

## SANKY'S DOUBLE HEADER

The oldest man in the train service didn't pretend to say how long Sanky had worked for the company.

Pat Francis was a very old conductor, but old man Sanky was a veteran when Pat Francis began braking. Sanky ran a passenger train when Jimmie Brady was running—and Jimmie afterward enlisted and was killed in the Custer fight.

There was an old tradition about Sanky's name. He was a tall, swarthy fellow, and carried the blood of the Sioux chief in his veins. It was in the time of the Black Hills excitement, when railroad men, struck by the gold fever, were abandoning their trains, even at way stations, and striking across the divide for Clark's Crossing. Men to run the trains were hard to get, and Tom Porter, trainmaster, was putting in every man he could pick up without reference to age or color.

Porter—he died at Julesburg afterward—was a great jollier, and he wasn't afraid of anybody on earth.

One day a war party of Sioux clustered into town. They were around like a storm and threatened to scalp everybody, even the local tickets. The head braves dashed in on Tom Porter, sitting in the dispatcher's office, upstairs. The dispatcher was hiding under a loose plank in the baggage-room floor; Tom, being bald as a sand-hill, considered himself exempt from the scalping parties. He was looking out of the window when they bore down on him and interested them at once. That led to a parley, which ended in Porter's hiring the war party to guard the train. Old man Sanky was said to have been of that original war party.

Now this is merely a caboose story—old on winter nights when trainmen get stalled in the snow drifting down from the Sioux country. But what follows is better attested. Sanky, to be sure, to take a job with a peculiar name. An unpronounceable, unspellable, unmanageable name. It was as hard to catch as an Indian cur, and that name made more trouble on the pay rolls than all the other names put together. Nobody at headquarters could handle it, and they were always writing Tom Porter about the thing. Tom explained several times that it was Sanky's name, and that he was always drawing that money, and that he usually signed the payroll with a tomahawk. But nobody at Omaha ever knew how to take a job.

The first time Tom went down he was led in very solemnly to explain about the name, and being in a hurry and not understanding of the whole business, Tom spluttered:

"Hang it, don't bother me any more about that name. If you can't read it, make it Sanky, and don't bother me. They took it from me, and they're actually old make it Sanky; and that's how our oldest conductor came to bear the name of the famous engineer. And more I may say, good name as it was—and is—the Sioux never disgraced it."

If you have ever gone over our line to the mountains or to the coast you may remember at McCloud, where they change engines and set the drier in or out, the prettiest green park in the east of the depot, with a row of catalpa trees along the platform line. It looks like a glass of spring water.

It happens that Sanky runs a regular west end day, sunny and delightful, you would be sure to see standing under the catalpas a shy, dark-skinned, little fellow, with a red riding cat, the little girl, and a parrot, or a handkerchief at the out-going train—that is, at Conductor Sanky, for who was the dark-skinned Sanky. Her mother was Spanish, and died when Neeta was a wee bit. Neeta and the Limited were Sanky's snows there.

When George Sinclair began pulling the Limited, running west opposite Pole, he struck up a great friendship with Sanky. Sanky, who was hard to start, was full of early day stories. George, it seemed, had the faculty of getting him to talk; perhaps because when he was pulling Sanky's train he kept on time—time was a hobby with Sanky. Pole said he was so careful of it that he was off half a day let his watch stop just to save time.

Sanky loved to breast the winds and the fowls, and he could get home pretty near on schedule with everybody else late, he was happy; and in respect of that, as Sanky used to say, George Sinclair could come nearer gratifying Sanky's ambition than any runner we had.

Even the fireman used to observe that the young engineer always neat, looked still nearer the days he had run Sanky's train. By and bye there was an introduction under the catalpas; after that, it was plain that George began wearing gloves on his engine—not kid gloves, but yellow dogskin and black silk shirts; he bought them in Denver.

Then an odd way engineers have of paying compliments—when George pulled into town on No. 2, it was Sanky's train, and he was wearing a would give a short, horse scream, most peculiar note, just as they drew past Sanky's house, which stood on the brow of the hill, and the yards. Then Neeta would know that No. 2 and her father, and naturally Mr. Sinclair, were in again, and all safe and sound.

When the railway trainmen held their division fair at McCloud there was a lantern to be voted to the most popular conductor—a gold-plated lantern with a green curtain in the globe. Cal Stewart and Ben Dotson, who were very well conductors, and great rivals, were the favorites, and the town divided over their chances for winning it.

But during the last moments George Sinclair stepped up to the booth and cast a storm of votes for old man Sanky. Dotson's friends and Stewart's friends, in amazement, looked on in amazement; they pooled their votes by throwing Stewart's votes to Dotson. But it wouldn't do. George Sinclair, a crowd of engineers—Cameron, Moore, Pole, Pat Mullen and Burns—came back at them with such a swing that in the final round the fairly swarthy Dotson Sanky took the lantern by 1,000 votes, but I understood it cost George and his friends a not of money.

Sanky said all the time he didn't want the lantern, but just the same he always carried that cardoulan lantern, with his full name, Sylvester Sanky, ground into the glass just below the green mantle. Pretty soon—Neeta, when she was a child, called it Sanky's lantern. Then it was plain that Sinclair was engaged to Miss Sanky—was going to marry her. And marry her he did, though that was not until after the war. He was Blackwood gorge, the time of the big snow.

It goes yet by just that name on the West End; for never was such a winter as that. The snow was so deep that it was chopped up for stalling wood.

Freight we didn't pretend to move; local passenger business had to be abandoned. Coal to keep our engines and our towns supplied, we were obliged to carry, and after that all the brains and the muscle and the motive power were centered on keeping it, and, our through passenger trains, running.

Not until April did it begin to look as if we should win out. A dozen times the line was cut, but each time we were disabled and train crews desperate. There came a storm that discomfited the workers on the West End. As the reports rolled in on the morning of the 5th, growing worse as they grew thicker, Neighbor, dragged out of his bed, and, with a candle, threw up his hands. The 6th it snowed all day, and on Saturday morning the section men reported 30 feet of snow on the line.

It was 6 o'clock when he got the word, and daylight before he got the rotary against it. They bucked away with axes and saws, and the rotary came in with their gear smashed and a driving wheel fractured. It looked as if we were beaten.

No, I got into McCloud 18 hours later; it was Sanky's and Sinclair's run west. There was a long column in the roundhouse. The rotary was knocked out; coal was running low in the chutes. If the line wasn't kept open for the coal from the mountains it was lost. The rotary was not until we could ship it from Iowa or Missouri. West of Medicine Pole there was another big rotary working east, with plenty of coal behind her, but she was reported stuck fast in the Cheyenne Hills.

Pole made suggestions and Dad Sinclair made suggestions. Everybody had a suggestion, but the trouble was Neighbor said, they didn't amount to anything, or were impossible.

"It's a dead block, boys," announced Neighbor, "and unless somebody had done. We are beaten unless we can get No. 1 through today. Look there, by the holy poker it's snowing again."

The air was dark in a minute with whirling clouds. Men turned to the windows and quit talking; every fellow felt the same. Sanky, sitting back of the stove, was making tracings on his overalls with a piece of chalk.

"It might as well unload the passengers," Sanky, said Neighbor. "You'll never get 'em through this winter."

And it was then that Sanky proposed his Double Header. He devised a snow plow which combined in one monster ram about all the good material we had left and substituted watching the preparations for the departure of the Overland.

Then as your coach moved slowly toward the depot, he was under a red riding cat, the little girl, and a parrot, or a handkerchief at the out-going train—that is, at Conductor Sanky, for who was the dark-skinned Sanky. Her mother was Spanish, and died when Neeta was a wee bit. Neeta and the Limited were Sanky's snows there.

## THE SPEEDWAY OF NEW YORK

### It Is a Magnificent Equestrian Circus-Bill to the Public.

Splendid Weekly Spectacle of Wealth and Prominence at American Metropolis.

Imperial Rome gave its populace "bread and circuses"—New York town, more than imperial, as yet provides only the circuses. But it is more than an open question if Rome spent as much upon its amphitheater as New York has put into the Speedway and its approaches.

Directly, the Speedway is an outgrowth on panic—the sad days following '93. Indirectly, it is the response to a rising demand. The city has bred and fostered a swiftly growing class of rich renaissance, or survivors or spiritual descendants of the old Bloomingdale road brigade. With their thousands, invested in the city, they have been generally increasing discontent over having to go on a Sabbath day's journey to find any place where the flyers could stop their best—and, incidentally, outstep each other.

The first plan that was offered raised a roar of indignation. The plan was to take a stretch down the west side of Central Park. Lively protests from all sorts and conditions of folk inclined toward the city, and the plan was of futility better. The Speedway, as an accomplished fact, interferes with nobody. Contrariwise, it turns to the exclusion of the city, a vast area of unsightly waste. Incidentally, the turning point many dollars into honest, horny hands that otherwise would have been empty or filled with grilling charity. Altogether the course is well worth its cost, if for no more than an object lesson as to how the fanciful desires of rich men supply the necessities of poor ones.

Manhattan's face is full of choice topographical surprises. Not one of them can be compared to the Speedway. The course is easily among the most picturesque in the world. That, however, is less amazing than its adoption as the ends of spectacle. The course is easily among the most picturesque in the world. That, however, is less amazing than its adoption as the ends of spectacle. The course is easily among the most picturesque in the world. That, however, is less amazing than its adoption as the ends of spectacle.

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look on and stare, and most likely envy, in six months the Speedway would be given up to trainers, exercise men, and some of the rich men themselves that know enough about horses and other things to get at the real 'drivin'.

Possibly the policeman was soured. Certainly the Speedway at its best helps to put one in love with life and things. For instance, on a fine autumn Sunday morning, when blotches of red and yellow show through themselves lightly through the overhanging foliage of Washington Heights, High Bridge and Washington bridge, springing alertly from the bold ramp of the heights, span the green, clear breadth of the valley and catch themselves on the wind-blown blue of the sky. Coming in from the viaduct, far and away, the most impressive approach, one sees high on the hill the historic mass of Hamilton Grange, once the home of Betty Bowen Jumeau. There is a flag in the yard—a flag streaming straight out upon a tickly west wind. Behind the wooden background is the site of historic Fort George, now given over to beer drinking and the speech of the vaterland. But one need not think of that—there is enough right at hand to fill eyes and mind and perception.

The road drops in a long incline, macadam for ten blocks, after that a broad reddish-yellow earthen ribbon, and then a long straight stretch of silver lace. There is a line of green grass between the yellow ribbon and the silver lace, but one must go early in the morning, for by 11 o'clock the walkways are so full they are no more than blurs and blotches of color. At least half the onlookers are women, and many of them are in holiday dress. Children likewise abound—the most part in gay coats, some few in somber black ones. But even the black coats have interest in the holiday driver. Children likewise abound—the most part in gay coats, some few in somber black ones. But even the black coats have interest in the holiday driver.

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