Carolyn *of the* Corners

BY RUTH BELMORE ENDICOTT

Copyright, 1918, by Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc.

CHAPTER XV—Continued.

—15—

He knew very well that what she had said about his daughter and Joseph Stagg was quite true. In his selfishness he had been glad all these years that the hardware merchant was balked of happiness.

The carpenter had always been a self-centered individual, desirous of his own comfort, and rather miserly. He had not approved, in the first place, of the intimacy between Joseph Stagg and his daughter Amanda.

"No good'll come o' that," he had told himself.

That is, no good to Jedidiah Parlow. He foresaw at the start the loss of the girl's help about the house, for his wife was then a helpless invalid.

Then Mrs. Parlow died. This death made plainer still to the carpenter that Mandy's marriage was bound to bring inconvenience to him. Especially if she married a close-fisted young business man like Joe Stagg would this be true. For, at the reading of his wife's will Mr. Parlow discovered that the property they occupied, even the shop in which he worked, which had been given to Mrs. Parlow by her parents, was to be the sole property of her daughter. Mandy was the heir. Mr. Parlow did not possess even a life interest in the estate.

It was a blow to the carpenter. He made a good income and had money in bank, but he loved money too well to wish to spend it after he had made it. He did not want to give up the place. If Mandy remained unmarried there would never be any question between them of rent or the like.

Therefore, if he was not actually the cause of the difference that arose between the two young people, he seized and enlarged upon it and did all in his power to make a mere misunderstanding grow into a quarrel that neither of the proud, high-spirited lovers would bridge.

Jedidiah Parlow knew why Joe Stagg had taken that other girl to Faith camp meeting. The young man had stopped at the Parlow place when Amanda was absent and explained to the girl's father. But the latter had never mentioned this fact to his daughter.

Instead he had made Joe's supposed offense the greater by suggestion and innuendo. And it was he, too, who had urged the hurt Mandy to retaliate by going to the dance with another young man. Meeting Joe Stagg later, the carpenter had said bitter things to him, purporting to come from Mandy. It was all mean and vile; the old man knew it now—as he had known it then.

All these years he had tried to add fuel to the fire of his daughter's anger against Joe Stagg. And he believed he had benefited thereby. But, somehow, during the past few months, he had begun to wonder if, after all, "the game was worth the candle."

Suddenly he had gained a vision of what Amanda Parlow's empty life meant to her.

Carolyn May, interested only in seeing her friends made happy, had no idea of the turmoil she had created in Mr. Parlow's mind.

During the time that the nurse was at the abandoned lumber camp caring for Judy Mason, Carolyn May hoped that something might take Uncle Joe there.

The next Friday, after school was out, Miss Amanda appeared at the Stagg home and suggested taking Carolyn May into the woods with her, "for the week-end," as she laughingly said. Tim, the hackman, had brought the nurse home for a few hours and would take her back to Judy's cabin.

"Poor old Judy is much better, but she is still suffering and cannot be left alone for long," Miss Amanda said. "Carolyn May will cheer her up."

Mr. Parlow would drive over on Sunday afternoon and bring the little girl home. Of course, Prince had to go along.

That Friday evening at supper matters in the big kitchen of the Stagg house were really at a serious pass. Joseph Stagg sat down to the table visibly without appetite. Aunty Rose drank one cup of tea after another without putting a crumb between her lips.

"Say, Aunty Rose," demanded Mr. Stagg, "what under the sun did we do before Hannah's Car'lyn came here, anyway? Seems to me we didn't really live, did we?"

Aunty Rose had no answer to make to these questions.

In the morning there was a smoky fog over everything—a fog that the sun did not dissipate, and behind which it looked like an enormous saffron ball.

Mr. Stagg went down to the store as usual. News came over the long-distance wires that thousands of acres of woodland were burning, that the forest reserves were out, and that the farmers of an entire township on the far side of the mountain were engaged in trying to make a barrier over which the flames would not leap. It was the consensus of opinion, however, that the fire would not cross the range.

"Scarcely any chance of its swooping down on us," decided Mr. Stagg. "Reckon I won't have to go home to plow fire furrows."

At the usual hour he started for The Corners for dinner. Having remained in the store all the morning, he had not realized how much stronger the smell of smoke was than it had been at breakfast time. Quite involuntarily he quickened his pace.

The fog and smoke overcast the sky thickly and made it of a brassy color, just as though a huge copper pot had been overturned over the earth. Women stood at their doors, talking back and forth in subdued tones. There was a spirit of expectancy in the air.

The hardware merchant was striding along at a quick pace when he came to the Parlow place; but he was not going so fast that he did not hear the carpenter hailing him in his cracked voice.

"Hey, you, Joe Stagg! Hey, you!"

Amazed, Mr. Stagg turned to look. Parlow was hobbling from the rear premises, groaning at every step, scarcely able to walk.

"That sciatica's got me ag'in," he snarled. "I'm a'most doubled up. Couldn't climb into a carriage to save my soul."

"What d'you want to climb into a carriage for?" demanded Mr. Stagg.

"'Cause somebody's got to go for that gal of mine—and little Car'lyn May. Ain't you heard—or is your mind so set on makin' money down there to your store that you don't know nothin' else?"

"Haven't I heard what?" returned the other with fine restraint, for he saw the old man was in pain.

"The fire's come over to this side. I saw the flames myself. And Aaron

He Plunged Forward Leaped the Blazing Brand and Galloped Down the Road.

Crummit drove through and says that you can't git by on the main road. The fire's followed the West Brook right down and is betwixt us and Adams' old camp."

"Bless me!" gasped the hardware dealer, paling under his tan.

"Wal?" snarled Parlow. "Goin' to stand there chatterin' all day, or be you goin' to do something?"

"Somebody must get over to that cabin and bring them out," Joseph Stagg said, without taking offense at the crabbed old carpenter.

"Wal!" exclaimed Parlow, "glad ter see you're awake."

"Oh, I'm awake," the other returned shortly. "I was just figuring on who's got the best horse."

"I have," snapped Parlow.

"Yes. And I'd decided on taking Cherry, too," the hardware dealer added, and swung into the lane toward the carpenter's barn.

"Hey, you! Needn't be so brash about it," growled the carpenter. "He's my hoss, I s'pose?"

Joseph Stagg went straight ahead, and without answering. Having once decided on his course, he wasted no time.

He rolled back the big door and saw Cherry already harnessed in his boxstall.

Together they backed the animal between the shafts, fastened the traces, and Mr. Stagg leaped quickly to the seat and gathered up the reins.

"You'll hafter take the Fallow road," the carpenter shouted after him. "And have a care drivin' Cherry—"

Horse and buckboard whirled out of the yard and his voice was lost to the hardware merchant.

Cherry stepped out splendidly, and they left a cloud of dust behind them as they rolled up the pike, not in the direction of the abandoned camp. Forewarned, he did not seek to take the shortest way to the cabin where Amanda Parlow and Carolyn May were perhaps even now threatened by the forest fire. The Fallow road turned north from the pike three miles from The Corners.

Flecks of foam began to appear on Cherry's glossy coat almost at once. The air was very oppressive, and there was no breeze.

The streak of flame that had followed down the banks of West brook moved mysteriously. He could see the smoke of it now.

Amanda Parlow and his niece might even now be threatened by the flames!

Now that danger threatened the woman he had loved all these years, it seemed as though his mind and heart were numbed. He was terrified beyond expression—terrified for her safety, and terrified for fear that somebody, even Jedidiah Parlow, should suspect just how he felt about it.

The horse's hoofs rang sharply over the stony path. Presently they capped a little ridge and started down into a hollow. Not until they were over the ridge was Mr. Stagg aware that the hollow was filled, chokingly filled, with billowy white smoke.

Another man—one as cautious as the hardware merchant notoriously was—would have pulled the horse down to a walk. But Joseph Stagg's cautiousness had been flung to the winds. Instead, he shouted to Cherry, and the beast increased his stride.

Ten rods further on the horse snorted, stumbled, and tried to stop. A writhing, flaming snake—a burning branch—plunged down through the smoke directly ahead.

"Go on!" shouted Joseph Stagg, with a sharpness that would ordinarily have set Cherry off at a gallop.

But, as the snorting creature still shied, the man seized the whip and lashed poor Cherry cruelly along his flank.

At that the horse went mad. He plunged forward, leaped the blazing brand, and galloped down the road at a perilous gait. The man tried neither to soothe him nor to retard the pace.

The smoke swirled around them. The driver could not see ten feet beyond the horse's nose. Ten minutes later they rattled down into the straight road, and then, very soon, indeed, were at the abandoned camp.

The fire was near, but it had not reached this place. There was no sign of life about.

The man knew which was Judy's cabin. He leaped from the vehicle, leaving the panting Cherry unhitched, and ran to the hut.

The door swung open. The poor furniture was in place. Even the bedclothing was rumpled in the old woman's bunk. But neither she nor Amanda Parlow nor little Carolyn May was there.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Laurel to the Brave.

The heart of the man was like a weight in his bosom. With so many hundred acres of forest on fire, and that, too, between the abandoned camp and The Corners and Sunrise Cove, how would Amanda Parlow and Carolyn May know where to go?

Certainly the place must have been deserted in haste. There was Carolyn May's coat. The man caught it up and stared around, as though expecting the child to be within sight.

The old woman's clothing was scattered about, too. It did not look as though anything had been removed from the hut. Coming out, he found another article on the threshold—one of Amanda's gloves.

Joseph Stagg lifted the crumpled glove to his lips.

"Oh, God, spare her!" he burst forth. "Spare them both!"

Then he kissed the glove again and hid it away in the inner pocket of his vest.

The hardware dealer tried to think of just what the fugitives might have done when they escaped from the cabin.

If it were true that Amanda would not run toward the fire, then she more than likely had taken the opposite direction on leaving the cabin. Therefore, Joseph Stagg went that way—setting off down the tote road, leading Cherry by his birdle.

Suddenly he remembered calling Prince the day Carolyn May had been lost on the ice. He raised his voice in a mighty shout for the dog now.

"Prince! Princey, old boy! where are you?"

Again and again he called, but there was no reply. The smoke was more stifling and the heat more intense every minute. Mr. Stagg realized that he must get out quickly if he would save himself and the horse.

He had just stepped into the buckboard again, when there was an excited scrambling in the underbrush, and a welcoming bark was given.

"Prince! Good boy!" the man shouted. "Where are they?"

The excited dog flew at him, leaping on the buckboard so as to reach him. The mongrel was delighted, and showed it as plainly as a dumb brute could.

But he was anxious, too. He leaped back to the ground, ran a little ahead, and then looked back to see if the man was following. The hardware dealer shouted to him again:

"Go ahead, Princey! We're coming!"

He picked up the reins and Cherry started. The dog, barking his satisfaction, ran on ahead and struck into a side path which led down a glade. Joseph Stagg knew immediately where this path led to. There was a spring and a small morass in the bottom of the hollow.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

U. S. Forces 4,791,172 at End of War

Reserve of 2,340,000 Class 1 Men Waiting to Be Mobilized When Armistice Was Signed

The United States was ready to increase its fighting force to 7,131,172 men during 1919 if the war had continued, Provost Marshal General Crowder stated in his annual report to congress.

A reserve of 2,340,000 class 1 men was waiting to be mobilized when the armistice was signed, the report stated, the armed strength of the nation then being 4,791,172 men. When war was declared the armed strength was 378,619 men.

Two out of every three men in uniform were raised through the draft, Crowder stated, the total number inducted during the war being 2,810,296. Every one was taken from class 1.

Only 18 per cent of the men of military age, 18 to 45, were in the service, the report stated, while England contributed 62 per cent of her available fighters.

In all 24,234,021 men were registered by the great draft system for military service.

Seven per cent was the maximum percentage of men taken from any one industry.

The farmers were treated better than any other workers, 69 per cent of those registered being granted deferred classification. Comparatively few married men were taken, the records showing that 89 per cent of them were deferred.

Physically the nation is 70 per cent perfect, according to the draft examiners. This is the percentage of the men found fit. This does not include the limited service men or those whose defects could be remedied.

The highest percentages of physical fitness come from the middle West. Oklahoma led the nation with 82 per cent, closely followed by Arkansas, Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Texas and North Dakota. Rhode Island and Arizona show the largest percentages of physically unfit, with Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, New York and Washington close. Rhode Island had only 53 per cent fit and New York 60 per cent.

Liquor was the smallest factor in causing physical rejections, the percentage being only one-tenth of 1 per cent. Heart troubles, eyes, tuberculosis and mental defects brought the largest number of rejections, each claiming more than 19 per cent of the total disqualified. Flat feet took only 1.3 per cent.

Gen. Crowder's "work or fight" order forced 120,000 men either into the army or useful work and his drive on the slacker marriages added 123,000 men to class one. Eighteen thousand waiters alone changed their work, as did 17,000 clerical workers. More than 295,000 are still classed as deserters by the provost marshal general's office, having failed to answer calls or register. About 67,000 have been apprehended.

Eight thousand convicts or ex-prisoners were inducted and their records show they have made fine fighting men.

Gen. Crowder closes his report with a tribute to all who helped make the draft a success. The total cost of the draft was only $16,000,000 and Gen. Crowder had $38,000,000 in appropriations waiting to go back to the treasury. The per capita cost of the inductments was $6.52, as compared with $217 in the '60s. The cost of enlisting a volunteer was $28.95 during the operation of the draft.

TIPS FOR THE POULTRY GROWER

That laying hens will increase their production if fed a properly proportioned ration has been demonstrated in Missouri this winter. And the ration costs no more than some of the carelessly compounded rations many flocks receive. Here is the ration expressed in quantities sufficient to feed 100 hens one day:

Scratch Feed—Ten pounds shelled corn or kaffir and 5 pounds thrashed oats or barley. Feed in deep litter morning and evening.

Dry Mash—Three pounds bran or 3 pounds cornmeal, 3 pounds shorts or 3 pounds ground oats, and 1½ pounds beefscrap or 1 pound tankage. Three gallons of milk may be substituted for the beefscrap or tankage. Keep this mash before the birds at all times.

In addition to this feed, supply green feed in some form, plenty of fresh water and grit and shell.

The use of the foregoing ration has been advocated by the extension service of the University of Missouri college of agriculture.

Ten communities have reported results for 30 days which shows a percentage increase of 173. This means that all communities reporting are receiving a double return in number of eggs laid, and one community reports that the yield has been increased seven-fold. This is conclusive evidence that the ration is practical, and that a laying hen, well fed, will respond to good feed.

First Discovery of Gold in California Was in 1848

The first gold in California was discovered 71 years ago, on January 24, 1848, by James Wilson Marshall. He was a native of New Jersey who had gone West and settled on the site of Sacramento. Blasting away some rocks to make a foundation for a building, he observed grains of what seemed to be gold scattered about in the excavated earth. A test revealed that it really was the precious metal. Wild excitement followed the discovery, and the immortal rush of the "forty-niners" brought thousands of miners and adventurers to the golden state. Marshall, the discoverer, did not profit from his find and would have spent his last days in poverty except for a small pension granted him by the state of California.

Active Volcano.

The most active volcano in the world is Mt. Sangay. It is 17,196 feet high, situated on the eastern chain of the Andes, South America. It has been in constant eruption since 1728.

Immense Food Supplies for Brave Yanks Across Seas—The Daily Stocks in Hand

Whoever goes hungry in Europe this winter it will not be the American soldiers, notes a correspondent. The daily stocks in hand reported by the quartermaster's department of the American expeditionary forces gives an idea of supplies only when it is remembered they represent reserves held between daily consumption and arrivals known to be en route. Potatoes furnish a striking example. The stock in hand at the last report was 8,200,000 pounds, and yet the American forces are receiving 30,000 tons of potatoes a month, which makes 60,000,000 pounds, chiefly from Ireland. Potatoes being perishable, it would not be wise to keep double the daily stocks in hand. Others were as follows:

Fresh beef, 16,600,000 pounds; tinned beef, 23,700,000 pounds; tinned bacon, 26,300,000 pounds; tinned salmon, 9,440,000 pounds; flour, 166,000,000 pounds; oatmeal, 2,000,000 pounds; cornmeal, 6,000,000 pounds; dry beans, 26,000,000 pounds; baked beans, 27,000,000 pounds; rice, 8,000,000 pounds; onions, 1,000,000 pounds; tomatoes, 36,000,000 pounds; jams, 2,000,000 pounds; prunes, 2,000,000 pounds; sugar, 28,000,000 pounds.

This list does not include other foods running beyond a million pounds, like dried vegetables, syrup, bacon in bulk, hardtack, hominy, dried and fresh fruits, as well as cheese, macaroni, butter and lard.

U. S. January Expenses Totaled $1,962,350,000

Big payments to allies under credits previously established, as reported by the treasury, raised the total of allied advances in January to $200,250,000, and aggregate government expenses for the month to $1,962,350,000. This is $97,000,000 less than the record of December. War savings sales reached $70,996,000.

WITH THE SAGES

It is a proof of boorishness to confer a favor with a bad grace. How little does a smile cost!—Bruyere.

Ill fortune never crushed that man whom good fortune deceived not.—Ben Johnson.

We should be ashamed to think what we should be ashamed to do.—W. Pickford.

FEW FOLKS HAVE GRAY HAIR NOW

Druggist Says Ladies are Using Recipe of Sage Tea and Sulphur.

Hair that loses its color and lustre or when it fades, turns gray, dull and lifeless, is caused by a lack of sulphur in the hair. Our grandmother made up a mixture of Sage Tea and Sulphur to keep her locks dark and beautiful and thousands of women and men who value that even color, that beautiful dark shade of hair which is so attractive, use only this old-time recipe.

Nowadays we get this famous mixture improved by the addition of other ingredients by asking at any drug store for a bottle of "Wyeth's Sage and Sulphur Compound," which darkens the hair so naturally, so evenly, that nobody can possibly tell it has been applied. You just dampen a sponge or soft brush with it and draw this through your hair, taking one small strand at a time. By morning the gray hair disappears; but what delights the ladies with Wyeth's Sage and Sulphur Compound is that, besides beautifully darkening the hair after a few applications, it also brings back the gloss and lustre and gives it an appearance of abundance.

Wyeth's Sage and Sulphur Compound is a delightful toilet requisite to impart color and a youthful appearance to the hair. It is not intended for the cure, mitigation or prevention of disease.—Adv.

Foolish Worrying.

So many things do not matter. Innumerable things that we worry over or fret about or strive for, really make no difference whatever, and we worry and fret and strive for them merely from a stupid sort of habit. And we have, perhaps, let them bother us and trouble us again and again, thinking that they mattered, and mattered tremely. But do they?

For House Plants.

A splendid fertilizer for all house plants and evergreens may be made this way: Dissolve one can of bone in two gallons of water; put in extra bones to make a thick, crusty mass. A few spoonfuls of this in your watering pot once a week will give a wonderful result.

The Difference.

Flat head is quite as bad in polite as flat foot is in military life. Not only that, but 80 per cent of the flat head cases are curable.—Hudson Post.

Funny, Ain't It.

Said the facetious feller: "I have often wondered how a man can speak straight from the shoulder unless he does his talking on his fingers."

And He's Worth Listening To.

The man who really has nothing to say generally talks less than other people, because he considers it worth giving some thought to.

Beet Sugar Industry.

The United States and Spain are the only countries which produce both cane and beet sugar in any considerable quantity. The development of the beet-sugar industry in the United States has been one of the great agricultural and manufacturing growths of this country. From 1898 the beet sugar production in the United States increased from 50,000 tons to approximately 800,000 tons in 1915.

Proper Treatment of Friends.

When our friends are present we ought to treat them well; and when they are absent, to speak of them well. —Epictetus.

A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN

Miss Kelly Tells How Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound Restored Her Health.

Newark, N. J.—"For about three years I suffered from nervous breakdown and got so weak I could hardly stand, and had backaches every day. I tried everything I could think of and was under a physician's care for two years. A girl friend had used Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and she told me about it. From the first day I took it I began to feel better and now I am well and able to do most any kind of work. I have been recommending the Compound ever since and give you my permission to publish this letter."—Flo Kelly, 476 So. 14th St., Newark, N. J.

The reason this famous root and herb remedy, Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, was so successful in Miss Kelly's case was because it went to the root of her trouble, restored her to normal healthy condition and as a result her nervousness disappeared.