

WILL ROGERS

Childhood adventures with an Oklahoma legend

BY CAROLYN ESTES

CHAPTER 4: *Sleeping under the stars*

Once the herd was watered at Four Mile Creek they settled down for the night. The drovers would head them out at first light the next morning.

The cowboys gathered around the campfire for chow and some conversation. Frank and Will tried to outdo each other twirling their ropes. Pa and Mr. Rogers drank coffee while resting by the fire.

"I'm sure glad we had a good stand of bluestem this year," Mr. Rogers said. "These longhorns look mighty fat and ready for market," he added. "I hope we get a good price for them!"

Pa asked Mr. Rogers if he had heard any more about the railroad.

"I don't want it to come. It's going to change everything in this part of the county," Mr. Rogers worried.

"You know, along with them trains come the sodbusters who want to farm the land," Mr. Rogers said. "I'm sure it will bring about a lot of change since it will cut the ranch in half."

The two men continued to talk about the problems the railroad would bring.

Soon, it was time to call it a night.

"Ok, boys," Pa said. "It's time you two find your bedrolls and get some shuteye."

"Yes, sir," Frank said as he got ready for a night under the starlit sky.

"Hey, Will, you think we should use our saddles for pillows?" Frank asked.

"Sure do," Will answered.

The two boys fetched their saddles and bedrolls. They found a soft spot to put them down and settled in. They drifted off to sleep to the sound of coyotes howling in the distance. They didn't worry, since the

wranglers took turns keeping watch over the herd and camp throughout the night.

At first light the campfire was stoked up and the trail cook prepared a big breakfast. Everyone took turns filling up his plate.

Will and Frank grabbed a quick bite and then saddled up their horses. They rode out to help the wranglers round up the herd and drive them to the creek for water before hitting

the trail. One ornery steer tried to bolt across the creek. Frank quickly turned his horse into the water to bring it back. However, his horse had a different idea and came to a fast stop, pitching Frank right into the water.

As luck would have it the water wasn't very deep. Frank bounced to his feet quickly.

"Anything broken?" asked Pa.

"Nope, only my spirit," Frank said as he remounted his horse.

"Round 'em up, head 'em out," shouted the trail boss to the drovers. Will and Frank watched as the herd and riders headed out of sight.



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CHAPTER 4 - 6.4375x10.5

NEWSPAPER ACTIVITY

1. Find a word in your newspaper starting with each letter in RAILROAD then try to make a sentence using those words.
2. How many nouns did you find?
3. How many pronouns did you find?
4. How many adjectives did you find?

NEXT WEEK: CHAPTER FIVE

Down to the swimming hole

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