

THE SMOKY YEARS

By ALAN LE MAY

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INSTALLMENT 3 THE STORY SO FAR:

Dusty King and Lew Gordon were joint owners of the vast King-Gordon range which stretched from Texas to Montana. When building up this string of ranches, they continually had to fight the unscrupulous Ben Thorpe. Thorpe ri-

valued King-Gordon in power and wealth, but he had gained his position through wholesale cattle rustling and gunplay. Their opposing interests came to a showdown when the Government announced the auctioning of the valuable Crying

Wolf land in Montana. King bid high to beat out Thorpe. Bill Roper, King's adopted son, raced home to tell pretty Jody Gordon the good news. A rider soon brought the news that Dusty King had been killed.

CHAPTER IV

They buried Dusty King five miles south of Ogallala, beside the Great Trail which he himself had pioneered. They thought he would want to rest out there in the open plain, near enough to the cattle trail so that the rumble of hoofs would sometimes come to him through the ground.

Over his grave they piled boulders, after the fashion of the prairie men. Bill Roper himself fitted a cross of railroad ties, the most durable and massive timber available at Ogallala.

After that was all done, and night had come on, and everybody had gone back to town, Bill Roper went back to that lonely cross and squatted on his heels against the pile of stone.

After a while a ridden horse came toward the cross at a walk; and Bill Roper remained motionless, unseen against the stones, as the horseman came up.

The rider stepped to the ground and walked slowly toward the cross, the reins of his pony on his arm.

"Quien es?"

Roper said, "Oh, hello, Dry Camp."

Dry Camp Pierce came and sat down beside Bill at the foot of the stones. "Find out anything, in the town?"

"Hell, no."
"No," Dry Camp repeated after him. "No, and they won't."
"You talk mighty sure, Dry Camp."

"I talk mighty sure because I am mighty sure. Nobody saw Dusty killed except the three men that done it; and one other man."

Bill Roper's hand shot out and caught Dry Camp's lean arm in a grip that bit like a trap. "Who was that?"

"Me."
There was a silence, sharp and hard, before Bill said,

"How is it you haven't told anybody this?"

"Haven't had any chance to talk to you," Dry Camp said. "I'm telling you now, ain't I?"

"Who was it?"
"Cleve Tanner; and Walk Lasham, and Ben Thorpe."

Dry Camp took a match out of the pocket of his cowhide vest and chewed the end.

"You see—" he searched for his words painfully, after the manner of men who are much alone—"Dusty, he tied his horse out back of the Lone Star Bar, in the angle of the wagon shed. There's a kind of a corner there, like you can't see into it from any place, hardly; and what with it getting dark—"

"Where were you?"
"I was in Bailey's Harness Shop, next door. I saw Dusty turn off the walk, and walk back between the buildings. I'd been watching for him, because I wanted to speak to him a minute. I went back through the harness shop, and I was just going out the back door. And then hell bust in the wagon shed angle."

"The time it happened," Bill Roper said, "there must have still been a little light."

"Enough to see by, all right. These three varmint steps out of the shed quick and quiet. Dusty knew what he was up against, all right. His gun come out; but Walk Lasham grabs his gun arm with his left hand and bears down like he was wrestling him. Then the whole works seems to blow up, as all three of 'em let loose. They just stood and throwed it into him, and it seemed like he was never going to fall. Ben Thorpe pumped two more shots after Dusty was down, and dead."

That was all the story. Both of them seemed to recognize that there were no questions to ask, nothing to add.

"I promise you this, Bill," Dry Camp said at last. "I can't go up and testify against these men. You know why. If I let it be known that I'm here, that's the finish of me. But that would be all right. Only, what court, that we got, would believe me against them?"

Bill Roper said, "There isn't anything you can do, I don't suppose."

"Oh, yes, there is. There's one thing I can do. I'll have to kind of bide my time, and make it sure; but—I'm going to get me these three men."

"No, you ain't," Bill Roper said. "We're going to go at this thing a different way. Trouble with you, you're figuring these three men as just three men. They ain't. They got the biggest string of tough outfits in the country, and they spread all the way from the Rio Grande to the Rosebud, and beyond. We got to bust up the whole works, if we want to get any place."

Dry Camp was silent for several minutes. "What you aim to do?"

"I aim to start in Texas, where Cleve Tanner runs Thorpe's breeding outfits in the Big Bend; I aim to tie into him piece by piece, till Ben Thorpe is smashed out of the West."

"Lew Gordon will never stand for—"

"Then, by God, King-Gordon has come to its split-up"

Silence again before Dry Camp said, "And I suppose I'm expected to just kind of stand aside and stay out of it and see how you work it out, huh? Well, I won't do it, Bill."

"You're in this, Dry Camp."

"How am I in it?"

"I've got to have me an outfit. It's got to be made up of boys that aren't afraid of Ben Thorpe or all hell; boys that haven't got anything more to lose. I'll need near fifty men. But to start off with I want Lee Harnish, and Tex Daniels and Tex Long; Nate Liggett—Dave Shannon—"

"Wow!" said Dry Camp. "You get those four or five in the same bunch, they'll eat each other alive."

"That's the kind I want," Bill Roper said. "I want a wild bunch such as the West has never seen before."

"And me—what am I supposed to do?"

"You—you're heading south. You're going back to Texas and

you're going to start rounding 'em in."

"What you offering these boys?"

"Horses and grub, and what other stuff we'll need. Not another thing."

They sat silent for a long time more.

"All right," Dry Camp said. "I'll go."

In the starlight Bill Roper swung down in front of the little shack which served King-Gordon as a loading-foreman's office at their Ogallala pens. Within, Bill Roper found Lew Gordon sitting alone.

"I just talked to a man," Roper said, "that saw the killing."

Gordon was instantly alert. "Who was it?"

"He's a man that can't come forward, because he's already an outlaw in his own right. But Dusty was killed by Ben Thorpe, and Walk Lasham, and Cleve Tanner, the three working together. Walk Lasham bore down Dusty's gun."

They looked at each other for a long moment.

"This man that told you this—we've got to get hold of him; his story has to go to the authorities, Bill."

Roper shook his head. "He'll hang if they lay hands on him. Anyway, nobody would believe him against these three."

Lew Gordon made a gesture at once impatient and weary. "Wherever we turn we hit some snag of lawlessness," he said. "There's too many men afraid to stand forward and face out the law. Seems like nothing is done open and above-board any more."

"Never was, since I remember," Roper said. "I've got a couple of ways in mind right now. I'm going on the warpath, Lew."

Gordon had been fiddling with a pencil, and now he threw it on the table in front of him. "We're figuring you to take over the Crying Wolf, Bill. Dusty's half of King-Gordon naturally will stand in your name now; Dusty never paid any attention to any other kin. But the Crying Wolf was where he figured for you to go and work; and there isn't any call to change that, now."

"You can count me out of the Crying Wolf, Lew."

"What do you want to do?"

"We're going to branch out a new way," Roper said. "We're going to have a warrior outfit. And I'm its new boss."

"I don't get you."

"We're going to carry the war into the other camp, Lew. For every outfit that Ben Thorpe has grabbed by force of arms, he's going to lose two; for every head that has come into his herds by rustle and raid, two head of his are going to be missing when he makes his roundup count. First thing, I'm going to break Cleve Tanner down in Texas. After that—"

Lew Gordon looked Bill Roper hard in the eye, smiled a little, and shook his head. His voice was slow and deep, stubbornly emphatic, as a granite cliff is emphatic. "No. We've never gone outside the law yet, and while I live we never will. We play the straight game always; and if we lose—that's in the hands of things beyond us."

Bill Roper angered. "I know how you feel about it," he said, keeping his voice down. "You swayed Dusty that way always. If you'd looked at it different, the guns would have been out years ago—and it would have been Ben Thorpe that went down. As it is—Dusty King is dead. Now you want me to drift on as we always drifted on, and I'm supposed to forget that Dusty's out there under a pile of stones. Well, I'm not going to play it that way, Gordon."

"While you're with King-Gordon," Lew said slowly, "you'll play it as I say you'll play it."

"If you want to buy me out," Roper said, "you can do, it at your own price. Because I'm going to do exactly what I tell you I'm going to do; I wouldn't run a sneak on you, Lew."

"You figure," Lew Gordon said incredulously, "that you, one youngster on horseback, can smash up Ben Thorpe? You wouldn't last forty seconds longer than a celluloid collar on a dead gambler."

"There'll be a few go with me," Roper said.

"Who?"

"Dry Camp Pierce for one; Lee Harnish, Tex Daniels, Tex Long; in all, maybe fifty men that I think I know where to get."

Lew Gordon looked as if he would explode. "You're naming the most vicious outlaws on the plains," he said. "If you ever get those men together, it will be the most infernal wild bunch that ever—"

"By God," said Bill Roper, "I'll show you how to clean a range or break a range; I'm telling you I don't care which."

Lew Gordon slapped his hand on the table; it fell with a dull and heavy wallop, but so hard it seemed the top of the table would split.

"No. No, by God! Not under my brand. Not in a hundred years..."

"Then draw up the terms of the sale."

Gordon was silent again, for a long time. He seemed very old, very tired. "Reckon you're man enough to make your own decisions, Bill."

"Thanks, Lew."

"But do me one last favor—will you? Don't decide here and now. Take a couple of days to think it over. It's for your own good. But I'm asking it as a favor to me..."

Bill Roper dropped his eyes, and for a moment or two he hesitated.

"I'll take an hour," he decided in compromise.

CHAPTER V

Bill Roper walked slowly to the Gordons' tall house, on its rise at the edge of the town, and let himself in softly. He wanted desperately to talk to Jody Gordon; but it was nearly midnight, and he couldn't make up his mind to wake her.

As it happened, decision was unnecessary. In the fireplace some lengths of cottonwood log still burned, and before the fire Jody lounged upon a buffalo robe, wide awake.

"You've been a long time."

"I know." He stopped beside her, half raised her in his arms, and kissed her lingeringly. Her arms and her lips clung, making it difficult for him to think of the road he had chosen. But presently he sat beside her on the buffalo robe, and turned his eyes to the coals.

"There's some stuff we have to talk about, Jody."

"I can think of better things to do with firelight than just talk."

"Jody—King-Gordon is splitting up."

Jody brought herself up on one elbow. "Why, Bill—what do you mean?"

"Dusty's share comes to me, as you know. I—I'm taking it out."

"You're—Bill, you must be loco!"

"Maybe. I'm going against Ben Thorpe."

"But—but—" Jody was at a loss for words.

"Since the trail began, he's stood for everything we're against. Four of the biggest rustling gangs in the country are directly hooked up with him, if it could be proved. He's stopped at nothing, and where he couldn't force his way he's bought his way. But now—he's gone too far."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

NEW IDEAS for Home-makers

By RUTH WYETH SPEARS



QUILTS do not belong to any one period and there doesn't seem to be the slightest indication that the old art of making them is dying out. Most quilts today are planned as bedspreads and have a color scheme to harmonize with other decorations. If a variety of figured scraps are used in the piecing, one dominant plain color is generally repeated in each block to give the design unity. Again, one color is combined with white throughout the entire quilt. Some quilts have elaborate pieced borders; others are finished with a band of white with the dominant color used as an edge binding. A bias striped material makes the binding of the quilt in the Whirl Wind pattern shown here.

The beauty of any quilt is enhanced if it is set off with a valance around the bed. They knew that in the days of the four-poster and the rule applies still. The bed in the sketch had no particu-

lar tradition and the footboard was much too high to display the quilt spread to advantage. What a difference in the effect when the board was cut down and the crisp frills of dotted Swiss were added! Surely, any quilt that is worth piecing is worth this extra touch.

NOTE: If you have an old iron bed that you would like to cut down, SEWING Book 3 tells how; 10 cents postpaid. You may also want Mrs. Spears' three Favorite Quilt Patterns. One, called the Ann Rutledge, was sketched from an original in the reconstructed Rutledge Tavern at New Salem, Illinois, and it is possible that Ann may have been making these quilt blocks when Abe Lincoln came courting. The other two patterns are the Whirl Wind and the Kaleidoscope. Set of three patterns with directions mailed for 10 cents. Send order to:

MRS. RUTH WYETH SPEARS
Drawer 10 New York
Bedford Hills
Enclose 10 cents for Book 3 and 10 cents for set of 3 quilt block patterns.
Name
Address

Oldest University

Azhar university at Cairo, Egypt, is the world's oldest. It is preparing to celebrate its 1,000th anniversary this year. This university is the center of Moslem learning and Moslem authority, and attracts students from all Moslem countries, such as Arabia, India, Malaya, China, the Philippines and the Balkans.

ASK ME ANOTHER

A Quiz With Answers
Offering Information
on Various Subjects

- ### The Questions
1. Was Capt. Miles Standish one of the Pilgrim Fathers?
 2. Who was killed by Aaron Burr in the famous duel?
 3. What is the exact length of time taken by the earth in making its revolution around the sun?
 4. Next to oxygen, what is the chief elementary constituent of the earth's crust?
 5. The word guerrilla is derived from a Spanish word meaning what?
 6. What President of the United States was born on July fourth?
 7. What place is known as the Gibraltar of the East?
 8. Is there more sunlight at the equator than at the poles?
 9. What is the smallest of all flowering plants?

- ### The Answers
1. Capt. Miles Standish was not a Pilgrim, he was brought along for protection.
 2. Alexander Hamilton.
 3. The trip takes 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds.
 4. Silicon.
 5. War (guerra).
 6. Calvin Coolidge.
 7. Singapore.
 8. No. A recent study showed that each pole has 65 more hours of sunlight per year than the equator.
 9. The smallest of all flowering plants belong to the genus Wolffia. They are aquatic, have no roots and produce flowers about the size and shape of the head of a pin.

TIPS to Gardeners

QUICK FLOWER GARDENS

MANY people want quick results in the flower garden, and for them the lists of annual flowers offer effective aid.

A highly satisfactory, and economical hedge, for instance, can be grown in six or eight weeks from seed. Kochia is the plant. A single packet of Kochia seed will provide a full, bushy hedge along the front or side of the yard. For a flowering hedge, Four o'Clock will produce attractively within two months after seed is planted.

Glowing borders of flowers that beautify the yard, and at the same time provide ample cut flowers for the housewife, may be enjoyed for the first summer. The fastest-growing and most dependable annuals for cutting include the Zinnias, Marigolds, Bachelor Buttons and Petunias. There are tall, medium, and dwarf varieties of each.

Most widely used of fast-growing annual vines is Heavenly Blue Morning Glory, whose giant, soft-blue flowers are in a class by themselves. It is well to scratch the coat of Heavenly Blue seeds before planting them to speed their otherwise slow germination.

Five Men Proved Ready to Profit by Judge's Advice

A judge was pointing out that a witness was not necessarily to be regarded as untruthful because he altered a previous statement.

"For instance," he said, "when I entered this court today I could have sworn that I had my watch in my pocket. But then I remembered I had left it in the bathroom at home."

When the judge got home that night his wife said: "Why all this bother about your watch—sending five men for it?"

"Good Heavens!" said the judge. "I never sent anyone! What did you do?"

"I gave it to the first one who came; he knew just where it was."

Tarpon Evolving?

Scientists believe the tarpon may be undergoing a strange evolution. An examination of their air bladders has shown a large amount of lung tissue, proving that the fish are not entirely dependent upon their gills for oxygen. This may be the reason why they can change from salt to fresh water and vice versa. The tarpon is the only fish that is known to have passed through the canal, 40 miles or so of which is fresh water.

HE FOUND A BETTER WAY



THE BETTER WAY TO TREAT CONSTIPATION DUE TO LACK OF PROPER BULK IN THE DIET IS TO CORRECT THE CAUSE OF THE TROUBLE WITH A DELICIOUS CEREAL, KELLOGG'S ALL-BRAN. EAT IT EVERY DAY AND DRINK PLENTY OF WATER.

Virtue's Complexion
Once he saw a youth blushing, and addressed him, "Courage, my boy; that is the complexion of virtue."—Diogenes Laertius.

Most delicious "bag" of the season... quick and easy to prepare... nourishing... economical... order, today, from your grocer.



Van Camp's Pork and BEANS

Feast-for-the-Least

Conditions Change
If matters go badly now, they will not always be so.—Horace.

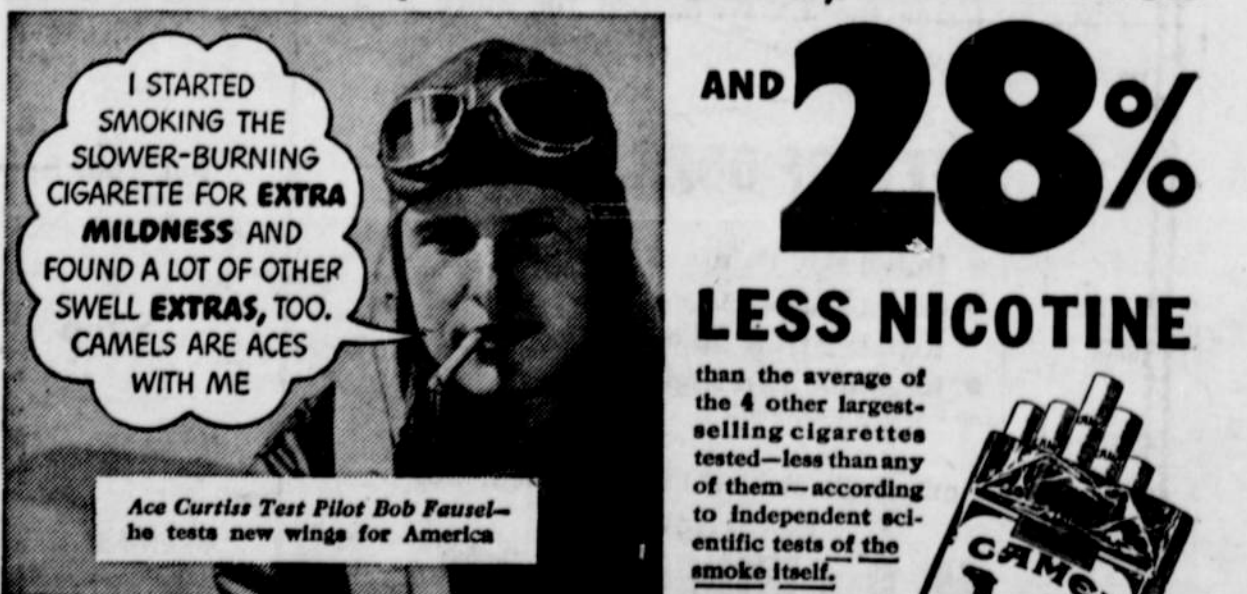
Nervous Restless Girls!

Cranky? Restless? Can't sleep? Tired easily? Because of distress of monthly functional disturbances? Then try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Pinkham's Compound is famous for relieving pain of irregular periods and cranky nervousness due to such disturbances. One of the most effective medicines you can buy today for this purpose—made especially for women. WORTH TRYING!

Misspent Time
There is no remedy for time mispent.—Sir Aubrey de Vere.

THE SMOKE OF SLOWER-BURNING CAMELS GIVES YOU EXTRA MILDNESS, EXTRA COOLNESS, EXTRA FLAVOR



CAMEL

THE SMOKE'S THE THING! THE SLOWER-BURNING CIGARETTE

