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The Pony Rider Boys with the Texas Rangers: On the Trail of the Border Bandits (The Pony Rider Boys Series Book 8) - Kindle edition by Frank Gee Patchin, Frederick Remington. Download it once and read it on your Kindle device, PC, phones or tablets.

He was not advancing his own cause by his attitude. The latter was not greatly disturbed at this. He did not think, for a moment, that the man would dare to shoot him. Ned did not realize what a desperate character he was facing. Who is Captain Billy? Some friend of yours, I suppose? We did not even know of your existence until you began shooting at us. Why did you do that? There was that in the eyes of the man before him which, all at once, told Ned Rector that the fellow meant what he said. We are not Texas Rangers. We are known as the Pony Riders and we are out for our health and as good a time as we can have. I had his little game sized up the minute I set eyes on your bunch. Now you out with the whole story. If you tell it straight, I may think about letting you go. In the meantime Tad Butler had not been idle. As the reader already knows, Tad had been deceived as to the location of the shot. He had gone a long distance out of his course. After a time he realized this and at once started back toward the plain. It was his intention to make the opening where they had first sought to make camp, as it was there or in that vicinity that he was to meet Ned Rector. The lad settled down to a trot. Every faculty was on the alert, for Butler was a natural woodsman, added to which was an experience of some two or three years in mountain and on plain until Tad was familiar with many of the tricks of the mountaineer. Suddenly the boy halted and stood with head thrown back sniffing the air. That means some one is in camp here. I must find out where the fire is. Having decided upon this he started in the direction named, but proceeded with much more caution than before as he did not wish to stumble upon strangers until he had first determined whether they were friends or enemies. At last he saw a faint flicker of light. I hope nothing has happened to Ned. Still, he would have fired his revolver had he got into trouble. He may be waiting for me down by the creek. Young Butler, crouching low, crept cautiously through the bushes, each foot being placed on the ground as softly as an animal stalking its prey could have done. Not a sound did the young woodsman make. Of course his progress was slow, but it was silent, which was much more to be desired. Some fifteen minutes elapsed before Tad reached a point where he could get a view of the fire. He was obliged to crawl some three or four rods from that point ere he found a position where he could see the men who were near the fire. Butler knew that the first finger of the right hand was toying with the trigger. His glances followed the direction indicated by the muzzle of the weapon. There, back to a tree, a rope twisted twice about his body sat Ned Rector, defiance in face and eyes. Ned was looking straight at his captor. The situation was strained. To Tad, it was maddening. What are your orders? Who is in charge of you? He is scientific, all right. Who is it you and your bunch are after? The two minutes is about up. And now once more, are you going to let me go? Ned had seen something that sent the blood coursing through his veins madly. That something was a figure that for a few seconds had been outlined in the faint light of the fire. The mountaineer caught the change of tone on the instant. His suspicions were aroused. He slowly straightened up until he had risen to his full height. Now the rifle came up to position, ready for work. It was at his chest again. The mountaineer had no need to bring the weapon to a level with his eyes. He could shoot equally well from almost any position. But that look was fatal. With a roar the fellow wheeled like a flash. The shots were fired with such suddenness that Ned did not realize the fellow had turned until after the rifle had spit two charges of fire and lead. Everything grew black about him again. The lad was in a fainting condition. It was all up with him now. Ned had tried to cry out, but the words would not come. He could not utter a sound if his very life depended upon so doing. Ned found his voice at last. It rose in a mighty yell for help, a yell that carried far beyond the spot where those exciting scenes were being enacted. At least, two bullets went ripping through the foliage over his head. The move served the further purpose of hiding him from the man who was shooting at him. The mountaineer had not even caught a sight of Butler, quick as had been his turn about. The

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fellow swung to the right letting go two more shots, evidently believing that he had not fired in the right direction. The boy came to his feet as if propelled by a spring. At that second the eyes of the mountaineer were fixed on a point several yards to the left of Tad. Without a sound Tad let go the rock. But the movement caught the eyes of the ruffian. He swung toward Butler at the same instant pulling the trigger of his rifle. Once more the rifle roared its savage protest. But that was its last roar for the time being. With such force had the missile been hurled that the fellow staggered back, the rifle falling from his hands, both of which were suddenly clasped over the part of his anatomy that had been struck. The fellow uttered a howl of pain. He swayed and staggered then fell over a dead limb, landing flat on his back with a crash. The eyes of the plucky Pony Rider Boy were flashing. Tad had not even thought to draw his revolver. But his anger was kindled. He was dangerous in his present mood. He did not pause to think what a terrible chance he was taking in thus rushing forward. Fortunately for Tad, however, the mountaineer was suffering such agonies that he either gave no thought to the revolver that was hanging at his side, or else he was too weak to draw it. He staggered to his feet, swaying, groaning, shoulders hunched forward, chin on his breast. Young Butler was upon him like a whirlwind. The fellow went down in a heap. He knew the first thing to be done was to secure the prisoner. The danger lay with the man stretched out there on the ground. His rope was jerked free from his belt. It came near being pretty warm for you. Are you going to cut me loose, or am I to stay tied to this tree for the rest of the night? We shall have to wait until our friend there comes to his senses before going farther. Tell me how you got into this mess. I blundered into it. Stacy may be right after all. There are plenty of Germans in Mexico, so why not some of them up here to stir up trouble? He looks like pictures I have seen of some of those Hun assassins," declared Ned Rector.

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Chapter 2 : The Pony Rider Boys with the Texas Rangers by Frank Gee Patchin - Full Text Free Book (Part 1)

The Pony Rider Boys With The Texas Rangers Or On The Trail Of The Border Bandits List of western films of the s wikipedia, title director cast country.

Conclusion The waking of the men was a matter of seconds merely. A touch on the shoulder and the man touched was on his feet as if propelled by springs, hand instinctively going to the revolver dangling from his belt. Tad, now keenly alive to what was going on, had partially thrown the blankets off, Chunky having done the same. All the better for us. That might leave some marks and lead them to investigate when day comes. This was the opportunity for which he had longed. Take a good aim. Give them a rattler of a volley. Every man pick his mark. A man who could plan such a cold-blooded crime could have no heart. And the worst of it was that Tad saw no way to prevent the crime. If their backs are turned toward us, all the better. It would be cold-blooded. Work the lever," commanded the captain as the voice of the lookout called down the one word "Right! If I shoot, drop in your tracks, but be careful not to drop in the opening. Now think as you never thought before! There goes the tree. One of the men procured a long pole from a crevice in the rock. This he thrust down under the roots of the tree, adjusted it and then began working the pole as one would a pump handle. The tree began to rise at once. Tad saw that the outlaw was working a pneumatic jack, on which he figured a piece of timber had been placed so as not to crumble the dirt from the roots when the bulk was raised by the jack. From the outside the bandits no doubt used the same method that the Pony Rider Boys had used to gain an entrance. One volley will be enough, then back and trip the jack. Look out for squalls! Things will happen rapidly when they begin. Once outside the bandits quickly skulked off to one side or the other. Almost with the first shot he heard the voice of the Ranger captain. McKay, ever on the alert, was not caught napping. A thundering volley crashed from the rifles of the outlaws, answered by a rattling fire from the revolvers of the Rangers. Tad heard an outlaw utter an exclamation of pain and knew that one at least of the bad men had been raked by a bullet. The word was not spoken loud enough to be heard far away, but every man there heard it, and back they rushed into the cave. A shower of dirt fell over the two Pony Rider Boys, who were by this time crawling on all fours to get away from the tree that they knew would come down with a bump. The Rangers were still shooting. Tad and Stacy were in a dangerous position. The Rangers were firing right over them. The instant the boys heard the base of the tree fall into place, Tad uttered the owl call. In the cave the outlaws were beginning to think. Each one denied that he had fired them. Somebody here is a traitor! Out there in front of the cave Tad was rapidly whispering to the Ranger captain what had occurred. He told him the bandits were all in the cave and that he believed the only exit was there behind the roots of the big tree. On each side of the row of bonfires McKay placed flanking parties who stood with rifles ready to train on the opening should the bandits seek to escape. All that night and the following day did the Rangers keep silent watch over the cave. The second night fires were built up as before, and part of the force stood watch while the others slept on the ground with rifles for pillows. It was not until about noon of the third day that any sign of life was observed in the cave. Willie Jones hailed the captain, declaring that he was ready to surrender. Terms were quickly made. The men were to walk out singly, leaving their arms in the cave. There was no need to caution Willie Jones as to what would follow the least sign of treachery. He knew without being told. Grim Rangers were standing on one side so that they should have a clear shooting space in front of them. Billy McKay stood directly facing the opening, as if for the purpose of tempting one of those desperate men in there to take a shot at him. None had the pluck to try it. Jones was the first one out. He was manacled and searched. One by one the bandits emerged until every man was a prisoner. That afternoon all were on their way to El Paso. It would be many years before they would again terrorize the Rio Grande border if at all, for there were many charges against them. Among the charges preferred against the bandits was that of aiding the Germans by stirring up trouble on the border. Not a man confessed, but while the government was unable to prove this particular charge, it was positive that in the arrest of this desperate gang a nest of dangerous traitors had been

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broken up. The boys were praised by every one for their bravery, and especially were Tad and Stacy, who had so bravely risked their own lives to save the lives of their young companions and the Rangers. That gentleman deposited it to the credit of the two plucky young lads, though it was some time ere they knew the existence of this special fund, all their own. It was the last night in camp before ending their wonderful outing, and every one was solemn-eyed and thoughtful. Their playspell was at an end and they were sad. Tad and Ned were speaking of the war, each confiding his desire to the other, to get into the fight, and expressing his intention of doing so soon. Stacy chuckled under his breath, at the same time keeping a weather eye out for any hostile move that Professor Zeppelin might make, for the professor plainly was excited. I have no need to tell you that, but, as Tad says, this is a good time for us all to declare our loyalty, and we should reiterate it every day of our lives. I attended a German military school and, to cut the story short, I became a German officer. I fought in many battles" "At the battle of the Nile he was fitting all the while," murmured the fat boy under his breath. Tad rebuked Stacy with a look. It was not until then that I realized that I had been wrong, that I had been upholding an unworthy cause. That was years ago. Soon I had absorbed the spirit of American liberty and became at one with its ideals. I became a citizen. Of course I looked back on my army experience with a certain amount of pride. No one who has fought and bled can help doing that up to a certain point. I was sorry deep down in my heart that I had served the Fatherland, but I rejoiced that I was then an American, a loyal American. I offered my services to the country of my adoption, believing that they would go to war at once, but I was too old, and then America was not yet prepared for the great conflict. Since we went to war I have again offered my services. I can still fight, young men. Professor Zeppelin held up a hand. From the case he drew a small object wrapped in tissue paper. Now I loathe it. Its possession has troubled me greatly of late and it has been my intention to rid myself of the hateful thing. Boys, what shall be done with it? Tad handed the tool to the professor. The latter placed the once prized decoration on a stone and with one blow from the axe smashed the cross. Blow after blow he rained on the medal until it lay scattered in pieces. These the professor gathered up and hurled far from him. The youthful voices of the Pony Rider Boys rose in the National anthem, the deep bass voice of Professor Zeppelin booming out above all the rest. When next we meet our boys we shall find them in utterly different surroundings. In the next volume of the present series our readers will find an extremely fascinating tale.

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Chapter 3 : The Pony Rider Boys with the Texas Rangers Quotes by Frank Gee Patchin

The Pony Rider Boys with the Texas Rangers; Or, On the Trail of the Border The Pony Rider Boys with the Texas Rangers; Or, On the Trail of the Border Bandits.

Showing Good Generalship Rifles had been jerked from saddle boots as the boys swung to the left, sweeping down over the plain. Tad assumed the leadership of the party, as he usually did in emergencies. But try to keep out of the fire," shouted the professor. Tad saw that several men were riding around in a circle shooting at a fleeing horseman whose rifle spoke often and spitefully. The lad knew that the solitary horseman was the Ranger lieutenant. Then when I say fire, every man shake out his rifle, but shoot high. Excellent head work, Tad. But I do hope none of you gets hit. The bandits had not discovered the advancing horsemen in the darkness, though had they been less interested in seeking to kill Lieutenant Withem they might have observed the little band that was now sweeping down on them. Whoop it up, fellows! Then they let go their voices, to which the professor added his own. But his voice was almost wholly lost in the blood-curdling shouts of his young charges. Five rifles crashed out, but their leaden missiles went high, followed by another series of wild yells, whoops and scattering shots. About this time the Border Bandits discovered the oncoming party of horsemen. All at once they turned their rifles on the Pony Rider Boys. At the first shot in the direction of the boys Tad turned in his saddle. Ride straight at them. The bullets sang so close to the boys that the lads could hear them plainly. Had the light been more certain some of them must have been hit, for those men out there knew how to handle rifles much better than did any of the Pony Rider Boys. With wild whoops and yells, keeping up a continuous fusillade, the plucky band kept straight on. Bang, bang, bang, bang! The horses of the bandits fairly leaped into the air. Soon after that they faded into dark, uncertain streaks on the white of the plain. Now the rifle of the solitary horseman began to speak again. Joe Withem was not afflicted with any scruples against shooting to hit. Withem thought he saw a man go down, but he could not be sure. The boys swept past him some distance to the left of the Ranger, still shooting, their purpose being to keep the bandits going until the latter should have been driven so far away that they would not be back that night. The boys pulled their horses down, and wheeling began trotting back. A little beyond they saw Withem galloping toward them. They had me on the hip for sure. Then he pulled his horse up sharply. And you boys put the bandits on the run, eh? They must have caught sight of me as I was riding out. Those fellows have had a fright that will keep them going for some hours yet. Some day, when my gun sticks in the holster, I may get mine. Surely you are not going on to-night? Swinging his pony about he galloped away into the darkness, while the boys turned their own mounts toward their camp in the canyon. But there were other equally exciting experiences ahead of them in the near future, in which the Border Bandits would play an active part.

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But we know that is a way these Rangers have. Besides he thought there was trouble in the air," guessed the professor. Captain McKay knows his business perhaps much better than do we. And now, if you are ready we had better be on our way. We have lost no little time here. The rest of the day passed uneventfully, the Pony Rider Boys continuing along the range of mountains. The place was thickly covered with brush and small trees, excepting for a small open space on which the grass grew high and green. They pitched their tent near the stream. This done the boys began gathering dry wood for the campfire which would need a lot of it before the evening came to an end. Wood was scarce and darkness had overtaken them ere they succeeded in getting enough for their needs. In the meantime the professor had been laboring with the tent. He had finished his job quickly, rather to the surprise of the boys, who were chuckling over the mess Professor Zeppelin would make of it. The professor, however, was far from helpless. He might not be suspicious of every one he met, but he was a man of brains. He knew how to get along with his young charges, as perhaps few men would have done. And he did get along, without friction, retaining the love of every one of the Pony Rider Boys. They were always ready to play pranks on the professor, yet there was not a lad of them but would have laid down his life, if necessary, for him. He insisted on getting the supper, "just to keep my hand in," as he expressed it. No one offered strenuous objection to this, though no cook ever had a more appreciative audience. What, not eat, and with an appetite like mine? Speaking of eating that reminds me of a story" "Will some one please muzzle the fat boy? The water holes had gone dry and they were choking for water when the clerk saved them and" "Ring the bell! You ought to remember the story. You have told it often enough. Have you forgotten your own story? This was another clerk. This one had a watch. Not a face was smiling. All were as solemn as owls. It is to smile, but nobody smiles. You make me tired. A minute ago you said it was going to snow. The professor is the only one in the outfit who has a sense of humor. The lad had raised his head in a listening attitude, his glance fixed keenly on the other side of the camp ground. Tad shook his head. Go on with the fun. Get Chunky to tell you when it is time to laugh. Ha, ha; ho, h" The fat boy paused abruptly. He was down on his knees about to dip up a cupful of water when chancing to raise his eyes he saw something that caused the word to die on his lips. A man stood just on the other side of the stream, lounging against a tree, observing the fat boy with an amused smile. You are the Pony Rider Boys. I promised myself that I should look you up at the first opportunity. I got on your trail this afternoon and as you were going in my direction I considered this an excellent opportunity to make your acquaintance. So here I am. Tad was smiling, the others gazing at the newcomer blankly. One would think you had seen a ghost," laughed the captain. Then I must have a double. I should like to meet him. Then the other man did not? I should know him now from the description given to me by Lieutenant Withem. We have just about finished the grub, but there is more. He was of about the same build as the other man who had declared himself to be the captain, but the real captain had light hair and laughing blue eyes, as opposed to the dark hair and eyes of the other man. It seemed not to have suffered from exposure to the sun and storm of the plains. Tad led the way to the camp, followed by the visitor and the rest of the Pony Rider outfit. You discovered me before I got into your camp. I stepped on a stick that bent down under my foot. How is it with you? Then I suppose I shall get shotted up some more. I guess you got revenge on them, young man. Mosquitoes were worse than a volley of rifle bullets. Captain McKay laughingly explained. The Pony Rider Boys laughed uproariously at this. Once more they sat down with a captain, but the same thought was in the mind of each who was the first man who had passed as Captain McKay? McKay himself did not appear to be over curious as to this. However, after the meal was finished he turned to the professor. You are very keen. I put a bullet through that ear myself, more than a year ago. I suppose you do

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not know who the gentleman is whom you entertained? You see what a sharp fellow he is. I suppose he pumped you gentlemen pretty thoroughly? I see now that Tad was right. I gave no heed to his words of warning. I guess I shall have to take him in with us. Willie Jones now knows all about the part you and your young men have played in capturing Dunk Tucker. He knows that it was your party that drove off his men when they were trying to get Lieutenant Withem. Do you think Willie will overlook that? Willie will be on your trail from now on. He will watch his opportunity and when he thinks he is safe from the Rangers he will strike he or his men. Then you young men will need to be resourceful, indeed, if you get off with whole skins. We have taken care of ourselves before this and we can do so again. It is for you, Professor, to do what seems best to you. If you decide to remain I think I shall be able to protect you. I have come to the conclusion, from certain things that have come under my notice, that the headquarters of this band of Border Bandits is here in the Guadalupes. Search as we might we have been unable to locate their cache. You see their plan of operation is this. These men indulge in various forms of rascality. In the first place they steal stock when possible. This they drive over the border and exchange for Mexican goods, which they smuggle across the river and store away until such time as they are able to dispose of it. Of course there are some people higher up who are receiving and disposing of these goods. The first thing to be done is to capture Jones and his band. When they are safely behind the bars the traffic will stop short. Perhaps when we get them all in limbo one or another of the newer ones will confess. That will make our work easier. In fact it is what we are depending upon at the present time. But will there not be danger in our remaining here? It is safe to suppose that the band will devote no little effort toward getting even with you. That means that they are quite likely to hover about in your vicinity. That will narrow down our field of operations considerably. It will give you an appetite," jeered Rector.

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Chapter 5 : The Pony Rider Boys with the Texas Rangers by Frank Gee Patchin: Chapter XXIV. Conclusion

The Pony Rider Boys with the Texas Rangers. or On the Trail of the Border Bandits. By. Frank Gee Patchin. 0 (0 Reviews) Free Download. Read Online.

The Cave of the Bandits The top of the tree sprang up with such force, when relieved of the weight of the fat boy, that Tad Butler lost his hold and was catapulted to the ground, which he struck with a force that made his bones ache. Who would have thought it? But get away from here! We may have disturbed some one. Nothing of the sort happened. The birds were singing in the trees, the sun was shining brightly, the heat was intense. There may be more to this than either of us think. I wonder if we can weight that tree down so the roots will stay up in the air? Perhaps we can make them stay on so the top will be held down. Tad was ready with a heavy, flat rock which he carefully raised by main strength. Butler leaped back out of the way, but Stacy recovered himself in time and after some effort succeeded in placing the rock in the limbs of the tree. The fourth rock brought the tree down to the ground, exposing the opening in the rocks once more. Then you may come down. Tad motioned for Chunky to descend. The fat boy leaped down. The tree top remained on the ground leaving a wide opening in the rocks. You may need it. I think perhaps it might be the wiser plan for you to remain out here and keep watch. It is taking long chances, but I guess the tree is safe unless some one should come along and trip the stones. We should be buried alive. We will take a chance. Chunky was trotting along behind him, the fat boy full of importance over the discovery they had made. At the opening they paused, glancing apprehensively at the great roots towering above them. Were the butt of that giant tree to settle down now, it would crush them. The boys stepped inside. They could see but a few feet ahead of them, but saw that they were in a huge crevice in the rocks, a sort of cave formed by the splitting apart of the rocks themselves, perhaps from some long past earthquake disturbance. To this the boys gave no heed. They had more important matters on hand than observing the atmosphere of the place. The cave they found was much larger than they had had any idea of. In places the roof was all of ten feet high. But as they penetrated further in, moving cautiously, lighting the way with every step, the walls sloped toward the back, approaching nearer to the floor. Except for the light from the matches, the boys were in darkness, so that they were not able to observe that the opening to the cave had closed. A strong breeze, swaying the upper limbs of the tree, had dislodged the stones and allowed the roots to slip quietly into place again. The boys, without knowing it, were prisoners. Why, were any one to come in here, he would discover instantly that strangers had been here. Our very lives may depend on our doing so. It is my opinion that the very men Captain McKay is looking for have been here. Come, we must be quick! We are likely to be interrupted at any time, though I hardly think any of them would come here in the daytime. After creeping under the low-hanging rock they found that they were able to stand erect once more. Then they discovered something else. There were bales piled on top of one another, packs securely tied lying about, guns, rugs, in fact a miscellaneous assortment of goods which the boys believed to be of great value. In one corner stood a chest securely padlocked. It was a rough chest, bound with iron bands that looked as if they might have been used on cotton bales. Tad shook his head. We had better be getting back to camp as quickly as we can. Do you know what they would do to us if they caught us here, Chunky? Light another match while I look into this niche. Then we will be making tracks for the outside. He motioned that they were to go back. The boys started briskly for the opening. The instant they had crawled out into the outer chamber they realized that all was not as it should be. At first they did not understand what had occurred. Tad was the first to make the discovery of what had occurred. Now we are in a nice pickle. He held a burning match in his hand until the match burned up to his finger, whereat Chunky dropped the match with an exclamation. We can do it. This may have been an accident. Those stones may have slipped off. I am inclined to think that is what has happened. I ought to have known better than to go out with you. Remember, whatever occurs, you are to leave your revolver in its holster. One little slip might be the death of us. For once in your life be prudent. He saw nothing to encourage him. Rocks everywhere, with here and there a discolored

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spot where tiny streams had trickled through, perhaps during a heavy rainstorm. Tad was thinking with all his might, trying to devise some plan by which they might protect themselves in case they were surprised by the return of the bandits, which he did not think would occur before night, even if then. He reasoned that the bandits were far away else the Rangers would not have gone on a long journey in search of them. That meant that the bandits would not be likely to return until matters had quieted down and the Rangers had left the locality. I always am right. Stacy repressed an "ouch" with some difficulty. The two lads stood listening. Particles of dirt were rattling from the roots of the fallen tree, sounding like hailstones as they fell to the rocks in the cave. Then a faint ray of light appeared under the bottom of the mass of roots.

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Chapter 6 : Frank Gee Patchin (Patchin, Frank Gee,) | The Online Books Page

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The Victor Index Title: Red Ryder serial Western: The Lone Ranger is one of the iconic characters in American folklore, and he got his start on Mutual, airing from through Last Updated January Note this is very much a work in progress. This index now lists all of the Victor Annuals and the , , , Gray-man, Volume 4 The Home Team: Fathers, Sons And Hockey Casebook of clinical geropsychology: We have now placed Twitpic in an archived state. Abilene Town Randolph Scott western movie free online. Abilene Town Randolph Scott western movie free online western movies and television shows from all over the web for you to watch here for FREE. Just take your mouse arrow and highlight the category you want to check through. Alexis pampers Duncan feeding him as she explains to Daniel that she let Duncan move in. Daniel sits down at the table dumbfounded. There are entries in the list.. This list was started after I noticed my first MPAA certificate number, which was in the ending credits of the movie Tron, somewhere around Residential Systems Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua nulla pariatur. Solar Street Lighting Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua nulla pariatur. Our Services Green Africa Renewable Energy Green delivers engineering solutions consulting to energy projects throughout African countries. Our engineers and scientists are among the most experienced in their fields. We are driven to provide optimum value and essential results to our clients. We have achieved a model that delivers excellence and knowledge

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Chapter 7 : Frank Gee Patchin (Author of The Pony Rider Boys in Montana)

In "The Pony Rider Boys in Montana" is told the story of the long and exciting ride over the old Custer Trail, famous in the tragic annals of our earlier days of Indian fighting.

You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. Frank Gee Patchin Release Date: July 22, [EBook] Language: Excitement on the West Fork II. Tad Butler Makes a Discovery V. Showing Good Generalship X. Surrounding the Enemy XX. Horses and men alike were wearied, dusty, perspiring and sleepy under the glare of a midsummer Texas sun. Little had been said for some time. None felt like talking. For hours they had been working south by west, urged on by the green of the foliage that they could see a short distance ahead. At least it had seemed a short distance for the last five hours, but the green trees now appeared to be just as far away as when the party had first sighted them early in the morning. At the head of the line rode a grizzled, stern-faced man, sitting on his pony very stiff and erect. Just behind him was a young man, slender, fair haired and smiling, despite the discomfort his red face showed him to be suffering. Still back of them rode three other young men, the last in the line being a disconsolate fat figure of a boy who slouched from side to side in his saddle, each lurch threatening to precipitate him to the ground. The fat boy was plainly asleep. He had been slumbering in the saddle for more than an hour, and occasional mutterings indicated that he was dreaming. Professor Zeppelin cast a critical glance down the line of jaded horses and riders, a faint smile twitching the corners of his mouth. Ned and Walter will be in a few minutes more. We will ride into the bushes over there on the other side of the stream. The water cannot be deep. Some hot coffee will wake us all up. Let him wake himself up. Chunky had settled in his saddle until it seemed that the boy was less than half his natural height. His body had fairly telescoped itself. The fat boy sat leaning forward, his sombrero tipped forward until it covered his face, leaving only the point of the chin exposed. By this time Professor Zeppelin had driven his own pony into the creek, the others following, where the horses drank greedily. Stacy and his mount were still on the bank, too sound asleep to think of either water or food. They then led the animals farther into the bushes, where the ponies were tethered until they should be wanted again. Chunky still slumbered on. In the meantime Tad was carrying water from the creek, while the other two boys were starting a fire on the bank, the smoke from which was already curling up lazily into the still, hot air. But not much of a meal was cooked. It was too hot to eat or to cook. The boys sat down to their little meal, almost choking with laughter every time they glanced across the stream toward the sleeping pony and its sleeping rider. By the way, how much farther is it to the mountains? How about it, Professor? According to my understanding, we were a little more than forty miles from them this morning. Since then we have gone a good twentyfive miles. All eyes were directed toward the sleeping fat boy and his slumbering pony. The latter was now beginning to show some signs of life. It had lifted one foot, then another, until it had taken two steps toward the creek. But the rider was as soundly asleep as before. Nothing seemed to disturb Chunky when he was having a nap. We want to see what he will do," begged Walter. Now its eyes were partly open. It saw the rest of the party on the other side of the creek. The cool water completed the awakening process for the horse. It drank freely then started for the other side, Chunky still sleeping. All at once the pony stepped into a deep hole in the creek. The animal went down on its nose with a mighty splash. Stacy shot over the disappearing head, then boy and pony vanished under the waters of Delaware Creek while the others of the party bowed with delight. The pony in the meantime had clambered up the bank and was trotting off to join its fellows. There is no second table in this outfit, except for good and sufficient reasons. "I fell in, I did. He began to understand that a trick had been played upon him. Anything would go to sleep with Chunky on hand," declared Ned. In order to get what he wanted he was obliged to undo three of the large packs. Once undone no one would help him lash them together again, so grumbling and growling, the fat boy tugged with the ropes until he had taken a secure hitch about each of the three packages. They made him tie the three before they would allow him to eat the biscuit and cold bacon that

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he had got out. While Stacy was munching his cold lunch the others were lashing the packs to the lazy ponies and preparing to start again, every one being anxious to reach the mountains before night fell. But the fat boy was surly as well as sleepy. That his companions should sit down to a meal, leaving him asleep on his pony, filled Stacy with resentment and a deep-rooted determination to be even with them. He was already planning how he could repay his companions in their own coin. You better learn to read your own before you go prying into mine. He promptly fell off, having forgotten to cinch the saddle girth. Now the pony woke up and began to kick as the saddle slipped under its belly. Stacy moved more quickly than he had at any other time during the day. Over and over he rolled in a cloud of dust in his efforts to get out of the danger zone, while the pony kicked and squealed, the boys shouting with laughter. It caught one of the flying hind feet of the pony. Do you think we are going to wait here all day for you? The lad got on this time without falling off, and with much laughter and joking, the party started off toward the blue haze in the distance, the dark ridge that marked the Guadalupe. It was in "The Pony Rider Boys in the Rockies" that our readers first learned how this little private club of youthful horsemen came to be organized. The need of open-air life for the then sickly Walter Perkins was one of the great factors in the organization of this little band of rough-and-ready travelers. Our readers remember the adventures of our young friends in the fastnesses of the Rocky Mountains. These lads speedily fitted themselves into the stirring life of the big game land, and had other yet more startling adventures in which wild animals did not play so strong a part as did wild men. The story of the discovery of Lost Claim, with its accompanying battle with claim-jumpers, was fully told in this first volume. The thrilling part that the young men took in the long cattle drive, with its stampedes, the fording of swollen rivers, the games of the cowboys and the tricks of the cattle thieves, is related in that second volume. How the boys improved their shooting and mastered the details of that fascinating sport of handling the lariat are all familiar to our readers. In "The Pony Rider Boys in Montana" is told the story of the long and exciting ride over the old Custer Trail, famous in the tragic annals of our earlier days of Indian fighting. Here the boys found themselves drawn into the life of the sheep men, on those great ranges where the sheep men must still defend themselves from the prejudices, and sometimes from the extreme violence, of the cattle men. It was in this connection that Tad Butler and his friends discovered leading clues in the great conspiracy of certain cattle men against the prosperity and safety of the sheep men. This state of affairs led finally to an angry battle, at which the boys were present. The next stage of adventures took our lads somewhat further east, as told in "The Pony Rider Boys in the Ozarks. The imprisonment of the youngsters in a mine, following a big explosion, formed another interesting scene in the narrative brought forth in that fourth volume of the series. It was here that Chunky, as our readers know, displayed the splendid stuff that lurked under his odd exterior and behind his sometimes queer manners. How, in escaping from the mine, the Pony Rider Boys penetrated a mystery that had disquieted the dwellers near the Ozarks for a long time, was one of the most interesting features of the tale. But such strenuous life proves the mettle of the right kind of young Americans. So, far from being discouraged, or sighing for the comforts of home, we next find our lads in Nevada, as related in "The Pony Rider Boys on the Alkali. Roving from water hole to water hole, finding them all gone dry, nearly drove the youngsters mad. Then, too, the fight with the mad hermit, who seemed a part of the life of that bleak desert, helped to accustom the boys to the strenuous life of daily danger. As our readers will recall, it was in the next volume, "The Pony Rider Boys in New Mexico," that the author described the events surrounding the first real acquaintance that our lads formed with the little that is left of the savage Indian to-day. It was here, too, that they beheld the fire dance of the Saboba Indians in all its ancient fury. The adventures of the young horsemen at this point became fast and furious. Between prairie fire and fight they had the most exciting time of their lives. Later, after a rest at home, as described in "The Pony Rider Boys in the Grand Canyon," the boys visited the wonderful region of the Colorado. Here, as our readers will recollect, the lads were cut off from their trail by the falling of great masses of rock during a fierce storm. Apparently the boys were doomed to remain helpless on a narrow shelf of rock; our readers recall how Tad Butler, at the risk of his life, spent hours in the attempt to get them out of their dangerous situation. The mysterious circumstances that followed the boys all

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the way along on their journey through the great canyon form a most remarkable series of events. Here they looked forward only to a long, healthful ride, full of pleasures, yet devoid of anything like sensational excitement.

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