James Washington and John Carter were in the freight business. They had sold their buffalo hides from the past winter to a buyer at Fort Kearny and used a part of the proceeds to buy a wagon with a team of horses to pull it.

The wagon was available because the owners, a young married couple, had died of typhoid on the Oregon Trail between Independence and Fort Kearny. The other members of their wagon train had burned their belongings but kept the wagon and its team of horses for the use of the train.

By the time the train had reached the fort, a large family had decided to sell their two wagons and teams and take a steamer back to Independence. The deaths of two children had convinced them to return home to Virginia. The wagon master purchased these wagons with their oxen teams, and the first wagon had become surplus. Besides, horses were a poor choice for pulling a loaded wagon to Oregon. They needed grain as a food supplement and tended to attract the attention of Indians. Oxen were preferred. They were slow but steady and could survive on poor grazing. Washington and Carter got a bargain, and the C&W Freight Line was in business.

The Rosebud Mercantile Emporium had been buying furs and buffalo hides from local Indians and buffalo hunters since late winter. Small steamers supplied transport for much of their inventory to Independence by water but were not able to move it all. C&W was hired to transport the remainder to their warehouse in that city.

Once again Carter’s wagon was loaded with buffalo hides. This time they were well salted and dried for eventual shipment to a tannery. The smell was minimal, but Carter still knew what he was hauling. Washington’s wagon carried bundles of furs that were also well salted and dried for shipment.

Nightshade and Buckskin accompanied the wagons. Leaving them in the care of some stable hand at the fort was not an option. Besides, they could prove useful for scouting during the afternoon or early evening stops.

The rest of the shipment required an additional wagon. The Mercantile representative purchased one from the wagon master, which he filled with a mixed load of crates and barrels. A team of four mules was bought to pull it. He then hired a driver and guard for a one-way trip to Independence. The two men were not very friendly, as Carter found out the first night on the road.

All three wagons were heavily loaded but, at least the trail was mostly level with an occasional grade up or down. It ran south of the river, so the wagons had to carry water for the animals. There were stretches where a man could see for miles in every direction and other parts where the road worked its way through rolling countryside with a limited view. Rocky outcrops and hills abutted the route from time to time and could be used by outlaws or Indians to lay ambushes.

Carter pulled off the dusty trail about twenty-five miles from Fort Kearny. His back was bothering him from bouncing over the ruts in the road, and one of the wheels had started screeching on its axle. He decided to stop here for the night to rest his back and grease the noisy
wheel with some buffalo tallow mixed with soap. It was a good site with water and grass for the animals. Since Carter was in the lead wagon, the others followed him off the trail.

“You plannin’ on stoppin’ here for the night?” Washington asked.

“It be a good spot for the animals and we done covered a good distance today,” Carter answered.

The two company men did not look happy about the stop. The driver, Jake Carsten, a tall, thin man with a scraggly beard, who smelled like a dead horse, stepped down from his wagon and walked over to stand near Carter. He said, “We got three hours of daylight left. I’m fer pushin’ on.”

“Me too,” said his partner as he came up beside Carsten and looked Carter straight in the eyes.

Carter stared at them both for a minute. Then he focused on the guard and said, “Your name be Curt Hayes. Ain’t that right?”

“Yeah, what about it,” Hayes replied, spitting a glob of tobacco juice out of a mouth hidden by a matted, tobacco-stained beard.

“I’m wonderin’ just why the hell you be comin’ along. One driver be enough for each wagon.”

“I am along to help guard this shipment from outlaws,” Hayes said. Then he paused for a second before continuing, “or anyone else who might decide to steal it.”

Washington put his hand on Carter’s shoulder and said, “Let’s get camp set up. We can hobble the animals and let them graze while I scout around a bit on Nightshade.” Then he gave the other two a hard look and said, “You two do whatever you want, but as long as you be travelin’ with us, you do as we say.”

Washington put the animals out to graze while Carter gathered wood for a fire and started getting set for the night. Buckskin was feeding with the team animals while Washington walked Nightshade over to where Carter was gathering the firewood. When he got there, Washington said, “Keep a watch on them two. I don’t trust them at all.”

“I be watchin’ them plenty close,” Carter said as Washington mounted Nightshade. “When you get back, you can help me grease that right rear wheel. It started making some noise a mile or so back.”

Washington waved his acknowledgment as he left camp. Before riding out of sight, he stopped and looked back to see what the other two were doing. Carsten was setting up a separate camp while Hayes pastured their mules. He thought to himself, “We should probably get closer to those two, so we can keep an eye on what they are up to.”

Washington figured on riding a few miles north and circling to the east, coming back into camp from the south. Tomorrow he would repeat the action but start south and circle round to the west.

As he made his circle, he did not see anything concerning until he crossed the trail several miles east of their campsite. There was an immigrant train of over a hundred wagons encamped along the path. They had a herd of several hundred cattle nearby grazing on the spring grass and muddying a small stream.

It was the first big train of the new season. Trains traveled along the trail with regularity throughout most of the summer. The early trains found good campsites with clean water and
fresh, spring grass to feed the livestock. By mid-summer, the campsites along the trail would be overused. There would be no firewood, the grassland overgrazed, the water holes polluted, and the stench of death and disease hanging over everything.

Washington figured they would have to travel a short distance off the trail to find decent campsites. The wagon trains would be using most anything within a mile or so of their route. Luckily, he had Nightshade along to search for suitable sites. They would stop each afternoon so he could scout ahead for a place to spend the night.

Forage for their animals would not be a problem since there was a small supply of it in the wagons. However, as the season wore on, they would have to carry more and more of it. That would reduce the amount of freight they could haul. Maybe they’d try the Bozeman Trail forts for business later in the summer. It was not as busy as the Oregon Trail, and good campsites were readily available throughout the season.

As he thought about these things, he turned away from the big train and continued circling back to their camp.

When he arrived, there was a single fire. Carter was frying some bacon while the other two were sitting nearby eating beans.

After dismounting, Washington said, “Big immigrant train comin’. We’ll meet up with them tomorrow, so we better get an early start.”

“What will be more behind them,” said Carter.

“So what? We’ll pass them by,” Hayes said.

Washington removed his hat and wiped his forehead with his sleeve before saying, “The problem is what happens along the trail to the good campsites. One big train can destroy a site for the whole season. Overgrazed grass won’t grow back during the dry season, and any waterholes will be contaminated.”

“What can we do about it?” Hayes asked.

“We’ll camp away from the main trail every other night. I’ll find places for us that ain’t been used by immigrant trains,” Washington said.

Hayes turned away and said something to Carsten, who nodded and walked over to their wagon, where he grabbed their bedrolls.

After supper, Carter cleaned the dishes with some sand and then left them on a nearby anthill for a thorough cleaning. While he was doing the cleanup, Washington removed a sturdy wooden bar from the side of the wagon and set a large rock behind Carter’s wagon. When Carter was ready, he used it to lever the wagon’s noisy wheel off the ground so Carter could remove it and grease the axle. When finished, they called it a night.

They got an early start the next morning and passed the immigrant train as it was pulling out. There was no grass visible anywhere, and a nearby stream was churned into mud by the herd of cattle accompanying the train. Piles of furniture littered the whole site and three fresh graves were near the side of the trail.

At the noon break, Washington said, “They only been on the road about two weeks since leavin’ Independence. From what I saw, a lot of them ain’t gonna make it to Oregon.”

“Most will make it,” Carter said. “But the trail will be lined with crosses and piles of furniture. I even saw a piano in one pile back where that train had camped for the night.”
Two days later they passed another train of about fifty wagons. It was early in the season, and everyone wanted to cross the Rockies before winter set in. Trains were regularly leaving Independence along with their herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. The trail was extensive for much of its course between Independence and Fort Kearny, so the two groups were able to give each other a wide berth.

When they reached the midpoint of their journey, the freighters met a train of about twenty wagons with just a few cattle. The wagon master invited them to spend the night with the train. Since it was planned to camp along the trail tonight, they accepted the invitation. They set up a few hundred yards from the nearest wagon and hobbled the animals nearby. Later, after supper, they would visit with the immigrants.

Hayes and Carsten did not seem to be very happy about camping near the train. They had been getting harder to deal with each day. Carter had come very close to sending them off on their own more than once. The reason he did not was to keep an eye on them. He suspected they were up to no good. Besides, the Rosebud Mercantile might void their contract if he did that.

As they prepared their meal, a visitor from the train came by their camp. “Hello in the camp. May I share your fire?” he said.

Carter looked him over. He appeared to be non-threatening. Dressed in black with a white shirt and black tie, the man wore a broad-brimmed, black hat and carried a Bible in his left hand. He was slightly under 5 feet tall with a full beard and did not create much of an impression.

“C’mon in and join us for a while. Our vittles ain’t much, but they are fillin’, and we are willin’ to share them,” Carter said.

When he came closer, Carter noticed he had piercing eyes with a fire behind them that made one take a second look. He also watched the visitor’s movements and thought that his mannerisms hinted at an inner strength and confidence that were easy to overlook with a glance.

He reached out, and as they shook hands, he said, “My name is Jim, and I go by the moniker of Baptist Jim. I travel around the west, sharing the word of the Lord with both the faithful and the sinners.”

After shaking hands, Carter pointed at a chunk of wood near the fire and said, “Have a seat preacher. My name’s John Carter and that big fella there,” he pointed at Washington walking around his wagon, “be James Washington. We’re hauling freight to Independence out of Fort Kearny.”

As Washington acknowledged him with a wave of his hand, Baptist Jim asked, “I noticed two men near that other wagon. Are they part of your group?”

Before Carter could reply, Washington said, “They’re with us. Didn’t you notice them when we passed you a mile back? You was just a bit to the north of the road.”

“They were trailing you by some distance, so I was just a bit curious, especially since they appeared to be keeping to themselves.”

“Even though they be with us, you can ignore them. Hayes and Carsten ain’t all that friendly,” Carter said.

When they heard their names mentioned, Hayes and Carsten walked over to stand by the fire. Ignoring Carter and Washington, they stared at Baptist Jim. Hayes said, “So you are supposed to be a preacher. That be funny. You’re such a runt I doubt God can even see you. Why don’t you go back where you came from?”
Carter stepped in front of them and said, “You two need to go back to your fire and keep your comments to yourselves.”

Hayes put his hand on the butt of his pistol and said, “Holy men bring bad luck. Even ones that look like him.”

Carsten had moved away from Hayes and faced Washington. He said, “Maybe it’s time we taught these two a lesson.”

The atmosphere had gotten tense, and a fight could erupt at any second. Washington slowly reached down to loosen the flap on his holster. When he touched the flap, Carsten drew his pistol. He just cleared his holster when a shot rang out, knocking him to the side with a hole in his left temple.

Baptist Jim had taken a pistol out of his Bible and shot him. Hayes held his hands away from his sides as he looked down the barrel of Jim’s gun.

Carter disarmed Hayes and tied his hands behind his back. Then Washington sat him down against a wagon wheel and tied him to one of its spokes.

While he was securing Hayes, the wagon master and a few other men from the train had come running with their rifles at the ready. Jim intercepted them and explained what had happened. Carter had accidentally fired a gun that he was cleaning. Since they could not see much of the camp, they just accepted Jim’s word and walked back to the train. Even if they doubted what he said, everything appeared to be alright, and they had enough problems of their own.

After they left, Carter asked Jim, “Are you a real preacher?”

“Yes, I sure am. I am also a bounty hunter,” Jim replied.

“I never heard of anything like that,” Carter said.

“Never heard of what?” Washington asked as he joined them at the fire.

“That Baptist Jim be a preacher and a bounty hunter,” Carter said.

Looking at Jim, Washington said, “So this is a disguise?”

“No. I am a Baptist Minister. My church was in Tennessee and got destroyed during the war. My congregation got scattered, and I was without a flock to minister. I came west to start a new church wherever God portends. I hunt outlaws to raise the necessary funds.”

“So, do you think that Oregon is where you will build your church?” Carter asked.

“I did until I saw those two when you passed me by earlier today. Posters I had gotten in Independence had their pictures. I just had to decide whether you might be working with them.”

Jim had placed his pistol back inside his hollowed-out Bible and took another Bible from an inside coat pocket. He removed two folded papers from it: wanted posters for Curt Hayes and Jake Carsten, dead or alive for robbery and murder.

“These two are part of a tough gang of outlaws who have been terrorizing the area around Independence. I heard they were at Fort Kearny and figured I’d tag along with a wagon train going in that direction.

“We were lucky you come along. Otherwise, I suspect we would have had trouble when we got near Independence,” Carter said.

“Since I have to get these two into the city to collect the five hundred dollars bounty money, suppose I drive the third wagon for you,” Jim said.

“What about your horse?” Carter asked.
“I have a mule that I ride. A preacher on a horse attracts too much attention. Riding a mule makes me less noticeable.”

“I’ll tie my mule to their wagon. I can hog-tie Hayes and keep him tucked in among the freight goods in the wagon. I’ll bury Carsten and say a few words over his body. Maybe his worthless soul will make it into Heaven, but I doubt it. I have his wallet and you two as witnesses for the bounty.”

Carter looked at Washington, who nodded his agreement. Then he looked back at Jim and said, “That works for us. You can also keep their pay for hauling that load of goods.”

“Now that we took care of their wagon, let’s talk to Hayes and find out what they had in mind,” Washington said, cutting him loose from the wagon wheel and roughly lifting him to his feet.

Taking a Bowie knife and placing the point an inch from his right eye, he started the questioning. Ten minutes later, with Hayes back on the wheel, the three of them sat talking about what they had learned.

“It was nice of you to let him keep both of his eyes,” Jim said.

“I was sorely tempted to pop it out when he admitted what they were up to,” Washington said.

“We need a plan,” Carter said.

Baptist Jim spoke first after a pause of a minute or two. “When I left Independence over a week ago, I noticed some men at a place called Bear Rock. There were three or four of them just sitting on their horses watching the wagons go past. One of them was Ben Samson, the saloon owner mentioned by Hayes as the gang leader.”

“The gang must be keeping watch on traffic so they can pick out easy targets,” Washington said.

Carter said, “If’n we can catch some of them at Bear Rock, they won’t know we’re comin’ into the city. Then we can take care of business and maybe get a return load and be back on the road before they know we were there.”

Baptist Jim said, “That all sounds good to me. While you two take care of the freight and get paid, I’ll collect my reward from the sheriff.”

“Is there any reward on other gang members?” Carter asked.

“I don’t think so. These two had done some stupid things and got identified. That was why they were on posters. Samson probably sent them away from the city until things cooled down a bit.”

“Should we try to get freight for all three wagons? That third wagon don’t rightly belong to anyone. The Rosebud just bought it for this one trip and put two outlaws on it. I doubt they’ll complain very much. You could keep it and join us on the return trip,” Carter said.

“I suppose I can head west with you if you get loads going in that direction. After the delivery, I’ll keep on goin’. I plan to build my church in Oregon with this reward plus some other money I have stashed. I figure I can have a nice little church in a small town.”

Washington stood and stretched. He said, “Now that’s settled, let’s get some sleep. We’ll start early tomorrow morning, and in three days we’ll be at Bear Rock.”

There were no problems for the next three days. They passed one more wagon train and avoided using any of the main campsites along the trail. Finally, they parked the wagons about a
mile west of Bear Rock among some cottonwoods. Then, leaving Baptist Jim with his prisoner, Washington and Carter approached the area on foot.

Two men were having a noon meal at the base of a hill that resembled a sleeping bear. While they watched, a third man descended the hill and joined them.

He said, “That last train had a straggler. Let’s look at it. Then we can head back into town.”

One of the others said, “Pickins been slim lately. Hope they got somethin’ to make Samson happy. He’s been hard to be around for some time now.”

As they started to gather their things, Washington stepped out into the open. He said, “You fellas best stand easy.”

“Who the hell are you?” one of them said, reaching for his pistol.

Carter shot him in the chest from his position among some rocks. As he fell backward, firing his gun into the ground, the other two ran in opposite directions while pulling their pistols out of their holsters.

One of them shot at Washington while running toward his horse. The bullet whizzed past his ear as he fired his pistol, hitting the outlaw in the shoulder, spinning him around and knocking him down. As he rolled on the ground, he raised his gun to fire again. Before he fired, Washington’s second shot put him down to stay.

The third man had disappeared into some brush. His erratic running had thrown Carter’s aim off. Before Carter could pursue him, he came flying back out of the brush and lay unconscious on the ground. Then Baptist Jim went out of the same brush holding a thick tree branch. They both stopped by the side of the prone outlaw.

Carter said, “You stopped him real good. Saved me some runnin’.”

After taking a close look at his face, Jim dropped the branch and said, “Ain’t no poster on this one. He is all yours.”

Carter took a close look at his face and said, “I don’t know how you can tell. You done smashed his nose all over his face.”

It was late in the day when the three wagons pulled into a lot behind the Rosebud Mercantile warehouse in Independence. While laborers worked at unloading the wagons, Carter met with the manager to receive their payment.

Meanwhile, Washington helped Baptist Jim walk their two prisoners to the sheriff’s office. He told Carter that they’d be back in about a half hour or so.

One of Samson’s watchers had seen them pull into the lot and recognized the two prisoners tied in the back of one of the wagons. He reported to his boss, who immediately sent a message to the sheriff. Samson told him to consider letting the two prisoners coming his way escape from his jail right after they arrive. Since the sheriff was on his payroll, that would not be a problem.

Samson had Jesse, his top man, gather a few toughs from his saloon to visit the Rosebud’s back lot. They were to give the wagon drivers a good beating and burn their wagons. If they killed the drivers during the blows, that would be even better.

The sort of men patronizing The Feathered Lady, Samson’s place of business, were from the seedier parts of Independence. Most were ready to do anything to make a few dollars. Jesse
got six of them to go along with him. Five dollars each for busting a couple of heads was easy money.

They got to the lot just as Carter came out of the office. When he saw them coming, he hurried to his wagon and reached for his rifle. He had hidden it beneath a bedroll. Unfortunately, one of the toughs got there at the same time and knocked him down. As he sat up, the tough held the rifle, and Jesse stood beside him with a pistol in his hand.

As Carter stood, Jesse said, “You are just gonna stand there while we burn your wagons and chase off your animals. That way we might just let you live.

“You be makin’ a big mistake,” Carter said.

Jesse raised his pistol, intending to whack him with the barrel when a voice spoke out from behind him and his men. It said, “If’n you do that, I’ll kill you.”

Turning, he saw a tall Negro and a small white man who was holding a Bible.

“How you gonna do that, nigger?” Jesse said as he swung his pistol in Washington’s direction.

Before he could pull the trigger, Baptist Jim dropped his Bible and fired before it cleared his pistol. The slug tore through the Bible and hit Jesse in the stomach. As he started to double over, with a surprised look on his face, Washington drew his pistol and put another bullet into his chest.

As Jesse fell, the man holding the rifle dropped it, and all six men raised their hands. Two of them picked up Jesse’s body. All of them walked to the sheriff’s office.

When they arrived, the sheriff was sitting at his desk. He jumped up and demanded to know what was going on. When Carter explained what had happened, he said, “I’ll take your guns and you three will wait here in a cell until a judge decides whether or not you murdered this man. The six men you brought with you will be witnesses.”

While he was speaking, Jim had been looking into the cells at the back of the jail. Before Washington responded to the sheriff’s demands, he stepped in front of the sheriff and said, “Where are the two prisoners I brought you earlier?”

Looking down at Jim with a sneer on his face, the sheriff said, “They escaped. You won’t be gettin’ any reward, and you’ll be takin’ their place in a cell. Now give me your guns.”

The sheriff reached for the pistol at his hip. Carter, who had been standing beside the sheriff with his rifle pointed at their prisoners, slammed its butt into his head.

They locked the sheriff in a cell with the other six men. Then, after securing the front door from the inside, they went out the back way. Baptist Jim locked that door with a key and snapped it off inside the lock. He threw the rest of the keys into a horse trough.

The Feathered Lady was six blocks from the jail. They decided to go there.

Baptist Jim said, “Shouldn’t we just leave town?”

Carter replied, “We plan to run freight all summer and well into fall. This Samson fella ain’t gonna ruin it for us.”

“What about the sheriff?” Jim asked.

“He won’t be a problem once we take care of Samson,” said Carter. “Samson is the one who must be payin’ him off.”

When they arrived at the front of The Feathered Lady, Jim asked, “Think one of us should go in through the rear?”
“Naw. The three of us can go in through the front and spread out,” Carter said.

When they entered the smoke-filled saloon, Samson was sitting at a table with two other men. Another man was sitting on a tall chair holding a shotgun. A scattering of men throughout the saloon was either sitting at tables playing poker or standing at its long bar nursing drinks.

After a cursory glance, most everyone ignored the newcomers. The ones who did not kept staring at them. Washington noted who these men were, and before they separated, he said, “If’n anything starts, I got the scattergun.”

Before they gained much separation, Hayes and the other outlaw came out of an upstairs room onto a balcony that ran across the rear of the saloon. When they spotted Washington and the others, they drew their guns and started shooting.

Their quick shots went wild, but the return fire did not. Baptist Jim put two bullets into Hayes, who fell back into the room he had just exited. Carter hit the other one in the belly. He doubled over and fell across the railing, landing on Samson’s table.

Samson jumped up, pointed at Baptist Jim, and yelled, “Kill him.”

As the patrons either ran to a side of the room or flattened out onto the floor, Washington killed the man with the shotgun as Carter and Jim had a short gunfight with two others.

The two men with Samson were blazing away at Jim. He had flipped a table onto its side and was firing from behind it. They were focusing on Jim because that was where Samson had pointed. Jim managed to hit one of the men in the shoulder while Carter shot the other in the chest. Washington was busy as well. He shot the bartender as he brought a shotgun out from beneath the bar.

Samson had also drawn his gun, but he was shaking so hard that he almost dropped it. When his men went down, he did let it go and raised his hands.

Washington shook his head and said, “I was hopin’ you’d try and take a shot.”

Jim walked up to Samson and said, “Let’s go into your office and see what you be hidin’ there.”

The saloon was empty as Jim and Carter went into Samson’s office. Washington waited by the bar. He was surprised when a cavalry officer and several troopers entered the saloon.

The officer, a captain, looked at Washington and said, “It appears as if you fellas had quite a party here.”

Before Washington could reply, Samson came out of his office with his hands raised. Baptist Jim was behind him carrying a leather satchel. When he saw the captain, he stopped and smiled. He said, “Hi, Jason. You be a sight for sore eyes.”

“What have you been up to now, Jim? We heard the ruckus you were making and saw the stampede out of here.”

“We were just cleaning out some vermin,” Jim said.

“It looks like you were thorough about it,” the captain commented as he looked around the room. “I see at least five bodies.”

“That’s most of a gang that’s been robbin’ immigrant trains along the Oregon Trail just outside of town,” Jim said as he handed the satchel to the captain.

“What is in here?” the captain said.

“It has personal items that belonged to immigrants. They were in Samson’s safe,” Jim said.
“I was sent here to investigate the attacks on the trains. It looks like you did my job for me,” the captain said as he pulled some strings of jewelry out of the satchel.

Turning to his men, he said, “Take this piece of trash to the sheriff’s office.”

Jim cleared his throat and said, “That might be a problem since the sheriff is locked in one of his cells.”

“Maybe you had better tell me what all has been going on here,” the captain said.

Jim filled him in on everything. The captain listened and then took charge. Samson and the sheriff were both placed under arrest. The deputies had all disappeared, so the army took charge of the prisoners. A new sheriff would have to be appointed by the mayor.

Washington and Carter went back to the Rosebud lot to check on their wagons. Jim followed along after another meeting with the Captain. When they got back together, Jim told them that he would be getting reward money for Hayes. The rest of the reward money was not possible. There was no evidence proving he had gotten Carsten. The wallet and deposition he had given the sheriff had disappeared.

“At least you’ll be getting some money for your church. It’s better than nothing,” Carter said.

“The captain said he would try to get the rest of it for me,” Jim said.

“Do you believe that?” Carter asked.

“We go back a long way, and he does owe me a favor. I am sure he will try.”

“How would he know where to send it?” Carter asked.

“I told him I would be hauling freight with the C&W Freight line through the fall. He should contact me through them.”

Washington appeared to be considering what he had just said. Then he smiled and said, “Welcome aboard partner. We got a contract with the Rosebud Mercantile to haul freight to Fort Smith up on the Bozeman Trail.”

“Ain’t that in Red Cloud’s territory?” Jim asked.

“It sure is. We’ll be getting top dollar for the delivery. Kind of a danger bonus,” Washington said.

Carter scratched his head and said, “That also be near where the Fetterman Massacre took place last December.”

“Things quieted down some since then. The army needs these supplies, and I volunteered us. We’ll make as much as we’d normally make for three trips under normal conditions,” Washington said. “They also gave me a bill of sale made out to Baptist Jim for the third wagon as part of the deal.”

Jim took out his Bible that held the pistol and looked at it. He said, “I need a new Bible. This one has a hole in it. I think I’ll also invest in a repeating rifle and a gun belt with a holster an additional pistol. I have a feeling I’ll need them on this trip.”

Carter said, “While they load the wagons, we might as well get a good night’s sleep. We can buy whatever we need in the morning before leaving,” said Carter.

“The Rosebud Mercantile will supply us with anything we want to make our trip successful,” Washington said. “It was part of the contract. So, let’s go have some fun before we start on our new adventure.”