



BUSTED RIBS AND BROKEN ENGLISH

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Threadbare Creek

Yeah, another short 'zine. I'm now on my third job in the past 6 months. This one shows much promise for being fairly long-term, and has some real potential for being quite lucrative in time, but also suffers from the common malady of startups: heavy time demands. So my REHupa contribution suffers again.

So, to capitalize on some ongoing work, I thought this would be a good place to try to bring those interested up to speed on some of the work I've been doing into good ol' Breck Elkins.

Part of my research has been to try to itemize all of the people and places mentioned in the stories, with all relational and physical descriptions. Then I'll be cross referencing these to build the Elkins family tree and detailed geography. Why? For the Hell of it.

Here are some excerpts from the notes for "Striped Shirts and Busted Hearts", the first Breck story in *A Gent From Bear Creek*, and the first story chronologically. It has the advantage of side-stepping the issue of variant versions as the original *Gent* publication is the only source we have:

People:

Breckinridge Elkins (1st person)
Joel Braxton
Glory McGraw
Pap Elkins
Jim Garfield
unnamed (Joel Braxton's brother)

Old Man McGraw (Glory's pap)
unnamed (Breck's sisters)
Joe, Bill, John (Glory's brothers)
Jack Gordon (Breck's cousin)
Snake River Wilkinson (a cowpuncher from the Wild River Country)
Miz McGraw (Glory's mom)
"the other gals" (Glory's sisters)
Ellen Reynolds

Steeds:

Alexander

Places:

Bear Creek
Humbolt Mountains
Wild River Country
Chawed Ear

Descriptions:

Braxtons
"no-account folks..." (Pap)
"...and I allow he's right" (Breck)

McGraws

trail leads to cabin w/yard outside door, door w/ lintel-log, benches & chairs, empty fireplace w/iron poker, windows w/hickory-wood bars, table, rain-barrel

"only folks on Bear Creek besides the Reynoldses and the Braxtons which ain't no kin to me" (Breck)

"[Old Man McGraw's] three boys" (Breck)

"long gangling boys [Joe, Bill, John]"

Glory McGraw

"I'd been sweet on Glory McGraw ever since I was big enough to wear britches" (Breck)

"the tallest, finest, purtiest gal in the Humbolt Mountains" (Breck)

"warn't a gal on Bear Creek, not even my own sisters, which could swing a axe like her, or fry a b'ar steak as tasty, or make hominy as good, and they ain't nobody, man nor woman, which could outrun her, less'n it was me." (Breck)

“sleeves rolled up” (Breck)
“arms and throat and bare feet was as white as anything you ever seen” (Breck)
“her eyes was the same color as the sky, and her hair looked like gold dust when the sun hit it” (Breck)
“She warn’t scairt of nobody but her old man, but he shore had her number” (Breck)
“her blue eyes was blazing, and her yaller hair” (Breck)
“that’s the first time I ever knowed she *could* cry” (Breck)
“before I takes a shotgun to you” (Glory)
“I’d of married you and settled down in a cabin up the creek somewheres” (Breck)

Elkins

“my folks all come from Texas” (Breck)

Breckinridge Elkins

“nobody ain’t [licked me], up to now—outside of pap” (Breck)
“you ain’t never fit none of my brothers” (Glory)
“the littlest one of my brothers can lick you” (Glory)
“I don’t claim to be no gunfighter” (Breck)
“All the clothes I had was what I had on” (Breck)
“I hadn’t never even *seen* a store-bought shirt (Breck)
“go get my rifle-gun” (Breck)

Jack Gordon

“I bet [Snake River Wilkinson] cain’t sling iron fast as my cousin Jack Gordon” (Breck)
(Context implies Jack Gordon faster than Breck)

Snake River Wilkinson

“a cowpuncher from the Wild River Country” (Glory)
“Store-bought clothes” (Glory)
“Star top boots, and gold-mounted spurs” (Glory)
“red neckcloth—he said silk” (Glory)
“a shirt all red and green and yaller and beautiful” (Glory)
“white Stetson hat” (Glory)
“pearl-handled six shooter” (Glory)
“the finest hoss and riggin’s [Breck] ever seen” (Glory)
“from the river country” (Breck)
“striped shirt” (Glory)
“his Winchester” (Glory)
“his scabbard-end tied to his laig” (Glory)
“a fine white hoss” (Breck)
“the saddle and bridle was the most elegant I ever seen. The silver-work shone when the sun hit it” (Breck)
“a hard voice” (Breck)
“Ain’t another [Winchester] like it in these mountains” (Wilkinson)
“white Stetson with the fancy leather band” (Breck)
“[shirt] all big broad stripes of red and yaller and

green”

“a pearl-handled Colt .45 in a black leather scabbard which was worn plumb smooth and the end tied down to his laig with a rawhide thong” (Breck)
“he hadn’t never wore a glove on his right hand, neither, by the brownness of it” (Breck)
“the hardest, blackest eyes I had ever seen” (Breck)
“[I] shot it out of his hand along with one of his fingers” (Breck)
“You may be accounted a fast gun-slinger down in the low country, but yo’re tolerable slow on the draw to be foolin’ around Bear Creek” (Breck)
“If I ever come within a hundred miles of Bear Creek again it’ll be because I’ve gone plumb loco” (Wilkinson)

Alexander

“he was a smart mule in his dumb way” (Breck)

Ellen Reynolds

“stuck-up hussy” (Glory)

Old Man McGraw

“tugging at his black beard”

Injuries to Breck:

Scratched belly (Joel Braxton, knife)
Head blow (Glory McGraw, oak water bucket)
Head blow, bit tongue (Old Man McGraw, iron poker)
Misc (McGraw boys, chairs+benches+table leg)
Mouth blow (John McGraw, table leg)
Head blows (Bill McGraw, chair)
Chawed thumb (Old Man McGraw)
Face slap (Glory McGraw)

Weapons:

knife (Joel Braxton)
cap-and-ball .44 in scabbard (Breck)
bowie knife (Bill McGraw)

Breck’s clothing:

buckskin shirt
coonskin cap
moccasins
buckskin britches

Environment:

spruce log
blackjack thicket
creek
clump of alders
white oak

Animals:

cougars
grizzlies
buzzards
beaver
spotted tail skunk