Author of "The Maid of the Whispering Hills," "The Heart of Night Wind," etc.

(Copyright, 1926, by Dodd, Mead & Co.) THIS STARTS THE STORY

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(Congright, 1926, by Dodd, Mead & Co.)
Tharon Last is one of the wonders
of Lost Valley. She and old Anita
of Lost Valley. She and old Anita
is notorious for his skill with guns
has been shot from behind. Before
has been shot from behind to her
lessen in shooting and hands to her
lessen in shooting and hands to her
lessen in shooting and hands to her
his bell of pistols. She seeks to learn
his bell of pistols. She seeks to learn
to get him." "Her father's killer
to "get him." "Her father's conse
marks Jim's burial place. "Two,"
make says, looking toward another
she says, looking toward another
the says, looking toward another
herselves to stand together against
Contrey.

HERE IT CONTINUES

series of signation solemally pledge flavors, faction for the flavors of the fl

"If that is so," she saw
"light"
The man laughed delightedly, and swung quickly down, dropping his rein.
Tharon noticed that. That much was natural. He held his hat against his natural, the one hand and came forward holding out

places were vague things to her.

"Yes?" she answered politely, "I make ne doubt you've come far. Come in. Dinner'll soon be ready," and she moved back from the door with a smile that covered her pitiful ignorance as with a garment of gold. When Tharon smiled like that she was wholly adorable, and the man knew it at once. Why she had so quickly invited him in before he had fully declared himself, she did not know unless it was because of that lack in her which his first words had trenied

of that lack in her which his first words had implied.
Old Anita, whose manners were the simple and perfect ones of the Mexican coupled to a kindly heart, had taught her how to comport.
Her easy and constant association with the riders and vaqueros had dulled her somewhat, but she could be royal on occasion.

on occasion.
Now she simply stepped back in the

Now she simply stepped back in the deep cool room where the ollas swung in the windows, smiled—and she was changed entirely from the girl of a few moments before.

The man came in, laid his hat on the flat top of the melodeon, walked over to a chair and sat down. There was an ease about him, a taking-for-granted, that amazed Tharon beyond words.

Then he looked frankly of the same comments and the same control of the same that amazed Tharon beyond words, that amazed Tharon beyond words, Then he looked frankly at her and began to talk as if he had known her

"Tve come to live in Lost Valley,
Miss Last," he said, "for a long while,
I think. Wish me luck."
"Come here to live?" said Tharon, "s
settler? Goin' to homestead?"
He shook his head.
"No."

He caught the drift of her thought in part.

"For no outfit, Miss Last," he said with a gentle dignity, "I am in the ment."

swift change came over Tharcn's

date.

'Bovernment!

That was no word to conjure by in Lost Valley. Steptne Service prated of Rowment. It was a farce, a synonym with the steptne service prated of Rowment. It was a farce, a synonym with the steptne service prated of Rowment. It was a farce, a synonym with the steptness of the

A slow dark flush spread over the man's face. He laughed, however, and in reaching for her bat caught two of her fingers, whether purposely or not Tharon could not tell. "Admirable hospitality in the last frontier," he said. "But perhaps I should not have expected anything different."

should not have expected anything different."

"You make me ashamed," said Tharon straightly, "but Last's ain't takin' chances these days. You may belong to government, an' you may belong to Courtrey, an' I'm against 'em both."

She walked with him to the dcor, stepped out, as if with some thought to soften her unprecedented treatment of the stranger under her roof. She noted the trim figure of him in its peculiar garb, the proud carriage, the even and easy comportment under insult.

From his saddle he untied a package wrapped in paper. wrapped in paper.
"Will you please take this?" he asked lightly, holding it out. "Just on general

"What's he mean by that?"
"Search me."
"Wasn't there nothin' about him different? Nothin' you could judge him by?"
asked Billy.
"Yes, there was. He wore somethin'
on his breast, a sign, a dull-like thing
with words an' letters on it."
"So?" said Conford quickly, "what
was it like, Tharon? Can't you describe
it?"

Tharon noticed that. That much was natural. He held his hat against his breast with one hand and came forward with the same quickness, holding out the other. Tharon was not used to shaking hands with strange men.

She gave her hand diffidently, because he so evidently expected it, and took it away swiftly.

"My name." he said. "is Kenset—David Kenset—and I am from Washington, D.C."

He might as well have said Timbuctoo. Tharon Last knew little outside her own environment. Words and names that had to do with unknown places were vague things to her.

"Yes?" she answered politely, "I make no doubt you've come far. Come in. Dinner'll soon be ready," and she moved back from the door with a smile that covered her pitiful ignorance as with a garment of gold. When Tharon smiled

port, irrevocable.

Thus had Jim Last inscribed the semi-

with the cattle, or for supplies.

Now she spread a shining pad under the light, sat down in her father's chair and began, carefully and minutely, to reproduce the badge that meant authority of a sort, yet was not a sheriff's star.

The riders, clustered at her shoulder, watched the thing take shape and form. At the end of twenty painstaking minutes Tharon straightened and looked up in the inferested faces.

"There," she said "an' it's dull copper color!"

And this was the shield with its unknown heraldry which Conford took upand studied carefully for a long time.

known heraldry which Conford took and studied carefully for a long time.



I think. Wish me luck."

"Come here to live?" said Tharon, "sattler? Goin' to homestead?"
He shook his head.

"No."
A quick suspicion seized her. Perhaps Washington was like Arizona, a place from which they imported gunmen. Only this man wore no gun, and he laad not a look of prowess. No. This man was different.

"Then what you goin' to do?" she asked as frankly as a child.

"First," he said, "I'm going up where the pines grow yonder and build myself a house," and he waved a hand toward the east where the ranges roiled up to the thickening fringes of the forest that marched back into the ramparts of the trailless hills.

"I want to find an ideal spot, a glade where the pines stand round the edges, with a spring of living water running down, and where I can look down and over the magnificent reaches of Lost Valley. I shall make me a home, and then I shall work."

"Ride?" asked the girl succinctly.

"Ride?" asked the firl succinctiy.

"Ride?" asked the firl succinctiy.

"Ride?" asked the firl succinctiy.

"There was a hard quality in her voice. If he had come into ride for Courtrey, why he must know at once, that Last's was no friend of his, now or ever."

He caught the drift of her thought in "For no outfit, Miss Last," he said with a gonle dignity. "I am in the worn ride her.

"To no outfit, Miss Last," he said with a gonle dignity. "I am in the worn ride her.

"To no outfit, Miss Last," he said with a gonle dignity. "I am in the worn ride her.

"The whole was the read the read of the property of the well as the content of the read of the head come into ride for Courtrey, why he must know at once, that Last's post proving a huge success.

"Can't draw her dry," said Bent Smith, a gonle dignity. "I am in the worn ride her.

"The court of the read of the province of the court of the read aloud.

"To he stays up in his fringe o' pines! I guess we ain't got no call to kick. Don't you worry, Tharon as a for th' for eat part they, if he stays up in his dry line to kick. Don't you worry. Tharon as a for the line of pin

Crystal and which was proving a huge success.

"Can't draw her dry," said Bent Smith, "pulled all of three hours with Nick an' Blue Pine yesterday an' never even riled her.

"She's good as th' Gold Pool or th' Silver Hollow new."

"You're some range man t' make any such a comparison," said Curly with conviction, "there ain't no artificial waterwell extant that can hold a candle t' th' real' livin' springs of a cattle country, when they're such bubblin, shinin' beauties as th' springs of Last's."

"You're right, Curly," said Tharon

"You're right, Curly," said Tharon quietly from under the light, "there's nothin' like them. They must be th' blessin's of God, an' no mistake. They must be th' stars at night, an' th' winds an' th' sunshine. They're th' lovers of th' horses, th' treasure of th' masters. I dove my springs"

th' herses, th' treasure of th' masters. I sove my springs."

"So do th' herds." put in Jack Masters. "They'll come fast at nightenow because they can smell th' water far off. an' it's gettin' pretty dry on th' range."

"Yes." sighed Tharon, "It's summer now, an' Jim Last died in spring. A whole season gone."

A whole season had gone, indeed, since that tragic night.

that tragic night. Last's Holding had missed its master Last's Holding had missed its master at each turn and point. A thousand times did Conford, the foreman, catch himself in the act of going to the big room to find him at his desk, a big, vital force, intent on the accounts of the ranch, a thousand times did he long for his keen insight. The vaqueros missed him and his open hand.

The very dogs at the steps missed him, and so did El Rey, waiting in his corral for the step that did not come, the strong hand on his bit.

And how much his daughter missed him only the stars and the pale Virgin knew.

(CONTINUED TOMORROW)

THE GUMPS-Still Peddling Carp Caviar

IT'S MY OLD PAL AL DUEBER -LISTEN AL - JUST SUPPOSE AS I LIVE AND BREATHE-THERE WAS ONLY ONE LICENSE I'M' SO OBLIGATED TO YOU AL IN THE WORLD TO STEAL AND I'M THAT I'M GOING TO HAND YOU HANDING IT TO YOU- I'M TELLING A TIP THAT'S JUST LIKE GIVING YOU THAT I STARTED IN THIS YOU THE COM BINATION TO THING WITH \$10.000.00 AND WHEN ! GET THROUGH WITH IT - I'LL HAVE SO MUCH DOUGH I CAN SELL IT THE US TREASURY



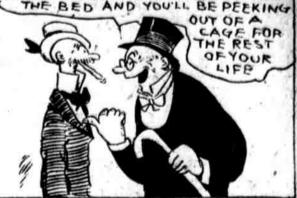
DO YOU BELIEVE IN FAIRIES? DO YOU STILL BELIEVE THAT STORY ABOUT CINDERELLA AND THE CRYSTAL SLIPPER AND ALLADIN AND THAT WONDERFUL LAMP -? AND BEAUTY AND THE BEAST? WHEN SHE WALKED UP AND KISSED THAT TOUGH LOOKING GUY AND MADE APRINCE OUT OF HIM? DO YOU STILL BELIEVE THAT STUFF? YOU KNOW THAT SONLY



NOW LISTEN ANDY-YOU KNOW I'M A FRIEND OF YOUR 3- YOU KNOW I'LL
GO THE LIMIT - THERE'S NO ROAD TOO
LONG OR TOO ROUGH FOR ME TO TRAVEL
FOR NOU OLD KID - BUT KEEP THIS
THING QUIET - IT'S ALLRIGHT WITH YOUR FRIENDS BUT DON'T PEDDLE THIS-YOU'LL WAKE UP SOME MORNING INA DETENTION HOSPITAL AND THE SUDGE MIGHT GET OUT THE WRONG SIDE OF THE BED AND YOU'LL BE PEEKING

By Sidney Smith

By C. A. Voight



PETEY-That Makes Two of 'Em

- OH BOY-THAT GIRL'S BEEN PIKIN ME OFF ALL DAY- SOME-THIN' TO THE OLD MAN YET-



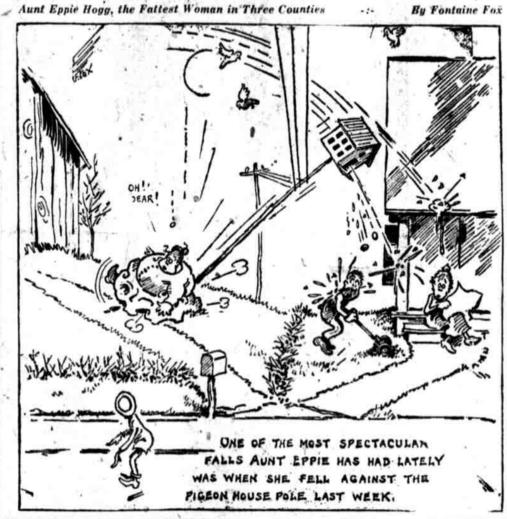
- HUH ? WHAT DO YOU THINK "MAC"-DERFECT HUH ?- GUESS THRETYSIX I'M LOSIN ALL JHIRT WAIST MY YOUTH AUD! (0. BEAUTY-EH MAC? HOTHIN THE MATTER WITH YOU OLD KID-



The Young Lady Across the Way



The young lady across the way says she doesn't believe in showing any feeling and when she gets mad at a person she merely stops speaking to her when she meets her. *, *



SCHOOL DAYS By DWIG WIN, THAT'S PERCY EASTMENT.
LAST WEEP HE HELPED A POOR
OLD MAIL ACROSS THE ROAD AN'
THE POR OLD MAN GAVE HIM A
DOTTLE O' IRON JUICE AN' TOAD
HIM TO RUD IT ON RIS MUSCLE
AN' HE DON'E IT AN' HIS ARM
AN' HE DON'E IT AN' HIS ARM GOOD FOR YOU, PERC! LITTLE FELLER IS JUST LINE IRON . MAGICIAM . HE CAN KNOCK A TREE DOWN DAY DREAMS

SOMEBODY'S STENOG-The Kid's Clever!





-:- '



"CAP" STUBBS—He Knew Columbus Had Done Something







•:-



