

Post Scriptum and Research to

*Old Shatterhand – The Sonora Adventure*

Set between part one and part two of *Winnetou II*.

Karl Friedrich May mentioned adventures 'as a detective in New York', before the first part, as well as with 'Fred Harton in the Sonora', and 'Emery Bothwell in the Southwest' between the 'Old Death' and the 'Old Firehand' segments.

Old Shatterhand in the Sonora is set in 1864 against the American Civil War, as well as the Second French Intervention in Mexico; these turbulent times are not readily apparent in Karl Friedrich May's *Winnetou* trilogy.

The three parts of *The Sonora Adventure* feature three different love stories, in contrasting settings, and of unusual circumstances.

This novel is based on Karl Friedrich May's *Winnetou* trilogy, the romances '*Der Weg zum Glueck*', '*Deutsche Herzen—Deutsche Helden*', and '*Das Waldroeschen*', and incorporates excerpts, translations and adaptations of the '*Wasserfex*' arc in the 19th century romance titled '*Der Weg zum Glueck*', or *The Path to Happiness*; and excerpts, translations and adaptations of the '*Pepi und Zilli*' segment in the 19th century romance titled '*Das Waldroeschen*', which is not contained in the English version, titled *The Rodriganda Romances*.

For the third part, the 'Wilkinsfield' segment of '*Deutsche Herzen—Deutsche Helden*', or *German Hearts—German Heroes* provides a 'southern theme' to the 1864 Civil War era against which this novel is set. The adaptations include some name, character, and outcome modifications\*. The novel is a crossover work including characters and events from travel novels and romances, and is a sidequel to the *Winnetou* trilogy. (\*In *The Path to Happiness*, Antoinette was Paula, or Pauline; while neither Almy nor Pepi or Zilli experienced character and outcome modifications, the original Paula/Pauline did, hence the name change.)

Karl F. May wrote five '*Colportage*' novels, which were of the genre *Trivilliteratur*, 'dime novels', 'light fiction', or 'cheap literature', delivered to the door of the subscribers in weekly or fortnightly instalments. The five novels were: *Waldroeschen*; *Deutsche Herzen—Deutsche Helden*; *Der Weg zum Glueck*; *Die Liebe des Ulanen*; *Der verlorne Sohn*. The first and second have 'Wild West' content, the third has connections to America, but no plot element that is set there.

In Karl Friedrich May's *Winnetou II*, after Old Death, the scout, had died, Charles May the detective sent a telegram from Chihuahua, in troubled Mexico, to New York, while the French, the Native Indians, and the Mexican forces were in a constant war for the possession of the country, informing the detective agency of his success, and Mr. Ohlert, the banker, of finding his son. It was a turbulent time during 1864; the Second French Intervention war

in Mexico lasted until Maximilian I was executed. The Civil War was still raging in the United States, with the Confederate States being blockaded by the Union forces, and the Native Indian resistance to white settlement on the North American continent continuing. Karl May wrote the story with Old Death ('*Der Scout*') in 1888/89, and then adjusted it to fit into the first part of *Winnetou II*, in 1893, by adding the introduction and bridging text of having been shipwrecked in the Gulf, and having to return to New York. The Sonora was the least affected part of Mexico, with Chihuahua, the capital of the neighbouring state of the same name, probably (maybe) having a working telegraph station.

In this novel *Old Shatterhand—The Sonora Adventure*, which continues directly from Detective Charles May's adventure in New York, and that with Old Death in the deep South, Old Shatterhand travels into the Sonora, and then to Santa Fe with Fred Harton and a young lady, who is lost in America. Lincoln had made the Union telegraph system a part of the military, and utilized it as a successful weapon against the Confederates.

Whether or not a working telegraph station, or even a military field telegraph station was operational during the setting of this novel, somewhere along the Santa Fe Trail, especially around Santa Fe, is difficult to establish. A cautionary 'yes' may be possible; however, Native Indian hostilities at the time had also intensified, causing the destruction of many miles of telegraph lines, with the system working rather intermittently, if there was one at all.

Also, travelling west from the Missouri, into New Mexico along the Santa Fe Trail was fraught with many dangers; a more northern, but longer stage coach route had been established.

Someone departing from Kansas City could be in Santa Fe within a reasonable 3-week period.

There is no 'Wilkinsfield' in any 'southern slave state'; however, the referenced Fort Smith and township of Van Buren, on the Arkansas and Oklahoma border (Oklahoma was not a state at that time), places the events in Wilkinsfield somewhere along the Arkansas River, because the villain Walker arrives in Wilkinsfield the morning after his evening encounter near Fort Smith/Van Buren, by canoe, coming down the river; the Arkansas River flows through between Fort Smith and Van Buren. In a typical eight-hour day, one could potentially paddle 40-80 miles! The villain Walker wants to get to a certain point along the Arkansas River, and arrives in the morning; a moderately fast river flows at about 5 kilometres per hour (3 miles per hour), which means, without paddling, the villain would arrive at his destination about 25 miles downriver from Fort Smith / Van Buren.

If he paddled, that distance could then be as much as 80 miles (or more, if taking advantage of the current as well) downriver from Van Buren. However, along the river, the distance between Van Buren and Little Rock is about 150 miles. Assuming that he paddled to keep the canoe from drifting, and took advantage of the current so as not to exert himself, he might have reached a point about halfway along by the time it was morning.

One of the illustrations depicts the canoe\*, according to one of the protagonists' comments, as travelling downriver, with the left bank being depicted as the landing place of the events around Fort Smith / Van Buren, which means, the northern side of the Arkansas River. According to Karl May, the villain Walker's destination was a cotton plantation named Wilkinsfield. The only other directional indication is that the protagonists, who are pursuing the villain Walker, set over the river in a makeshift raft, to the same side on which Walker lands—from the left bank to the right bank, that being south of the Arkansas River. Fictional Wilkinsfield can therefore be placed on the right bank of the Arkansas River, about halfway between Van Buren and Little Rock, somewhere in the vicinity of today's Lake Dardanelle, perhaps.

(\*The image actually depicts a rowing boat with two oars and backward facing rower, which is not a canoe; however, Karl F. May writes: *Boot and Kahn*. Also: *Er hat die Ruder eingezogen [...] Ein Einzelner sitzt darin. Es ist ein india-nisches Rindenkanot; es geht bis an den Rand im Wasser*. An 'Indian Bark Canoe' cannot also be a rowing boat with two oars.)

It was a spring day when the canoe landed at Wilkinsfield. The State of Arkansas had seceded and was a Confederate state. The state is known for its cotton production. This novel is set in 1864; it is August when Charles May meets Martin Adler, as the latter rides into Santa Fe, on the trail of the villain Leflor. The events at Wilkinsfield can conceivably have taken place between spring and autumn of that year, ahead of the two men's meeting in Santa Fe.