek of burned powder from before you so you may look over the edge of the abyss of the Great Primal Cause. Duck to the whistle of a bullet and commune with Schopenhauer. Perhaps I am a little mad. Perhaps I am supremely intelligent. But in either case I am not understandable to myself. How, then, be understandable to others? If these sheets of paper, this incoherence, is ever read, the others will understand it about as much as the investigating hawk. But none the less be it of record that I, Karslake, SAW. It reads like Revelations: 'I, John, saw.' It is just that. There is something apocalyptic in it all. I have seen a vision, but cannot--there is the pitch of anguish in the impotence--bear record. If time were allowed to order

and arrange the words of description, this exaltation of spirit, in that very space of time, would relax, and the describer lapse back to the level of the average again before he could set down the things he saw, the things he thought. The machinery of the mind that could coin the great Word is automatic, and the very force that brings the die near the blank metal supplies the motor power of the reaction before the impression is made ... I stopped for an instant, looking up from the page, and at once the great vague panorama faded. I lost it all. Cosmos has dwindled again to an amphitheatre of sage and sand, a vista of distant purple hills, the shimmer of scorching alkali, and in the middle distance there, those figures, blanketed, beaded, feathered, rifle in hand.

"But for a moment I stood on Patmos.

"The Ridiculous jostles the elbow of the Sublime and shoulders it from place as Idaho announces that he has found two more cartridges in Estorijo's pockets.

"They rushed again. Eight more cartridges gone. Twenty-one left. They rush in this manner--at first the circle, rapid beyond expression, one figure succeeding the other so swiftly that the dizzied vision loses count and instead of seven of them there appear to be seventy. Then suddenly, on some indistinguishable signal, they contract this circle, and through the jets of powder-smoke Idaho and I see them whirling past our rifle-sights not one hundred yards away. Then their fire suddenly slackens, the smoke drifts by, and we see them in the distance again, moving about us at a slow canter. Then the blessed breathing-spell, while we peer out to know if we have killed or not, and count our cartridges. We have laid the twenty-one loaded shells that remain in a row between us, and after our first glance outward to see if any of them are down, our next is inward at that ever-shrinking line of brass and lead. We do not talk much. This is the end. We know it now. All of a sudden the conviction that I am to die here has hardened within me. It is, all at once, absurd that I should ever have supposed that I was to reach La Paz, take the east-bound train and report at San Antonio. It seems to me that I *knew*, weeks ago, that our trip was to end thus. I knew it--somehow--in Sonora, while we were waiting

orders, and I tell myself that if I had only stopped to really think of it I could have foreseen today's bloody business.

"Later.--The Red One got off his horse and bound up the creature's leg. One of us hit him, evidently. A little higher, it would have reached the heart. Our aim is ridiculously bad--the heat-shimmer----

"Later.--Idaho is wounded. This last time, for a moment, I was sure the end had come. They were within revolver range and we could feel the vibration of the ground under their ponies' hoofs. But suddenly they drew off. I have looked at my watch; it is four o'clock.

"Four o'clock.--Idaho's wound is bad--a long, raking furrow in the right forearm. I bind it up for him, but he is losing a great deal of blood and is very weak.

"They seem to know that we are only two by now, for with each rush they grow bolder. The slackening of our fire must tell them how scant is our ammunition.

"Later.--This last was magnificent. The Red One and one other with lines of blue paint across his cheek galloped right at us. Idaho had been lying with his head and shoulders propped against the neck of his dead pony. His eyes were shut, and I thought he had fainted. But as he heard them coming he struggled up, first to his knees and then to his feet--to his full height--dragging his revolver from his hip with his left hand. The whole right arm swung useless. He was so weak that he could only lift the revolver half way--could not get the muzzle up. But though it sagged and dropped in his grip, he *would* die fighting. When he fired the bullet threw up the sand not a yard from his feet, and then he fell on his face across the body of the horse. During the charge I fired as fast as I could, but evidently to no purpose. They must have thought that Idaho was dead, for as soon as they saw him getting to his feet they sheered their horses off and went by on either side of us. I have made Idaho comfortable. He is unconscious; have used the last of the water to give him a drink. He does not seem----

"They continue to circle us. Their fire is incessant, but very wild. So long as I keep my head down I am comparatively safe.

"Later.--I think Idaho is dying. It seems he was hit a second time when he stood up to fire. Estorijo is still breathing; I thought him dead long since.

"Four-ten.--Idaho gone. Twelve cartridges left. Am all alone now.

"Four-twenty-five.--I am very weak." [*Karslake was evidently wounded sometime between ten and twenty-five minutes after four. His notes make no mention of the fact.*] "Eight cartridges remain. I leave my library to my brother, Walter Patterson Karslake; all my personal effects to my parents, except the picture of myself taken in Baltimore in 1897, which I direct to be" [*the next lines are undecipherable*] "...at Washington, D. C., as soon as possible. I appoint as my literary--

"Four forty-five.--Seven cartridges. Very weak and unable to move lower part of my body. Am in no pain. They rode in very close. The Red One is---- An intolerable thirst----

"I appoint as my literary executor my brother, Patterson Karslake. The notes on 'Coronado in New Mexico' should be revised.

"My death occurred in western Arizona, April 15th, at the hands of a roving band of Hunt-in-the-Morning's bucks. They have----

"Five o'clock.--The last cartridge gone.

"Estorijo still breathing. I cover his face with my hat. Their fire is incessant. Am much weaker. Convey news of death to Patterson Karslake, care of Corn Exchange Bank, New York City.

"Five-fifteen--about.--They have ceased firing, and draw together in a bunch. I have four cartridges left" [*see conflicting note dated five o'clock*], "but am extremely weak. Idaho was the best friend I had in all the Southwest. I wish it to be

known that he was a generous, open-hearted fellow, a kindly man, clean of speech, and absolutely unselfish. He may be known as follows: Sandy beard, long sandy hair, scar on forehead, about six feet one inch in height. His real name is James Monroe Herndon; his profession that of government scout. Notify Mrs. Herndon, Trinidad, New Mexico.

"The writer is Arthur Staples Karslake, dark hair, height five feet eleven, body will be found near that of Herndon.

"Luis Estorijo, Mexican----

"Later.--Two more cartridges.

"Five-thirty.--Estorijo dead.

"It is half-past five in the afternoon of April fifteenth. They followed us from the eleventh--Friday--till to-day. It will

[The MS. ends here.]