

SERIAL STORY
LANGFORD
of the
THREE BARS
By
KATE AND VIRGIL D. BOYLES

CHAPTER I.
The Island With a Mystery.

He said positively to Battle Ax, his scraggy buckskin cow pony, that they would ride to the summit of this one bluff, and that it should be the last. But he had said the same thing many times since striking the barren hill region flanking both sides of the river. Hump after hump had been surmounted since the sound of the first promise had tickled the ears of the tired broncho, humps as alike as the two humps of a Bactrian camel, the monotonous continuity of which might very well have confused the mind of one less at home on these ranges than George Williston. Even he, riding a blind trail since sun-up, sitting his saddle with a heavy indifference born of heat and fatigue, began to think it might be that they were describing a circle and the sun was playing them some strange tricks. Still, he urged his pony to one more effort; just so much farther and they would retrace their steps, giving up for this day at least the locating of a small bunch of cattle, branded a lazy S, missing these three days.

Had not untoward circumstances intervened, he might still have gone blindly on; for, laying aside the gambling fever that was on him, he could ill afford to lose the ten or twelve steers somewhere wandering the wide range or huddled into some safe place, there to abide the time when a daring rustler might conveniently play at witchcraft with the brand or otherwise dispose of them with profit to himself and with credit to his craft. Moreover, what might possibly never have been missed from the vast herds of Langford, his neighbor of the plains country, was of most serious import to Williston.

"Devil take you, Battle Ax, but you're slow," muttered Williston. "I'd give a good deal to sit down this minute to some of my little girl's flapjacks and coffee. But nothing for us, lazy-bones, till midnight—or morning, more likely. Do walk up as if you had some little standing in the world of cow ponies. You haven't, of a surety, but you might make an effort. All things are possible to him who tries, you know, which is a tremendous tie, of course. But perhaps it doesn't apply to poor devils like us who are 'has-beens.' Here we are, Ah!"

There were no more hills. Almost directly at his feet was one of those precipitous cut-aways that characterize the border bluffs of the Missouri river. A few more steps, in the dark, and horse and rider would have plunged over a sheer wall of nearly 200 feet. As it was, Williston gave a gasp of involuntary horror which almost simultaneously gave place to one of wonder and astonishment. He had struck the river at a point absolutely new to him. It was the time of low water, and the river, in most of its phases muddy and sullen-looking, gleamed silver and gold with the glitter of the setting sun, making a royal highway to the dwelling-place of Froebus. A little to the north of this sparkling highroad lay what would have been an island in high water, thickly wooded with willows and cottonwoods. Now a long stretch of sand reached between bluff and island.

Dismounting, with the quick thought that yonder island might hold the secret of his lost cattle, he crept as close to the edge as he dared. The cut was sheer and tawny, entirely devoid of shrubbery by means of which one might hazard a descent. The sand bed began immediately at the foot of the yellow wall. Even though one managed to gain the bottom, one would hardly dare risk the deceitful sands, ever shifting, fair and treacherous. Baffled, he was on the point of remounting to retrace his steps when he dropped his foot from the stirrup unawares. Was the day of miracles not yet passed?

It was the sun, of course. Twelve hours of sun in the eyes could play strange tricks and might even cause a dancing black speck to assume the semblance of a man on horseback, picking his way easily, though maybe a bit warily, across the waste of sand. He seemed to have sprung from the very bowels of the bluff. Whence else? Many a rod beyond and above the ghostly figure frowned the tawny, wicked cutaway. Path for neither horse nor man appeared so far as eye could reach. It must be the sun. But it was not the sun.

Motionless, intent, a figure cast in bronze as the sun went down, the lean ranchman gazed steadfastly down upon the miniature man and horse creeping along so far below. Not an eyelid of the object of his fixed gaze had been swallowed by the trees and underbrush did his muscles relax. This man had ridden as if unafraid.

"What man has done, man can do," ran swiftly through Williston's brain, and with no idea of abandoning his search until he had probed the mystery, he mounted and rode northward, closely examining the edge of the precipice as he went along for the evidence of a possible descent. Presently he came upon a cross ravine, devoid of shrubbery, too steep for a horse, but presenting possibilities for a man. With unerring instinct he followed the cross-cut westward. Soon a scattering of scrub oaks began to appear, and sumach already streaked with crimson. A little farther and the trees began to show spiral wreaths of woodbine and wild grape. Yet a little farther, and doubtless there would be outlet for horse as well as man.

But Williston was growing impatient. Besides, the thought came to him that he had best not risk his buckskin to the unknown dangers of an untried trail. What if he should go lame? Accordingly he was left behind in a slight depression where he would be pretty well hidden, and Williston scrambled down the steep incline alone. When foothold or handhold was lacking, he simply let himself go and slid, grasping the first root or branch that presented itself in his dare-devil course.

Arrived at the bottom, he found his clothes torn and his hands bleeding; but that was nothing. With grim determination he made his way through the ravine and struck across the sand trail with a sure realization of his danger, but without the least abatement of his resolution. The sand was firm under his feet. The water had receded a sufficient length of time before to make the thought of quicksands an idle fear. No puff of cloudy smoke leaped from a rifle barrel, if, as he more than half suspected, the island was a rendezvous for cattle thieves, a place surely admirably fitted by nature for such unlawful operations, the rustlers were either overconfident of the inaccessibility of their retreat and kept no lookout, or they were insolently indifferent to exposure. The former premise was the more likely. A light breeze, born of the afterglow, came scurrying down the river bed. Here and there, where the sand was finest and driest, it rose in little whirlwinds. No sound broke the stillness of the summer evening.

What was that? Coyotes barking over yonder across the river? That



Turned and Faced Squarely the Spot Which Held the Watching Man.

allen sound! A man's laugh, a curse, a heart-breaking yell of pain. Williston parted ever so slightly the thick foliage of underbrush that separated him from the all too familiar sounds and peered within.

In the midst of a small clearing—man-made, for several stumps were scattered here and there—two men were engaged in unroping and releasing a red steer, similar in all essential respects to a bunch of three or four huddled together a little to one side. They were all choice, well-fed animals, but there were thousands of just such beasts herding on the free ranges. He owned red steers like those, but was there a man in the cattle country who did not? They were impossible of identification without the aid of their brand, and it happened that they were so bunched as to completely baffle Williston in his eager efforts to decipher the stamp that would disclose their ownership. That they were the illegitimate prey of cattle rustlers, he never for one moment doubted. The situation was conclusive. A bed of glowing embers constantly replenished and kept at white heat served to lighten up the weird scene growing dusky under the surrounding cottonwoods.

Williston thought he recognized in one of the men—the one who seemed to be directing the procedure of this little affair, whose wide and dirty hat was so tantalizingly drawn over his eyes—the solitary rider whose unexpected appearance had so startled him a short time before. Both he and his companion were dressed after the rough, nondescript manner of cattle men, both were gay, laughing and talkative, and seemingly as oblivious to possible danger as if engaged in the most innocent and legitimate business.

A little to the left and standing alone was an odd creature of most striking appearance—a large, spotted steer with long, peculiar-looking horns. It was quite impossible to mistake such a possession if it had once been yours. Its right side was turned full toward Williston and in the center of the hip stood out distinctly the cleanly cauterized three perpendicular lines that were the identifying mark of the Three Bars ranch, one of those same big, opulent, self-centered outfits whose

astonishingly multiplying sign was becoming such a veritable and prophetic writing on the wall for Williston and his kind.

Who, then, had dared to drive before him an animal so branded? The boldness of the transgression and the insolent indifference to the enormity of attendant consequences held him for the moment breathless. His attention was once more called to the movements of the men. The steers with which they had been working was led away still moaning with surprise and pain, and another brought forward from the reserve bunch. The branded hip, if it was a brand, was turned away from Williston. The bewildered animal was cleverly roped and thrown to the ground. The man who was plainly directing the affair, he of the drooping hat and lazy shoulders, stepped to the fire. Williston held his breath with the intensity of his interest. The man stooped and took an iron from the fire. It was the endgate rod of a wagon and it was red-hot. In the act of straightening himself from his stooping position, the glowing iron stick in his right hand, he flung from his head with an easy swing the flopping hat that interfered with the nicety of sight requisite in the work he was about to do, and faced squarely that quiet, innocent looking spot which held the watching man in his brush; and in the moment in which Williston drew hastily back, the fear of discovery beating a tattoo of cold chills down his spine, recognition of the man came to him in a clarifying burst of comprehension.

But the man evidently saw nothing and suspected nothing. His casual glance was probably only a manifestation of his habitual attitude of being never off his guard. He approached the prostrate steer with indifference to any meaning that might be attached to the soft snapping of twigs caused by Williston's involuntary drawing back into the denser shadows.

"Y' don't suppose now, do you, that any blamed, interferin' officer is loafin' round here he oughtn't to be?" said the second man with a laugh.

Williston, much relieved, again peered cautiously through the brush. He was confident a brand was about to be worked over. He must see—what there was to see.

"Easy now, boss," said the second man with an officious warning. He was a big, beefy fellow with a heavy, hardened face. Williston sounded the depths of his memory but failed to place him among his acquaintances in the cow country.

"Gamble on me," returned the leader, with ready good nature. "I'll make it as clean as a boiled shirt. I take it you don't know my reputation, pard. Well, you'll learn. You're all right, only a trifle green, that's all."

With a firm, quick hand, he began running the searing iron over the right hip of the animal. When he had finished and the steer, released, staggered to its feet, Williston saw the brand clearly. It was J. R. If it had been worked over another brand, it certainly was a clear job. He could see no indications of any old markings whatsoever.

"Too clean to be worked over a lazy S," thought Williston, "but not over three bars."

"There were six reds," said the chief, surveying the remaining bunch with a critical eye. "One must have wandered off while I was gone. Get out there in the brush and round him up, Alec, while I tackle this long-horned gentleman."

Williston turned noiselessly away from the scene which so suddenly threatened danger. Both men were fully armed and would brook no eavesdropping. Once more he crossed the sand in safety and found his horse where he had left him, up the ravine. He vaulted into the saddle and galloped away into the quiet night.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MODERN DEMAND FOR SILENCE.

German Newspapers Protest It Is Being Carried to Extremes.

"How the times change!" says a writer in the Frankfurter Zeitung. "In the days of our fathers no description of a homelike, cosy room was complete without a reference to the ticking clock. It was this gentle sound which emphasized the quiet of the place. People had no nerves in those days. To-day the thought of a machine ticking off the seconds and striking the hours is a source of worry and distress. Time is going, but they do not wish to be reminded of it continually; no clock is better than the ticking machine. And now to meet the requirements of the nervous people, a factory at Schramburg is making a noiseless clock." In an article on the same subject another paper says: "The anti-noise craze has made disagreeable and unendurable some of the noises which once were music to us, and soon we will find a way to silence the birds and to muffle the sound of the rustling leaves."

The Cutting Retort.

"You don't have to brag of success," declared the big woman when she had listened to the little woman's account of how well she was doing with her work; "it shows for itself." "And you don't have to tell outright of the decline of success once you have been successful," remarked the little woman, who had listened first to the big woman's talk; "it shows for itself the bitterness with which you complain of existing circumstances."

His Present State.

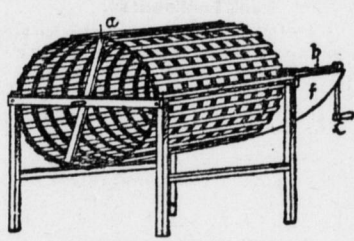
"What state does the young fellow belong to who wants to marry old Billy's daughter?" "Judging from his appearance when I saw him come out of the old man's office I should say a state of collapse."

HORTICULTURE



CLEANING POTATOES QUICKLY.
Home-Made Contrivance Which Will Also Sort the Tubers.

The sketch shows my home-made potato cleaner and sorter which I have used at Fairview farm for a number of years, writes a correspondent of Farm and Home. It consists of a number of hoops to which are fastened half-inch slats so as to make holes 1 1/2 inches square. Two heavy pieces, A, are placed inside the cylinder



Home-Made Potato Sorter.

to hold the axle, B, which extends entirely through the machine and is turned by a crank, E. The frame made is four inches lower at the opening end of the cylinder so that the potatoes will run through freely.

At the crank end is a hopper, F, into which the potatoes are poured. The cylinder is 2 1/2 feet long and three feet in diameter. It will not bruise the potatoes and the dirt and small ones run through on the floor or grate and the marketable ones run out at the open end of the cylinder into another crate. With one man to turn the crank and another to fill the hopper, 700 to 800 bushels can be sorted in a day.

DEMAND FOR CHERRY STOCK.

Chance for Some Enterprising American Horticulturist to Grow Trees.

W. F. Heikes of Huntsville, Ala., states there are imported into the United States from France annually 10,000,000 to 15,000,000 cherry stocks. Fairly trustworthy figures show that from this number of stocks the output of merchantable trees at two years old, of all sizes, is not more than one-third of the number of stocks planted, and of these not more than one-third will grade five-eighths and up. The first difficulty encountered in cherry growing is in getting a stand. So much depends on the condition of the plants on their arrival from France. There are various causes of injury from the time the plants leave the grower in France to the time of their arrival at destination. There is more or less danger from freezing or heating on the way. Sometimes the plants are dug too early, and suffer from being heeled in, or they are dug when the ground is too wet and packed in boxes before they are separated from the mud and properly dried. In this condition they start to grow in the boxes, and however carefully they may be handled, there is sure to be a heavy loss in planting. In some instances the plants are grown on land unsuited for their growth, when they suffer in health, quality and appearance. Such plants are abnormally branched, and usually present a blackish appearance of the roots. There is room for some enterprising horticulturist here who will collect Mazzard cherry seeds and grow some of the seedlings required by nurserymen for budding and grafting purposes.

NURSERY TREES.

Proven That They Do Not Exhaust the Land of Its Fertility.

All experience proves that a crop of nursery trees does not exhaust the land of its fertility, says T. R. Peyton, Cooper county, Missouri. In fact, it is generally considered that land from which trees have been moved is in the very best condition for a crop of wheat or potatoes.

The best nursery lands are those which contain a basis of clay, and these are the ones which soonest suffer under unwise treatment. The land is kept under high culture, and is, therefore, deeply pulverized. There is practically no herbage on the soil to protect it during the winter.

The soil, deeply broken and robbed of its humus, runs together and cements itself, and it then requires "rest" in clover or other herbage crop to bring it back to its rightful condition.

This resting period allows nature to replace the fiber in the soil and to make it once more so porous and mellow that plants can find a congenial root-hold in it.

Planting Temporary Trees.

We note that a horticultural writer advises to plant temporary trees between the trees meant to be permanent, for shade purposes. It is a bad plan. The owner does not have the nerve to dig out the trees meant to be temporary as soon as he should, and in the meantime these trees are taking light and plant food from the other trees. The matter of light is a very great one, far greater than most people suspect. Any shutting off of the light from a growing tree results in the malformation of its outlines. The beautifully shaped trees we sometimes see grow with an abundance of light on all sides of them.

REV. TROUTMAN SENDS BEST WISHES FOR PE-RU-NA

Rev. George A. E. Troutman, Mt. Washington, Mo., Writes,

"My Wife and I Are Strong Believers in Pe-ru-na."

Catarrh and La Grippe.
Rev. Geo. A. E. Troutman, Mt. Washington, Mo., writes: "My wife and I are strong believers in Peruna."



"For several years I have been troubled with a peculiar spasmodic affection of the throat. It would seize me suddenly and for a few minutes I would be unable to speak audibly, and my breath would be greatly interfered with. I would be obliged to gasp for breath. I finally concluded that it was some catarrhal affection which probably excited the spasm. It interfered with my vocation as a preacher, attacking me occasionally in the pulpit. I had heard so much about Peruna as a catarrh remedy that I determined to try it. After taking two bottles, my trouble has disappeared. I feel sure that Peruna has greatly benefited me." Rev. P. E. Swanstrom, Swedish Baptist Pastor, Box 228, Grantsburg, Wis., writes that from the use of Peruna he is perfectly well, entirely cured of chronic diarrhea and catarrh.

I was cured of a bad case of catarrh when nothing else that I tried had any effect. My wife was cured from a severe case of la grippe, and we feel that the least we can do is to gratefully acknowledge the merit of Peruna. My wife joins me in sending best wishes for your success." Throat Trouble. Rev. H. W. Tate, 920 Lincoln Avenue, Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, Ohio, writes:

Peruna in Tablet Form. For two years Dr. Hartman and his assistants have incessantly labored to create Peruna in tablet form, and their strenuous labors have just been crowned with success. People who object to liquid medicines can now secure Peruna Tablets, which represent the medicinal ingredients of Peruna. Each tablet is equivalent to one average dose of Peruna.

Ask Your Druggist for Free Peruna Almanac for 1908.

For Spavin Curb or Splint Sloan's Liniment is unsurpassed
It penetrates and relieves pain very quickly—needs very little rubbing—and does not leave a scar or blemish. An antiseptic remedy for thrush, fistula and any abscess.
PRICE 25¢, 50¢ & \$1.00
Sloan's Treatise on Horses, Cattle, Hogs and Poultry Sent Free
Address Dr. Earl S. Sloan, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

W. L. DOUGLAS SHOES
\$3.00 SHOES AT ALL PRICES, FOR EVERY MEMBER OF THE FAMILY.
MEN, BOYS, WOMEN, MISSES AND CHILDREN.
W. L. Douglas makes and sells more men's \$2.50, \$3.00 and \$3.50 shoes than any other manufacturer in the world, because they hold their shape, fit better, wear longer and are of greater value than any other shoes in the world to-day.
W. L. Douglas \$4 and \$5 Gilt Edge Shoes Cannot Be Equalled At Any Price.
CAUTION: W. L. Douglas name and price is stamped on bottom. Take No Substitute. Sold by the best shoe dealers everywhere. Shoes mailed from factory to any part of the world. Illustrated Catalog free to any address.
W. L. DOUGLAS, Brockton, Mass.

HICKS' CAPUDINE CURES ALL ACHES
And Nervousness
Trial bottle 10c. At drug stores.

FERTILE FLORIDA
First vegetables in market. Best prices. From \$100 to \$1500 per acre realized. Oranges, pineapples, tropical fruits. Winter homes, fine climate, no malaria, school churches. For information address FLORIDA EAST COAST LAND DEPARTMENT, St. Augustine Fla., or NORTHWESTERN AGENCY, 130 Adams Street Chicago Ill.

PARKER'S HAIR BALSAM
Cleanses and beautifies the hair. Promotes a luxuriant growth. Never Fails to Restore Gray Hair to its Youthful Color. Cures scalp diseases & hair falling. 50c. and \$1.00 at Druggists.

YOUR HIDE TANNED—HORSE or HILLES make fine, warm robes. CA T T L R is the oldest house doing this kind of work. A responsible, and know how. Write for prices.
THE WORTHING & ALGER CO., Hillsdale, Mich.

LIVE STOCK AND MISCELLANEOUS ELECTROTYPES
In great variety for sale at the lowest prices by a W. KELLOGG NEWSPAPER CO., 739, Adams St., Chicago

PATENTS
Walter E. Coleman, Patent Attorney, Washington, D. C. Advice Free. Terms low. Highest ref.

160 FARMS in Western Canada FREE
Typical Farm Scene. Showing Stock Raising in WESTERN CANADA

Some of the choicest lands for grain growing, stock raising and mixed farming in the new districts of Saskatchewan and Alberta have recently been opened for settlement under the

Revised Homestead Regulations

Entry may now be made by proxy (on certain conditions), by the father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister of an intending homesteader. Thousands of homesteads of 160 acres each are thus now easily available in these great grain-growing, stock-raising and mixed farming sections. There you will find healthful climate, good neighbors, churches for family worship, schools for your children, good laws, splendid crops, and railroads convenient to market. Entry fee in each case is \$10.00. For pamphlet, "Last Best West," particulars as to rates, routes, best time to go and where to locate, apply to

H. M. WILLIAMS, Law Building, Toledo, Ohio.
ANKESIS gives instant relief POSITIVELY CURE. Sample FREE. Address, ANKESIS, Tribuna Bldg., New York

DEFIANCE STARCH easiest to work with and starches clothes nicest.