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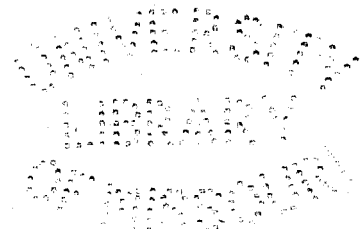
HANDSET REMINISCENCES

Recollections of an
Old-Time Printer
and Journalist

By J. B. GRAHAM

Printed by the
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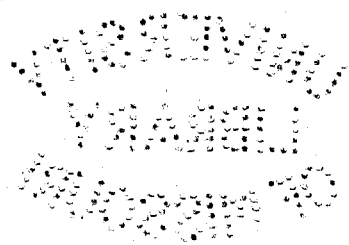
1915



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THE AUTHOR



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Contents.

3-3-47
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History X

	Page
THE AUTHOR	Illustration
EDWARD T. PLANK	Illustration
TO THE PRINTING FRATERNITY	7
IN LIEU OF A FOREWARD.....	9-13
ONCE A HOBO	15-49
THE UNDOING OF OLD ORMSBY.....	50-56
TRIBULATIONS OF A TWO-THIRDER..	57-66
NEW YORK HERALD FIFTY YEARS AGO	67-82
IN THE EARLY SIXTIES.....	83-124
THE FIRST GREAT SILVER BOOM....	125-166
AN INSPIRED LIAR.....	167-175
UNION MAN IN A RAT HOLE.....	176-182
SAVANNAH JUST AFTER THE WAR...	183-190
A "TOURISTS" STRIKE.....	191-197
FOUR YEARS IN GEHENNA.....	198-253
FORTY YEARS AFTER	254-282
MY LAST VENTURE	283-307

549865 65

*TO THE MEMORY OF MY OLD-TIME FRIEND
AND SIDE-PARTNER EDWARD T. PLANK THIS
VOLUME IS FRATERNALLY DEDICATED.*

To the Printing Fraternity

"Handset Reminiscences," having been prepared for your special entertainment, will be sold by subscription only. I am assured it will be read sooner or later by most printers. Please don't borrow it.

I am in my seventy-sixth year; was in the printing business over fifty years—carrying a working card about thirty, the rest of the time "enjoying" myself as "editor, publisher and proprietor" of country newspapers.

In the spring of 1908, before the printers' pension law became operative, I was placed on the retired list of No. 115 because of disability. To paraphrase, my eyes were bad and my fingers queer.

The incidents here sketched are true—as nearly to the letter as I have been able to set them down between regular shifts at other labor.

I am kindly permitted to use two short stories and part of another which appeared years ago in the Inland Printer, under the heading "Handset Reminiscences," also, one that was published in the International Journal.

Brethren, I shall be gratified if this book entertains you; more gratified if it deserves a big sale and receives it.

Price \$1.25 postpaid. Send orders to

Yours fraternally,

JERRY B. GRAHAM,

214 E. Fifth South St., Salt Lake City, Utah.

March 1, 1915.



EDWARD T. PLANK
President I. T. U., 1888 to 1891

In Lieu of Foreword.

As this book is made up of anecdotes relating to myself, is in the nature of an autobiography and there is little to explain, a foreword seems hardly necessary. But in the beginning I wish to apologize for the crudities of my work. I was not educated for the editorial profession, or any other for that matter. As explained in one of the sketches, I took up the pen by sheer force of circumstances.

I hope not to be criticised too severely. The greatest authors have not always been those who could command faultless language. J. Fennimore Cooper in his day was the most successful American writer of fiction. Millions of readers were entranced by his absorbing creations, without discovering that often they were not only preposterous but execrably written. Even the queen of England begged him to give something of the earlier life of Leather Stocking, and the result was "The Deerslayer," first volume of the "Leather Stocking Tales" though the last written. But Mark Twain came along, and pointed out that there are a score of rasping errors of composition and misfit words in some pages of those stories; that in the action, for instance, Leather Stocking shot at a mark and with wonderful accuracy and a strange rifle hit a nailhead at three hundred paces that could not be seen at fifty with a spyglass; while his marvelous woodcraft, when stripped of romance, was in many details unreal and absurd.

H. C. Williams, my successor as editor of the Bingham Bulletin, inserted in that paper

the following personal after I had gone to California and when, as he says, I was unable to defend myself. I can forgive him for it, and even thank him, except as he in a way puts me in a class with Judge C. C. Goodwin, without doubt the ablest and smoothest newspaper writer the west has ever produced. Williams was a first-class printer—like myself not an author, born or made. If you discover crudities in his composition, as in mine, forget it. Tread lightly on the tacks. Let the pure gold intended obscure the dross.

“When men of courage and imagination came into these mountain solitudes in the early days they became transformed. There was no sordid commercialism to soil them; and there was nothing to check them from being absorbed into the spirit of the mountains and forests over which hovered the glamor of purple and gold of the setting sun, which men had seen from afar since the birth of history and have finally followed until the star of empire sank into the Pacific. Call it Colchis or California these men were of the heroic mold, and they will stand always heroic to those who follow and bring their humdrum world with them and transform the grand solitudes into routine. The race is dead or dying and most all of them will soon be altogether heroic. One meets relics of it now and then, old and gray, with their large hearts and lovable natures still imparting the spirit of the grand solitudes which they absorbed a long generation ago; and so they will go on to the end, for the beauty of the solitudes that transformed them will not let go of them.

“The editor met a couple of these sojourners a dozen years ago in Salt Lake City, and if he mentions one of them now it is because he is away and cannot exercise the veto which his retiring disposition would certainly impose. One was “Jerry” and the other was “Judge.” And it is only to the world that knows them not that they become plain Mr. Graham and plain Mr. Goodwin—in our hearts they are Jerry and Judge, and so only I and others who really know them may ever think of them.

“When Mr. Graham severed his relations with the Bulletin a few days ago he closed a newspaper career which time had made romantic and to which rapid change in western environment has lent an element of pathos.

“In 1903 he visited California and while there sought for such friends as a lapse of forty years might still have left. With 128 others in 1861 he was a member of Eureka Typographical Union No. 21. A record had been kept of their comings and goings, and most all of them had gone, to not return there, or anywhere. Himself had been marked “probably dead.” Of the whole number half-a-dozen were left in Frisco, and a few others were still alive but elsewhere.

“Equally pathetic was his visit to the New York Herald office about five years ago. He had worked there in the days of the elder Bennett, in 1859 and later. Out of a force of upwards of two hundred in that year not one was left, and the oldest man in the office dated from 1865. Mr. Graham’s identity was established by his references to the old boys, who were still reverently remembered, and finally by the payrolls bearing his name. He at

HANDSET REMINISCENCES

once became the wonder of the office, and chaperoned by Eugene Young, a night editor, formerly of Salt Lake, there was a hot time in the old town, and the freedom of the Herald and all of its belongings were his. He was invited to take some perfunctory place on the editorial staff, where his main duty would be drawing a salary. But Jerry is not built that way, and he returned to his post here in Bingham.

"Mr. Graham was born in Rochester, New York, in 1839, and began the printing business as "devil" in the Rochester Advertiser. From thence he went to New York City, and at various times worked in the Herald, Tribune and World, when those papers were presided over by the elder Bennett, Horace Greeley and Manton Marble.

"In 1860 he went to San Francisco (via the Isthmus), where he was employed on the Herald, said to have been the first paper printed on the coast. It had been boycotted by the vigilantes in 1852, but got out from under and lived until 1862.

"In 1862, when the first great silver boom was on, Mr. Graham went to Virginia City, and rode into Nevada with Hank Monk, the furious driver who in that year gave Horace Greeley a shaking up on a ten per cent down grade; setting type in Virginia City two years at \$1 per thousand. Mark Twain and Dan de Quille were at that time local editors of the Territorial Enterprise. Mr. Graham returned to New York in 1865.

"In 1871 Mr. Graham established the La-peer, (Mich). Democrat, which by the way

IN LIEU OF FOREWORD

now strangely bears the legend "Established in 1852."

"He went to Pitkin, Colorado, in 1881, and purchased the Pitkin Independent. He white washed himself in this venture; saw a mining camp of 2,000 people dwindle to 200, parted with \$9,000 in less than four years and left the mountains with barely \$15.

"Mr. Graham started the Telluride, Colorado, Republican in 1887 for a company, and later was connected with the Cheyenne, Wyo., Stock Journal. In the fall of 1895 he purchased the Bulletin.

"May 12, 1860, Mr. Graham joined New York Typographical Union No. 6, and is therefore among the oldest union men on the Pacific slope. He is also a mason, and a member of the supreme lodge of A. O. U. W.

"This career is a more romantic and productive one than to make a million and then retire and be devoured by the acids of unrest, and soured in spirit; for Jerry in his up and downs was always as his friends have known him—sweet in temper, generous and unpretentious. If he had troubles they were soon buried, but his spirit would go out in sympathy because of the tribulations of his friends, or of anybody.

"Jerry, like Judge, was born of the spirit of the mountains, and like them will not change. Those who love him most would like to emulate him in disposition, in faith, and in the personal honor which is the firmest thread in his nature. If you don't know these things you merely know J. B. Graham; you don't know Jerry."

