

INSTALLMENT 11

Dusty King and Lew Gordon had built up a vast string of ranches in the West. King was killed by his powerful and unscrupulous competitor, Ben Thorpe. Bill Roper, King's adopted son, was determined to avenge his death in spite of

#### CHAPTER XV-Continued

When Lew Gordon spoke, his voice was so quiet that its very stillness carried threat of imminent destruc-"Bill Roper sent a man to you?"

"I didn't say that. He's a man who was with Bill Roper in the Texas Rustlers' War; he doesn't

seem to be in the Montana raids." "Who was it?" Lew Gordon rumbled. "What's his name?"

"Shoshone Wilce."

"Wilce! I know that name. I know it well. I'd rope and drag him in a second, if I caught him talking to you!"

"This man has talked with Ben Thorpe in Dodge," Jody told her father. "A lot of strange news is working down to Thorpe from up here in Montana. Some bands of rustlers are slashing up and down Montana throwing lead and leather into the Thorpe outfits under Lasham; they say he's badly hurt already-nobody will know how badly until the winter breaks."

Her father waited, his eyes angry. "The word from Dodge explains half the trouble that King-Gordon is up against," Jody said. "Thorpe can't believe that one lone cowboy. deserted by everyone who should have been his friend, could manage to smash his Texas holdings, and go on to cut away his herds in Montana. He thought that we were backing Billy Roper in the Texas Rustlers' War. And he believes that we're backing him now."

"Well?" Lew Gordon said. "You mean to say you came all this way to tell me that?"

"Ben Thorpe means to kill you." Lew Gordon's face showed no change of expression. But he did not reply at once.

"I don't doubt it," he said at last; "what would you expect? You bring war into a range and anybody is likely to go down."

Jody's face was white.

"You know what's at the bottom of all the trouble we're having," her father said. "You know as well as I do that two years of nothing but trouble lays square at the door of Bill Roper."

Jody sprang up to face him. "I certainly do not know anything of the kind!" she answered him.

Lew Gordon stared at her.

"It's an everlasting shame upon the cow country that Dusty King's killers are still in their saddles. I tell you, Billy Roper is the only man I've seen with courage enough

And now her father angered as she had seldom seen him anger. "You'll tell me nothing!" he roared. "Roper! I'm sick of hearing his name-a dirty outlaw whelp that knows nothing but kill and burn and raid!"

Jody's eyes narrowed and filled with tears. "You may as well know this," she told her father. "The day that Billy Roper dies I want to die

For a moment Lew Gordon seemed bewildered: he stared at his daughter as if the devil had come up through the floor. The girl who faced him was entirely strange to him.

He heard her say, "If you had stayed by him, as Dusty King would have done, Thorpe would have been whipped and through, long ago."

"Child," he said queerly, "what are you talking about?' "If you'd only take Billy Roper

back into King-Gordon-" "That'll never happen while I

live," her father said flatly. A silence fell between them, pres-

ently broken by the girl. "He asked me to ride with him once, when he first took the outlaw trail. I wish I had. To the last day I live, I'll wish I'd ridden with him then. And now I'll tell you something more. If ever he asks me again, I'll go."

For several moments he stared at her, more shaken than he had been since the death of Dusty King. Then his face congested, and he rose up on his boot heels to tower over the

girl. "By God," he said, his voice unsteady with the repression he put upon it, "that closes the deal! I've kept my riders off him because of Dusty King, and I let him run on and on, rousing up a range war that has close to busted King-Gordon. But when it comes to tampering with you-it's the end! I'm through, you hear me?"

He caught up his battered sombrero, and his spurs rang as he turned

toward the door. "Dad, what are you going to do?" "Thorpe has a reward on Bill Roper's head. King-Gordon is going to

double that reward." He went storming out, his face black and violent with portent of

war. For several moments Jody Gordon stood motionless where he had left her. Then she turned and went out of the house to the long shedlike stable.

Shoshone Wilce was loitering there in the shadow of the rear wall, an uneasy and restless figure.

"Did you find out where Billy Roper can be reached?" Jody demand-

THE STORY SO FAR: the opposition of his sweetheart, Jody Gordon, and her father. Daring raids upon Thorpe's Texas holdings wiped him out of the state. Roper then prepared for a great raid upon the vast herds on Thorpe's Montana ranches. Several

and I got to be getting on there, any message you want me to take, I'd sure like to be pulling out of here, before-

"All right. You be here with two good horses just after dark."

"If you could just as leave give me the message now, I'd sure like

"There is no message. I'm going

with you to Bill Roper.' Shoshone Wilce looked like a man entrapped. "I can't do it! Your father-I just won't do it, Miss Gor-

"All right. I'll make the ride by myself."

"Hey, look! You can't-"

"Bill Roper isn't going to like this,

Shoshone studied her searchingly, but found nothing to reassure him. It was in his mind that this girl would do exactly as she said. "My



"I'd sure like to be pulling out of here before-"

life ain't worth a nickel, either way," he almost whimpered. "You be here with the horses,"

Jody said. She turned and went into the house, leaving Shoshone Wilce standing unhappy and uncertain, anale deep in the wet snow.

# CHAPTER XVI

The rounding up of the wild bunch of riders lost Roper a few days; but within the week Bill Roper and Tex Long rode into the plains of the Lit-

Here around a spluttering fire the riders crouched in their sodden blankets, like Indians, while Roper gave out his orders. Thirty-two men and six outlaw leaders were now in the field against Walk Lasham's power-Raid.

Roper's first move had been to split his renegade riders into five the snapping rope ends of the tail bunches under the leaders that he knew-Tex Long, Lee Harnish, Dave drop out, promptly forgotten. Yet, Shannon, Dry Camp Pierce and himself. Hat Crick Tommy he sent to Miles City in search of further word from Jody Gordon; Hat Crick would later rejoin Roper as messenger and scout.

It was Roper's plan that he and Tex Long, with twelve men between them, should make the most daring who he believed would do what he raid of all; a raid upon the big herds said. The cattle were moving more which Lasham held between the headwaters of Timber Creek and through the heavy going; Tex Long the Little Dry. Of all the ranges in which the wild bunch was interested, this was the nearest Miles City-the most accessible, the most closely watched, the best protected. How many cattle he could transfer from this range to the starving Canadian Sioux, Roper did not know; but it was his hope to raise such a conspicuous and stubborn disturbance as would mask the operations of the rest of the wild bunch, and raiding to westward. permit Pierce to work unimpeded.

"The fourteen of us will split seven ways," Roper told them now. "I figure Lasham's look-out camp for this range is about twelve miles southeast. We'll comb every way but that way. I'm not telling you how to gather stock. Hunt 'em like you know how to hunt 'em. Move out one day's ride, spotting your cow bunches. Next day pick 'em up and work 'em this way. And on the third day throw your gather against a coulee or something where one man can hold 'em, and the other man of each pair ride back and meet me here. I figure this range is heavy with cattle. I don't see any reason why two good men can't



thousand Indians had gathered near the Canadian border to take every beef that was driven across. Shoshone Wilce, one of Roper's men, told Jody that her father's life was in danger, so she rode to warn him. He was surprised to see her.

"Yes, mam, I kind of did, I guess; | easy throw together three hundred head in a couple of days. That Miss Gordon. If you'll just give me gives us a nice bunch of anyway two thousand. The more the better -but with two thousand we'll make our drive.

> They slept that night under the slowly falling snow. Roper himself made coffee and routed out his riders two hours before the first light. They caught their horses in the dark, with hands that fumbled the stiffened ropes; then split off in pairs to comb the range.

For two days Roper watched the enemy camp while the snow held on, piling a deeper and deeper mat; then on the third day he returned to the rendezvous as the roundup men began straggling in.

Tex Long was the first one back. "This range is plumb solid with stock," Tex declared. "How many head do you figure me and Kid Johnson scraped up, just us two?" "Well," Roper grunted, "upwards

of a dozen-I should hope." "Better'n six hundred head! Lord Almighty, Bill! Figuring they're worth twenty dollars apiece, and allowing that all the other boys do as good, we're liable to get out of here with around eighty thousand dollars worth of cattle! You realize that?"

But Roper was thinking of the letter in his pocket; the appeal of a girl who needed him in some unknown way, and who did not even know why he couldn't come.

All the next day they worked to throw the little bunches together into a trail herd. Not all of them had done as well as Tex Long and Kid Johnson, but most of them had done well enough. And then, at last, the first herd privateered in the Great Raid began to roll., A long unsteadily moving river of cattle poured northward, a dark welter in the thinning fall of the snow. White-faces mostly, blocky and heavy, well wintered on the prairie hay-Roper counted two thousand six hundred

Pressed hard by the heavy force of cowboys, the cattle bawled but humped along northward into the valley of the Prairie Elk.

Rounding up within a day's ride of Miles City itself, Roper's men had taken this herd almost out of the very corrals of Lasham's outposts; and yet, so far as any of them knew, that swift-moving drive represented a harder blow than had ever been struck a cattleman in a single raid. In all their months of effort the winter wild bunch had been unable to achieve an equal reprisal upon Lasham, and now they could hardly believe their own success. They forced the cattle hard, driving through the clogging snow at a rate incredible to men accustomed to handling market herds.

The cattle that broke the way through the snow kept dropping back, blown and tired; but as fast as they failed, others were forced forward to take their places. Longhorned, stag-legged steers of the old Texas strain fought the riders. breaking the heavy column repeatedly in their wild-eyed thrusts for ful Montana outfits in the Great liberty, and these were allowed to get away. Gaunt, weak cattle lagged back, unable to keep up even under riders; they also were allowed to in that first day, the side riders swept in enough north-roaming cattle to more than make up the loss.

Roper went with the herd as far as Circle Horse Creek; but when they had forded the shallows, crashing through the rotten ice, he turned back. With him he took four men slowly now, plodding doggedly and the remaining eight men could hold them to their way. What was needed now was work of a different kind, and Roper thought he knew how that was to be done.

It was his intention to fight a rear guard action-not only for this first herd, which would be delivered within the week to the Indians who would spirit it away, but for the protection of all the rest of the wild bunch

But now as he neared the head of the Little Dry, a rider came dropping down a long slope upon a racing horse. His carbine was held above his ragged sombrero in sign of peace: and as he came near they saw that it was Hat Crick Tommy. Roper jumped his horse out to

meet Hat Crick. "What is it? Is there any word? Did she-" Tommy's face was haggard with "She's gone!" he jerked fatigue.

out. "She's been to Miles City-and now she's gone!" "Gone? Gone where?" "Nobody knows. She's missingdisappeared-strayed or lost or rustled, I don't know which! Her tather's wild crazy, and every K-G

outfit in the north is combing the trails-' Roper sat staring for a full half minute. Then his hands fumbled for his reata, shook out the loop. "Turn that roan pony! I've got to

have a fresh horse (TO BE CONTINUED)

# by Lynn Chambers



'A PICNICKING WE WILL GO . . . ' (See Recipes Below)

#### IT'S PICNIC TIME!

The soft, sunny days of late May and early June tempt even the most conscientious to turn their backs on work, and, since "the only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it," a picnic is the answer!

One reason for the nation-wide popularity of picnics is that they're easy on the lady



sliced tomatoes and green onions for salad . corn - on - the cob, if a vegetable is wanted ("roasting ears" may be cooked in

hot coals, allowing 20 minutes to a half hour for the best flavor) . . taste-tempting cheeseburgers . . lemonade, milk or coffee, or all . and dessert-it's as simple as that!

No dishes to wash afterward . . no table linen for the laundry bag . . in fact, it's almost a case of "no work and all play!"

For that "something hot" which is a picnic "must," I suggest plump, juicy cheeseburgers. If you're picnicking in the woods, your array of 'burgers probably won't look like the above picture, but they'll no doubt taste the same. If you are entertaining the family or guests at a "back yard" supper, you can serve a large tray of cheeseburgers with

toes, and tall glasses of milk or iced tea-they'll love the combination!

assorted relishes, shoe-string pota-

\*Cheeseburgers With Piquant Sauce. 2 pounds ground beef

1/2 cup milk 1 teaspoon salt

Dash pepper 34 pound American cheese

1/4 pound butter buttered buns

Mix ground beef with milk, salt and pepper. Form 8 patties of meat about 3 inches in diameter. Cut 8 slices of cheese slightly smaller than size of meat patties. Melt butter in skillet and fry patties slowly for about 10 to 15 minutes, turning several times during the cooking period. Place on buttered toasted buns, spread with piquant sauce and top with a slice of cheese. (If prepared indoors, place under broiler flame until cheese begins to melt). Serves 8.

# Piquant Sauce.

1/2 cup chili sauce 1/4 cup pickle relish

1 tablespoon prepared mustard, or 1 tablespoon horseradish

Mix all ingredients together well. If a more highly seasoned sauce is preferred, a teaspoon of Worcestershire sauce may be added.

Or you may want to try fried eggs and hamburger, sandwich style. Cook hamburgers, set aside to keep hot. Fry eggs in same skillet, and serve eggs atop the hamburgers.

# LYNN SAYS:

When hamburgers are included in the picnic menu, form the patties of ground meat, mixed with minced onion and seasoning, before you leave home. Place between waxed paper, and they're ready to cook when the fire is ready.

Hash goes upstage when it is used as a bun filler. Scoop out rolls, (leftover or fresh) butter insides and pile full of savory cooked hash. Brush top with melted butter or gravy and bake 15 minutes in moderate oven. Ideal for out-of-door suppers.

To "dress-up" your picnic billof-fare, there are colorful oilcloth and/or paper tablecloths and napkins. You can find them designed to carry out nearly any theme you so desire. And, as an added tip, in case you're planning to spread an oilcloth covering on the ground, attach it to a pair of old curtain rollers. They'll prevent even the strongest wind from blowing it away!

Good news for picnic lovers are the new "lunch" kits. In them you'll find two one-quart yacuum bottles, plus a metal lunch box. The bottles carry their own cups, nested within their screw tops. The nicest thing, however, is the leg which converts the inside lid into a table.

#### THIS WEEK'S MENU

Bonfire Banquet \*Cheeseburgers With Piquant Sauce Sliced Tomatoes and Green

Onions Raw Carrots Potatoes or Green Corn, Roasted over Hot Coals Cup Cakes, Pie (not juicy,

please) or Fruit Coffee or Milk in a Thermos, or Lemonade ·Recipe given.

Here are more let's-have-a-picnic suggestions:

Cole Slaw.

(To Make "On Location") 3 cups finely shredded cabbage 1/2 cup mayonnaise 3 tablespoons french dressing 2 tablespoons thick cream

Mix the mayonnaise, french dressing and cream together and mix into the cabbage just before serving. Add more salt if necessary.

Old-Fashioned Potato Salad. cups diced, boiled potatoes

3 hard-cooked eggs, chopped 1/4 cup finely minced sweet pickle 2 to 4 tablespoons minced onion 1/4 cup pimiento, chopped Salt, pepper and celery salt 1 cup cooked salad dressing

2 tablespoons mayonnaise Mix all ingredients together lightly. Let stand, chilling, for at least



1 hour. If desired, the onion and potato may be marinated over night in french dressing before being mixed with other

ingredients. Variations: Meats, such as diced tongue, ham or frankfurters may be added to the standard recipe, and seasonings of chives and green pepper may be included.

#### Marshmallow-Graham Cracker Dessert Sandwich.

For each person, allow 1/2 milk chocolate candy bar, 2 graham crackers and 2 marshmallows. Toast marshmallows, then place them on the chocolate candy that is on one graham cracker. Put the second graham cracker on top and it is ready to eat. The marshmallows should be hot and soft.

While your picnic group may be addicted to frankfurters in their own sweet, natural style, you might like to try a new trick. Split the large frankfurters down their middles, spread with rich, brown prepared mustard, fill with chopped sweet pickle and turn them over to the "cooking department" to broil. They'll prove ever so popular!

Here's a good one to cook in a kettle: put in one potato for each person, and cover with water. When potatoes are almost tender, add frankfurters (enough for everybody) and heat thoroughly. With buttered buns, ketchup, and perhaps some fresh fruit for dessert, you have a simple and extremely tasty picnic meal.

If it's ice cream you're planning for dessert, I'd suggest you use an

ice cream freezer (little son can do the grinding before "starting" time), or pack refrigerator - made ice cream in dry ice. Here's a recipe for a favorite

that should please everyone.

Chocolate Ice Cream. 1 square unsweetened chocolate 3 cup sweetened condensed milk % cup water

Melt chocolate in top of double

½ teaspoon powdered mace 1/2 cup whipping cream

boiler. Add sweetened condensed milk and stir over boiling water for five minutes until mixture thickens Add water and mix well. Chill thoroughly. Add mace. Whip cream to custard-like consistency and fold into chilled mixture. Pour into freezing pan. Place in freezing unit of refrigerator. After mixture is about half frozen, remove from refrigerator. Scrape mixture from sides and bottom of pan. Beat until smooth, but not until melted Smooth out and replace in freezing unit until frozen for serving.

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)





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