

The Ranch at the Wolverine

By B. M. BOWER

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Continued from last week.

CHAPTER XIV.

Billy Louise Gets a Surprise.

FRIGHTENED, worried, sick at heart because her crowding doubts and suspicions had suddenly developed into black certainty just when she had thought them dead forever, Billy Louise rode up the narrow, rocky gorge. She had come to have a vague comprehension of the temptation Ward must have felt. She had come to accept pitifully the possibility that the canker of old influences had eaten more deeply than appeared on the surface. She had set herself stanchly beside him as his friend, who would help him win back his self-respect. She felt sure that he must suffer terribly with that keen, analytical mind of his, when he stopped to think at all. He had no warped ethics wherewith to ease his conscience. She knew his ideas of right and wrong were as uncompromising as her own, and if he stole cattle, he did it with his eyes wide open to the wrong he was doing. And yet—

"That's had enough, but to try and fasten evidence on someone else!" Billy Louise gritted her teeth over the treachery of it. She believed he had done that very thing. How could she help it? She had seen the corral and had seen Ward ride away from it in the dusk of the evening; or she believed she had seen him, which was the same thing. And she knew what lay behind him. Was his version of the past after all the correct one? Might not the paragraph she had burned been nothing more than the truth?

Billy Louise fought for him; fought with her stern, youthful judgment which was so uncompromising. It takes years of close contact with life to give one a sure understanding of human weakness and human endeavor.

At the ford, when Blue would have crossed and taken the trail home, Billy Louise reined him impulsively the other way. Until that instant she had not intended to seek Ward, but once her fingers had twitched the reins against Blue's neck, she did not hesitate; she did not even argue with herself. She just glanced up at the sun, saw that it was not yet noon—so much may happen in two or three hours!—and sent Blue up the hill at alope.

She did not know what she would do or what she would say when she saw Ward.

The two mares fed dispiritedly at the lowest corner of the field, their hair rough with exposure to the winter winds and the storms, their ribs showing. With all the hay he had put up, Ward might at least keep his horses in better shape, Billy Louise censured, as she passed them by.

Farther along, Billy Louise heard a welcoming nicker and turned her head. Here came Rattler, thin-flank! and rough-coated, trotting down a shallow gully to meet Blue. The two horses chummed together whenever Ward was at the Wolverine. Billy Louise pulled up and waited till Rattler reached her. He and Blue rubbed noses, and Blue laid back his ears and shook his head with teeth bared, in playful pretense of anger. Rattler kicked up his heels in disdain at the threat and trotted alongside them.

Billy Louise rode with puckered eyebrows. Ward might neglect his stock, but he would never neglect Rattler like this. And he must be at home, since here was his horse. Or else...

She struck Blue suddenly with her rein-ends and went clattering up the trail where the snow lay in shaded, crusty patches rimmed with the loose stock. Where was Ward? What had happened to him? She looked again at Rattler. There was no sign of recent saddle marks along his side, no telltale imprint of the cinch under his belly. Where was Ward?

Blind, unreasoning terror filled Billy Louise. She struck Blue again and plunged into the icy creek crossing near the stable. She stopped there just long enough to see how empty and desolate it was, and how the horses and cattle had huddled against its sheltering wall out of the biting winds; and how the door was shut and fastened so that they could not get in. She opened it and looked in, and shut it again. Then she turned and ran, white-faced, to the cabin. Where was Ward? What had happened to Ward? Thief or honest man, treacherous or true—what had happened to him?

Billy Louise saw the doorstep banked over with old, crusted snow. Her heart gave a jump and stopped still. She felt her knees shake under her. Her face seemed to pinch together, the flesh clinging close to the bones. Her whole being seemed to contract with the deadly fear that gripped her. It was like that chill morning when she had crept out of her cot and gone over to roommate's bed and had lifted roommate's hand that was hanging down...

She came to herself; she was r...

ning up the creek, away from the cabin. Running and stumbling over rocks, and getting tripped with her riding skirt. She stopped, as soon as she realized what she was doing; she stopped and stood with her hands pressed hard against each side of her face, forcing herself to calmness again—or at least to sanity. She had to go back. She told herself so, many times.

So Billy Louise went back to the cabin, slowly, with shaking legs and a heart that fluttered and stopped, fluttered and jumped and stopped, and made her stagger as she walked. She reached the doorstep and stood there with her palms pressed hard against her cheeks again. "You've got to do it. You've got to!" she whispered to herself commandingly.

She never doubted that Ward was inside. She thought she would find him dead—dead and horrible, perhaps. No other solution seemed to fit the circumstances. He was in there, dead.

It took courage to open that door, but Billy Louise had courage enough to open it, and to step inside and close the door after her. She did not look at anything in the cabin while she did it, though. She kept her eyelids down so that she only saw the floor directly in front of the door. She had a sense of relief that it looked perfectly natural, though dusty.

"Throw up your hands!" came hoarsely from the bunk. Billy Louise gasped and pulled her gun, and dropped crouching to the floor. Also she looked up.

From her crouching position she looked into Ward's fever-wild eyes. He was sitting up in the bunk, and he was pointing his big forty-five at her relentlessly. "Get up from there!" he ordered sternly. "Don't try any game like that on me, Buck Olney! Get up and go over and sit in that chair. I've got a few things to say to you."

Billy Louise somehow grasped the truth, up to a certain point. Ward was sick; so sick he didn't know her. She thought she would better humor him. She got up and went and sat in the chair as he directed.

Ward, keeping the gun pointing her way, sneered at her in a way that made the soul of Billy Louise cringe. She faced him big-eyed, too amazed at the change in him to feel any fear that he would harm her. He had whiskers two inches long. She wouldn't have known him except for his hair—and that was terribly tousled; and his eyes, though they were wild and angry. His voice was hoarse, and while he glared at her, he coughed with a hard, croupy resonance.

"So you came back, did yuh?" he asked grimly at last. "Well, you didn't get a chance to plug me in the back. How long did you lay up there on the bluff this time, waiting to catch me when I wasn't looking? I've been wishing I'd left that rope so it would have hung you, you —!" (Billy Louise listened round-eyed to certain man-sized epithets strange to her ears.)

"I suppose you and Foxy and that halfbreed have been fixing up some more evidence, huh? You figure that I can't catch 'em this time and work the brands over, so they'll stand Y's, and I'll get railroaded to the pen. Well, you've overplayed your hand, old-timer. I let you fellows down easy, last time. I don't reckon Foxy objected much to those few I turned back to him, and I don't reckon you did any kicking when you found I'd cut the rope so it wouldn't hold your rotten carcass. You can't let well enough alone, though. You thought you'd raise me, did you? You thought you'd come back and try another whack at me behind my back. You knew hanged well I wasn't the kind of man that would jump the country. You knew you'd find me right here, attending to my business like I've always done."

"But you've overplayed your hand. This time I'm going to get you—and Foxy and the breed along with you. It was a rotten trick, running Y's over Seabeck's brand. If I hadn't caught you in the act, you'd have planted them cattle where all I—couldn't have saved me when they were found. If I hadn't caught you at it and run MK monograms over the whole cheese, I'd have been up against it for fair. So now you're going to get what's coming to yuh. I won't take any chances on your not trying it again. I'm going to protect myself right."

"You throw that gun on the bed!" (Billy Louise did so, her eyes still upon Ward's flushed face.) "Now, get down that tablet from the shelf. Here's a pencil." He drew one from under his pillow and tossed it toward her. "Now you write the truth about all this rustling. It's a bigger thing than shows right in this neighborhood. I know that. And I know, too, that Foxy has been pulling down some on the side. He never paid for all the stock that's running around vented and rebranded MK. I've got that sized up. Pretty smooth trick, too; a heap better than working brands. He ought to have been satisfied with that—but a crook never is satisfied. I knew he wasn't the tenderfoot he tried to make out, and when I saw some of his stock and that gate fixed to ring a bell when it was opened, I knew he was a crook. But he made a big mistake when he threw in with you, you—"

"I want you to write down the truth about that Hardup deal; who was in with you. I know, all right, but I want it down on paper. And I want to know how long Foxy's been in with you, and who's working the game on the outside. Get busy; write it all down. I'll give you all the time you need; don't leave out anything. Dates and all, I want the whole graft. Don't try to get away. I've got this gun loaded to the guards, and you know I'm aching for an excuse—"

He stopped and coughed again, hoarsely, rackingly. Then he lay quiet, except for his rasping breath and watched.

Billy Louise, with the tablet on her trembling knees, pretended to her. From under her lashes she watched Ward curiously. She saw his attention waver, saw his eyes wander aimlessly about the room. She sat very still and waited, making scarcely marks that had no meaning at all. She saw Ward's fingers loosen on the revolver, saw his head turn wearily on the pillow. He was staring out through the window at the brilliant blue of the sky with the dazzling white clouds drifting like bits of cotton to the northward. He had forgotten her.

(Continued next week)

NOTICE OF FINAL SETTLEMENT.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, executor of the estate of Lena Lurch, deceased, has filed in the County Court for Lane County, Oregon, his final account as executor of said estate and that Saturday, the 11th day of May, 1918, at the hour of 11 o'clock a. m. of said day has been set by the County Court as the time hearing objections to said final account.

BENJAMIN LURCH,
Executor of the estate of
Lena Lurch, deceased.

ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given that by order of the County Court of Lane County, Oregon, duly made and entered of record on the 30th day of March, 1918, in the matter of the estate of James Henry Derby, deceased, the undersigned, Alta King, was duly appointed administrator of said estate. All persons having claims against said estate are required to present them duly verified as by law required to said administrator at his law office in the First National Bank building, Cottage Grove, Oregon, within six months from the date of this notice.

Dated this 5th day of April, 1918.
ALTA KING,
Administrator.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS.

Notice is hereby given that by an order of the county court of Lane County, Oregon, made and entered of record on the 27th day of March, 1918, in the matter of the estate of Lydia E. Hickey, deceased, the undersigned was duly appointed administrator of said estate.

All persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to present the same, duly verified, to the undersigned at the law offices of Potter & Immel in Eugene, Oregon, within six months from the date of this notice.

Dated this 5th day of April, 1918.
STANLEY HICKEY,
Administrator of the estate of
Lydia E. Hickey, deceased.
POTTER & IMMEL,
Attorneys for Estate.

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE ON EXECUTION.

Notice is hereby given that by virtue of an execution and order of sale issued out of the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon, for Lane County, on the 14th day of March, 1918, and by me received the 14th day of March, 1918, in an action wherein O. L. Nichols was plaintiff and George L. Mote and Madge Mote, his wife, M. S. Currier and Lillian Currier, his wife, and D. H. Brumbaugh and Julia Brumbaugh were defendants, on the 13th day of March, 1918, in the above entitled court the plaintiff, O. L. Nichols, recovered judgment against the defendants, George L. and Madge Mote, for the sum of \$385.49, with interest at the rate of 6 per cent per annum from the 13th day of March, 1918, together with costs amounting to fifty and no 100 dollars attorney's fees and fifteen and 20-100 dollars costs and disbursements, which judgment was enrolled and docketed in the office of the Clerk of said Court on the 13th day of March, 1918, and said execution to me directed commanding me in the name of the State of Oregon, in order to satisfy said judgment, costs and accruing costs, to sell the following described real property, to-wit:

Beginning at the southwest corner of the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 7, Township 21 south of Range 2 west of Willamette Meridian, run thence east 45 rods to the center of Brumbaugh river thence down the center of said Brumbaugh river to the north line of the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of said Section 7 at a point 35 rods east of the northwest corner of said southwest quarter of southwest quarter of said Section 7; thence west 35 rods and thence south to the place of beginning, containing 20 acres of land, excepting herefrom a 12-foot right of way across said premises for an irrigation ditch.

Now, therefore, in the name of the State of Oregon and in compliance with said execution and in order to satisfy said judgment, costs and accruing costs, I will on Saturday, the 27th day of April, 1918, between the hours of 9 o'clock a. m. and 4 o'clock p. m., to-wit: at one o'clock p. m. on said day at the southwest door of the county courthouse in Eugene, Lane County, Oregon, offer for sale for cash, subject to redemption, all the right, title and interest of the above named defendants in and to the above described real property.

D. A. ELKINS,
Sheriff of Lane County, Oregon.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS.

In the matter of the estate of Richard B. Woolley, deceased.

Notice is hereby given that Martha A. Woolley has been by the County Court of the State of Oregon in and for Lane County, appointed executrix of the estate of Richard B. Woolley, deceased, and that all persons having claims against the estate of said deceased are hereby notified to present the same, duly verified as the law requires, at the law office of H. J. Shinn, in Cottage Grove, Lane County, Oregon, within six months from the date of this notice, to-wit: within six months from the 12th day of April, A. D. 1918. MARTHA A. WOOLLEY,
Executrix.

H. J. SHINN, her attorney
a12-m10

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION.

Department of the Interior, U. S. Land Office at Roseburg, Oregon, April 5, 1918.

Notice is hereby given that Randolph Holt, of Oakridge, Oregon, who, on December 28, 1914, made Homestead Entry Serial No. 09864, for the NW 1/4 of NE 1/4 and SE 1/4 of NE 1/4 of NW 1/4 of Section 22, Township 21 S., Range 3 E., Willamette Meridian, has filed notice of intention to make final three-year proof to establish claim to the land above described, before E. O. Immel, U. S. Commissioner, at his office at Eugene, Oregon, on the 22nd day of May, 1918.

Claimant names as witnesses: J. E. Roberts, of Oakridge, Oregon; J. C. Holt, of Oakridge, Oregon; F. S. Warner, of Oakridge, Oregon; L. R. Hebert, of Oakridge, Oregon.

W. H. CANON,
Register.
a12-m10

SUMMONS.

In the Circuit court of the State of Oregon for Lane County.

Mary A. Sherman and David Sherman, Plaintiffs, vs. Fingal Hinds, Effie Hinds, F. L. Dolezal and Mrs. F. L. Dolezal, his wife, first and full name unknown, and Harry Munnixma and Mrs. Harry Munnixma, first and full name unknown, wife of Harry Munnixma, Defendants.

To Fingal Hinds, Effie Hinds, F. L. Dolezal and Mrs. Dolezal his wife, first and full name unknown, and Harry Munnixma and Mrs. Harry Munnixma, first and full name unknown, wife of Harry Munnixma:

In the name of the State of Oregon, you are hereby required to appear and answer the complaint filed against you in the above entitled court and cause, on or before the 31st day of May, 1918, said date being six weeks from the date ordered for the first publication of this summons, to-wit: six weeks from the 19th day of April, 1918, and if you fail to appear and answer said complaint, the plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief demanded in said complaint, namely, for a decree for the sum of \$712.18 with interest thereon at 8 per cent per annum from the first day of February, 1918, for the further sum of \$996.78 with interest thereon at 8 per cent per annum from the first of February, 1918, for the further sum of \$63.77 taxes and interest paid by plaintiff with 10 per cent per annum interest from February 1, 1918, and for the further sum of \$100 attorney's fees, and for costs and disbursements of this suit, also for a decree foreclosing one certain real estate mortgage particularly described in exhibit "A" in plaintiff's complaint.

You are further notified that the date of the order for publication of this summons was made on the 10th day of April, 1918, and the day upon which you are required to answer said complaint on or before the 31st day of May, 1918. That the date of the first publication of this summons will be made on the 19th day of April, 1918, and the date of the last publication thereof will be on the 31st day of May, 1918.

You are further notified that this summons is served upon you by publication thereof in The Cottage Grove Sentinel, a newspaper published in Cottage Grove, Lane County, State of Oregon, and of general circulation therein.

H. J. SHINN,
Attorney for Plaintiff.
a19-m31

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION.

Department of the Interior, U. S. Land Office at Roseburg, Oregon, March 27, 1918.

Notice is hereby given that Samantha Clevinger, widow of John Clevinger deceased, of R. 3, Box 265 Salem, Oregon, who, on November 30, 1912, made homestead entry serial No. 08443 for the W 1/2 of NW 1/4 and SE 1/4 of NW 1/4 of Section 34, township 20 S., range 6 W., Willamette meridian, has filed notice of intention to make final three-year proof to establish claim to the land above described, before the register and receiver of the United States land office at Roseburg, Oregon, on the 13th day of May, 1918.

Claimant names as witnesses: Arthur Woolley, of Gunter, Oregon; Fred E. Clark, of Gunter, Oregon; J. O. Gunter, of Gunter, Oregon; George Woolley, of Gunter, Oregon.

W. H. CANON,
Register.
m29-a25e

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION.

Department of the Interior, U. S. Land Office at Roseburg, Oregon, April 10, 1918.

Notice is hereby given that LeRoy Hebert, of Oakridge, Oregon, who, on May 29, 1915, made Homestead Entry Serial No. 010150 for the SE 1/4 of NE 1/4 of Section 22, Township 21 S., Range 3 E., Willamette Meridian, has filed notice of intention to make final three-year proof to establish claim to the land above described, before E. O. Immel, U. S. Commissioner, at his office at Eugene, Oregon, on the 22nd day of May, 1918.

Claimant names as witnesses: Randolph Holt, of Oakridge, Oregon; James W. Hill, of Oakridge, Oregon; Verty F. Hebert, of Oakridge, Oregon; James E. Roberts, of Oakridge, Oregon.

W. H. CANON,
Register.
a19-m17

NOTICE TO CREDITORS.

Notice is hereby given that Neva J. Perkins has been appointed administratrix of the estate of Catherine A. Perkins, deceased, by the county court of Lane County, Oregon, on the 27th day of March, 1918, and that all creditors having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present the same, duly verified as the law requires, to this administratrix at the law office of H. J. Shinn in Cottage Grove, Oregon, within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice.

Date of first publication of this notice will be on the 29th day of March, 1918.
NEVA J. PERKINS,
Administratrix.
m29-a25

SOUTHERN PACIFIC TIME TABLE

North Bound	South Bound
No. 18—9:50 a. m.	No. 13—2:05 a. m.
No. 14—4:35 p. m.	No. 53—6:54 a. m.
No. 16—2:33 a. m.	No. 15—2:42 p. m.
	No. 17—7:40 p. m.

No. 53 carries coaches only as far south as Ashland.

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FARMER, STOCKRAISER, PRODUCER

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Oregon does not need any orators for orators are a drug on the market, and like constitutional lawyers, they do not get anything.

The Federal Government needs all the assistance Oregon can give, but is not receiving it because it has not been put up to the department on a business basis.

Today business men are having more to do with the government affairs than ever before. We are spending twenty-four million dollars a day and the people who will pay this money are the people who actually create wealth, the farmer, producer and the toiler.

Our prosperity depends upon our continued industrial activities and every one of these should be maintained at maximum capacity.

The prosperity of the small farmer, the small producer and the small manufacturer is as essential to the state and the nation as the prosperity of the big man. Every one of our occupations should be given equal consideration regardless of the amount produced.

Every encouragement must be given to increase production and this can be obtained only through assurance that the small farmer as well as the big man is going to receive his proportionate share of the war expenditures, and that there will be a market for his products and a profit to him for his work, based proportionately upon his cost of production.

There must be equality in all phases of our state and national industry, and the small fellow must not be forgotten, overlooked or crowded out through the rush for big things and big orders and big accomplishments.

If the people of the state want a business man, a worker, a man who knows, is thoroughly acquainted with every phase of the industrial situation in Oregon, a man who is capable, honest and fearless, a man who has by his own labor and through his own advancement aided in the progress and development of Oregon, they want Robert N. Stanfield.

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| for | For good roads. |
| Governor | For rigid law enforcement. |
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| | For national, universal eight-hour day, excepting agriculture. |
| | For better working and living conditions for the thousands of workers and laborers throughout the state. |
| | For the greatest possible moral, social and economic advancement of all citizens of the state. |
| | For an efficient state educational system. |
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| | "Policies backed by twenty years of practice." |
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