

SERIAL STORY

LANGFORD of the THREE BARS

By KATE AND VIRGIL D. BOYLES

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SYNOPSIS.

Cattle thieves despoiling ranches of South Dakota. George Williston, small ranchman, runs into rendezvous of thieves on island in Missouri river. They have stolen cattle from Three Bar ranch. Langford visits Williston and his daughter and Williston reports what he has seen to Langford, who determines to rid country of thieves. Jesse Black heads outlaws. Langford falls in love with Williston's daughter, but does not tell her so. Louise Dale, court stenographer, and niece of Judge Dale, visits Kemah at request of county attorney, Gordon, to take testimony in preliminary hearing. Gordon falls in love with her. After preliminary examination Williston's home is attacked and defended by his daughter and himself. Outlaws fire building just as Langford and his cowboys arrive. Outlaws carry off Williston but Langford rescues the daughter. Without Williston evidence against Black is meager, and case seems to be going against the state. Gordon takes a night ride and finds Williston, who has escaped from captors. The courthouse at Kemah burns at night. Williston holds a tea party in his room following court house fire, and Mary Williston and Louise Dale attend. Court convenes in the church, and Williston's testimony is introduced by Gordon. Black, seeing his case lost, makes break for liberty, and escapes. Louise from her hotel room in the night sees a man in the act of shooting Gordon through the window of his room across the street. She arouses Mary who shoots and would be assassin, but too late, for Gordon is seriously wounded.

CHAPTER XX.—Continued.

"Doc! Doc Lockhart! Some one send Doc over here quick? Gordon's office. Be quick about it!" he cried, in a loud, firm voice. Then he closed the door and locked it. In response to his call footsteps were heard running. The door was tried. Then came loud knocking and voice demanding admittance.

"No one can come in but Doc," cried Langford through the keyhole. "Send him quick, somebody, for God's sake! Where's Jim Munson? He'll get him here. Quick, I tell you!"

He hastened back to the side of his friend and passed his hand gently over the right side to find the place whence came that heartbreaking drip. Disappointed in their desire to get in men crowded before the window. Louise stepped softly forward and drew the blind between him and the mass of curious faces without. She was very pale, but quiet and self-possessed. She had rallied when Langford had whispered to her that Gordon's heart was still beating. The doctor rapped loudly, calling to Langford to open. Paul admitted him and then stepped out in full sight of all. His hand still on the knob. The late moon was just rising. A faint light spread out before him.

"Boys," he cried, a great grief in his stern voice, "it's murder. Dick Gordon's murdered. Now get—you know that for—and be quick about it!"

They laid him gently on the floor, took off his coat and cut away the blood-soaked shirts. Louise assisted with deft, tender hands. Presently the heavy lids lifted, the gray eyes stared vacantly for a moment—then smiled. Paul bent over him.

"What happened, old man?" the wounded man whispered groggily. It required much effort to say this little, and a shadow of pain fell over his face.

"Hush, Dick, dear boy," said Langford, with a catch in his voice. "You're all right now, but you mustn't talk. You're too weak. We are going to move you across to the hotel."

"But what happened?" he insisted. "You were shot, you know, Dick. Keep quiet now! I'm going for a stretcher."

"Am I done for?" the weak voice kept on. But there was no fear in it. "You will be if you keep on talking like that."

Obedying a sign from the doctor he slipped away and out. Gordon closed his eyes and was still for a long time. His face was white and drawn with suffering.

"Has he fainted?" whispered Louise. The eyes opened quickly. They fell upon Louise, who had had not time to draw away. The shadow of the old sweet smile came and hovered around his lips.

"Louise," he whispered. "Yes, it is I," she said, laying her hand lightly on his forehead. "You must be good until Paul gets back."

"I'm done for, so the rest of the criminal calendar will have to go over. You can go back to—God's country—sooner than you thought."

"I am not going back to—God's country," said Louise, unexpectedly. She had not meant to say it, but she meant it when she said it.

"Come here, close to me, Louise," said Gordon, in a low voice. He had forgotten the doctor. "You had better—I'll get up if you don't. Closer still. I want you to—kiss me before Paul gets back."

Louise grew white. She glanced hesitatingly at the doctor, timidly at the new lover in the old man. Then she bent over him where he lay stretched

on the floor and kissed him on the lips. A great light came into his eyes before he closed them contentedly and slipped into unconsciousness again.

Langford rounded up Jim Munson and sent him across with a stretcher, and then ran upstairs for an extra blanket off his own bed. It was bitterly cold, and Dick must be well wrapped. On the upper landing he encountered Mary alone. Something in her desolate attitude stopped him.

"What's the matter, Mary?" he demanded, seizing her hands.

"Nothing," she answered, dully. "How is he?"

"All right, I trust and pray, but hurt terribly, wickedly."

He did not quite understand. Did she love Gordon? Was that why she looked so heart-broken? Taking her face in his two hands, he compelled her to look at him straight.

"Now tell me," he said.

"Did I kill him?" she asked.

"Kill whom?"

"Why, him—Jesse Black."

Then he understood.

"Mary, my girl, was it you? Were those last shots yours?" All the riotous love in him trembled on his tongue.

"Did I?" she persisted.

"God grant you did," he said, solemnly. "There is blood outside the window, but he is gone."

"I don't like to kill people," she said, brokenly. "Why do I always have to do it?"

He drew her to him strongly and held her close against his breast.

"You are the bravest and best girl on earth," he said. "My girl—you are my girl, you know—hereafter I will do all necessary killing for—my wife."

He kissed the sweet, quivering lips as he said it.

"Why, Jim!" cried Langford in surprise. "I thought you had gone with the stretcher."

"I did go," said Jim, swallowing hard. He shifted nervously from one spurred foot to the other. "But I came back."

He looked at Langford beseechingly.

"Boss, I want to see you a minute, ef—Mary don't mind."

"I will come with you, Jim, now," said Langford with quick apprehension.

"Mary"—Jim turned away and stared unseeing down the staircase—"go back to your room for a little while. I will call for you soon. Keep up your courage."

"Wait," said Mary, quietly. There were unsounded depths of despair in her voice, thought it was so clear and low. "There was another shot. I remember now. Jim, tell me!"

Jim turned. The rough cowboy's eyes were wet—for the first time in many a year.

"They—hope he won't die, Mary, girl. Your father's shot bad, but he ain't dead. We think Black did it."

"I want you to give me a bench warrant, judge. I am confident that I can get him. It is the shame of the county that he is still at large."

"You have to deal with one of the worst and most desperate outlaws in the United States. You must know it will be a very hazardous undertaking, granting your surmises to be correct, and fraught with grave peril for some one."

"I understand that fully."

"This duty is another's, not yours."

"But that other is incompetent."

"My dear fellow," said the judge, rising and laying his hand on Langford's big shoulder, "do you really want to undertake this?"

"I certainly do."

"Then I will give you the warrant, gladly. You are the one man in the state to do it—unless I except the gallant little deputy marshal. You know the danger. I admire your grit, my boy. Get him if you can; but take care of yourself. Your life is worth so much more than his. Who will you take with you?"

"Munson, of course. He will go in spite of the devil, and he's the best man I know for anything like this. Then I thought of taking the deputy-sheriff. He's been true blue all along, and has done the very best possible under the conditions."

"Very good. Take Johnson, too. He'll be glad to go. He's the pluckiest little fighter in the world,—not a cowardly hair in his head."

So it was agreed, and the next morning, bright and early, the little posse, reinforced by others who had earnestly solicited the privilege of going along, started out on its journey. The rains were over, but the roads were heavy. In many places, they were forced to walk their mounts. No one but the initiated knew what gumbo mud means. Until they took to the hills, the horses could scarcely lift their feet, so great would be the weight of the sticky black earth which clung in immense chunks to their hoofs. When they struck the hills, it was better and they pressed forward rapidly. Once only the sheriff had asserted that he had run across the famous outlaw. Black had resisted savagely and had escaped, sending back the bold taunt that he would never be taken alive. Such a message might mean death to some of the plucky posse now making for the old-time haunts of the desperado.

(To Be Continued.)

The Fool of the Family.

Primogeniture had engaged so much of a young American's hostile attention that his companion, who happened to be the heir to an earldom, felt constrained to apologize for it. "It has its advantages," he said, mildly; "it makes but one fool in a family, you know."

"All my younger brothers 'amount' to something, as you Americans put it," he further explained. "One of them is in the army, another in the navy, and the third lives and works in the east end of London."—Youth's Companion.

and met Black on the corner, running. He stopped, cried out, "You, too, damn you," and that's the last I knew until the boys picked me up."

These were the most interested—Langford, Gordon, Williston. Had they been in the count, things might have been different. It is very probable a posse would have been formed for immediate pursuit. But others must do what had been better done had it not been for those shots in the dark.

There was blood outside Gordon's window; yet Black had not crawled home to die. He had not gone home at all,—at least, that is what the sheriff said. No one had seen the convicted man after his desperate and spectacular exit from the court-room—no one at least but Louise, Mary, and her father. Mary's shot had not killed him, but it had saved Richard Gordon's life, which was a far better thing. It was impossible to track him out of town, for the cattle had trampled the snow in every direction.

The authorities could gather no outside information. The outlying claims and ranches refuted indignantly any hint of their having given aid or shelter to the fugitive, or of having any cognizance whatsoever regarding his possible whereabouts. So the pursuit, at first hot and excited, gradually wearied of following false leads,—contented itself with desultory journeys when prodded thereto by the compelling power of public opinion,—finally ceased altogether even as a pretence.

One of the first things done following the dramatic day in court had been to send the officers out to the little shanty in the valley where the half-breed lay dead across the threshold. A watch was also set upon this place; but no one ever came there.

August had come again, and Judge Dale was in Kemah to hear a court case.

Langford had ridden in from the ranch on purpose to see Judge Dale. His clothes were spattered with mud. There had been a succession of storms, lasting for several days; last night a cloud had burst out west somewhere. All the creeks were swollen.

"Judge, I believe Jesse Black has been on that island of his all the time."

"What makes you think so, Langford?"

"Because our sheriff is four-flush—he always was in sympathy with the gang, you know. Besides, where else can Black be?"

Dale puckered his lips thoughtfully. "What have you heard?" he asked.

"Rumors are getting pretty thick that he has been seen in that neighborhood on several occasions. It is my honest belief he has never left it."

"What did you think of doing about it, Langford?"

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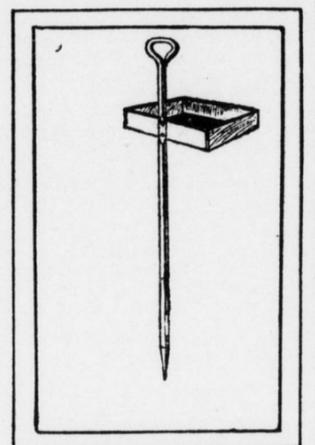
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FARM AND GARDEN

BOX HOLDER FOR BUSH BERRIES

Provides Receptacle for Berries and Leaves Both Hands Free to Pick.

Make a box of crate material 6 1/2 x 1 inches, and three inches deep. Sharp end a wagon box rod at the lower end and six inches from the top flatten the



The Box Holder.

rod and punch two holes two inches apart, the size of copper rivets. The box is then riveted to the rod and when it is placed in the ground both hands are free for picking.

Use of the device shown in the accompanying illustration above described, says the Prairie Farmer, will be found to add a good many quarts of berries in the course of a day's picking.

FERTILIZING THE ORCHARD.

What Prof. Voorhees Thinks is the Best Treatment.

Prof. Voorhees spoke on fertilizers for fruit growers at the late meeting of the New Jersey Horticultural society. He called minerals and water the two elements of most importance to the fruit grower. Greater care should be taken in the use of stable manure in orchards than with any other kind of fertilizer. The original soil is a very important factor, and the fruit that grows well on one will not grow to a good maturity on another.

A mixture of one-third ground bone, acid phosphate and nitrate of potash is good for most kinds of fruit; the quantity to be applied may be regulated by the needs of the soil and crop. An annual application of 1,000 pounds per acre in the early life of an orchard would not be too much; also a light application each year. The amount to be used must be determined by the grower.

Cover crops should be used, he says, but not allowed to mature, as they take too much moisture from the trees; they should be plowed down while in a green state to supply humus, from which to secure nitrogen for future use.

WET AND STICKY SOIL.

Let it Alone Until it Can Be Safely Worked.

A Minnesota correspondent of the Farmers' Review says: "The ground is too wet and sticky to work to advantage." The wise thing to do with such land is to let it alone till it dries out. The temptation to work such soil should be resisted at all hazards. If the soil sticks to the implements it is a sign that the soil particles will stick together if they are pressed together during the working. That is the way clods are made. It is the way also that bricks are made, even when they are made without straw or sand. Many a good field has been plowed when in that condition and has afterward proved the despair of the farmer. The air and sun will gradually pull enough of the moisture out of the top soil to do away with the stickiness.

ABOUT THE FARM.

A farmer is known by the tools he uses.

Manure is never so valuable as when fresh.

Weeds often take more plant food than the crop.

Spray your potato vines with Bordeaux mixture and a good arsenate, not once or twice but at least three or five times.

Sweet potatoes raised from cuttings of the vines from the early planted ones make potatoes that keep better than those grown from the early spring plants.

Thistles spread only from the seed. If the plant is not allowed to go to seed it will not spread over the pasture. The best time to cut the weed is just before it comes into bloom and before there is any possibility of the seed maturing.

Planting Potatoes.

A reader wants to know when potatoes should be planted if they are grown extensively. At the same time they are planted when grown on a small scale. The right time is usually as early in the spring as the ground can be properly worked, and not before.

MAKING OAT HAY.

What the Experience of One Farmer Has Taught Him.

When the hull or the grain on top of the head begins to turn yellow is the time I begin to make oat hay. At this time these top grains are in the dough state, and the remainder is mostly in the milk, and the stalks and blades are still green, writes a correspondent in the Farmers' Voice. While as a usual thing stock does not relish oat hay as much as mixed timothy or clover, I find it to be a good substitute.

It must be well cured, as it is one of the worst crops to draw dampness, heat and mold. It should never be put into the barn when the least tough or damp. I have made a good deal of oat hay and find it fairly good if cut at the right time and properly handled. Many farmers allow it to get too ripe to make the best of hay. When allowed to almost mature there will be a greater amount of grain. It can be more easily cured, there will be less danger from molding, but it will not be oat hay; it will be oats in the straw. When handled this way the animals will eat the grain readily, but will only eat the straw when driven to it by hunger and will get but little good out of it. Nor should they be cut while too green, as in that case it will be very hard to cure sufficiently, while green oats cut in the milk makes very good feed for milk cows, but the curing is very difficult, owing to the long period necessary for properly drying and the difficulty of getting good weather. It is absolutely necessary that the fodder be thoroughly dried before storing.

When the surface of the ground is smooth I cut the oats with a mower, and let them remain several days, then turn them over, repeating this operation until thoroughly dry. It usually takes me about a week to cure my oats properly. When the weather is not favorable and I fear a rain before they have time to dry in the windows, I build very large cocks, and build them so as to turn the water as much as possible. These cocks will go through a sweat and may stand if necessary two or even three weeks, after which they must be stacked or put into the barn. When unloading every two loads can be salted liberally and tramped down, it will then go through another sweat. Such hay when fed with clover will prove excellent for horses and cattle.

MAKING CREAM CHEESE.

How the Farmer's Family Can Enjoy Choice Home-Made Article.

We make our own cheese for home use, and as there are perhaps some who do not know how to make this highly nutritious food I will give our method, writes a farmer in Farm and Home. To make a three-pound cheese that is good after four weeks, and better with age, we take five gallons milk, cream and all, if it has set for a while, and heat till about milk warm.

We then dissolve one-half of a No. 2 rennet tablet in half a teacupful of cold water, stir it well into the milk, and add one tablespoonful salt to the milk, and then stir. We remove it from the fire and let stand from three to six minutes, when it becomes thick, like clabber. As soon as it becomes solid clabber it is ready to break up. We then stir the clabber, or curd, as it is called, which separates the curd from the whey, and let it stand until the curd settles to the bottom.

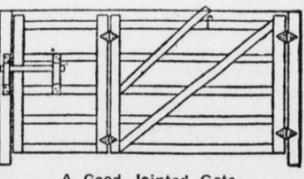
With the hand we press the pieces, say one inch thick, put into a crock, and over it pour hot water. It is then stirred with a spoon, and let set till it seems tough, like leather, which will be in about three minutes. We again cut in pieces, as it has run together, salt as for butter, and it is ready to be pressed.

For the press we take a gallon syrup can and melt off both ends, and make ends for the can from one-inch boards to just fit inside. We set the can over one board and line it with a well-greased cloth, long enough to fold over the top. Pour in the curd, fold over the cloth, and put on the other board. It is then set where it can drain, a 15-pound weight is placed on top, left for 24 hours, and then removed from the press. We take off the cloth and grease the cheese, lay it on a plate in a screened box and grease and turn it every day until it is ready to use.

A JOINTED GATE.

Very Handy for Farmers, as He Does Not Have to Handle Big Gate.

A gate that is used much is handy when made with a hinged joint so a



A Good Jointed Gate.

person can pass through easily without opening the big gate. When the main gate is to be opened the short brace is lifted with the foot and lodged on a hook. The gate shuts against a short post in the ground and a hook and staple at this place makes it steadiest.

Scrubs, Grades or Pure Breeds?

The scrub hen and the scrub farmer make a scrub team; the grade hen and the grade farmer make a grade team; pure-bred teams always attract attention.

FACTS FOR SICK WOMEN



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