

LORD OF THE DESERT

By PAUL DE LAMRY

CHAPTER III—Continued.

Bertha Lyle had come all the way from Scotland to look after an estate supposed to have been left her by her father. He and a brother had come to America eighteen years before, when she was a mere child. At the age of two years she had lost her mother, and her father had placed her in school and come to America to drown his troubles and make his fortune. Before he had been here ten years the report came that he had been killed by Indians. This was shortly after the report that he and his brother had inherited an immense fortune from a brother in New York, and while neither Bertha nor her friends could ever get any information concerning what became of this fortune, her uncle in America had supplied her with plenty of funds to complete her education and meet all her wants. He wrote her that they had invested their inheritance together in American property and that the speculation had proved a failure, and that while her father had left assets above his abilities there was nothing to speak of coming to her. Out of pure benevolence, however, he, the uncle would see that his niece should not suffer for the necessities of life.

Economizing the funds he had sent her from time to time until her savings amounted to considerable sums started for America not informing her uncle of her coming until she reached New York City, from which place she wrote him of the probable date that she would reach Boise City Army Post.

Impatient waiting for the arrival of an escort from the interior and started with a pack train for the interior. On the night in which the conversation at the beginning of this chapter opened, the pack train had reached a point on Snake river on the Old Oregon Trail near the Oregon and Idaho line. Fortunately, on the same night, the escort consisting of cowboys, under the leadership of an expert frontiersman, met her at this place.

Both parties had camped in a small valley near the river, surrounded by mountains, covered with rocks and boulders. The pack train consisted of thirty mules and two wagons, while the escort consisted of ten men, besides its leader and a dozen horses, one of which was used exclusively for a pack horse, and another was brought along for Bertha to ride.

Tired and worn out by the hardships of the trail, the packers had huddled out their mules, prepared their meal, and gone to bed early. The mulemen of the escort, while not so fatigued, had prepared for retiring early also, partly to keep from disturbing their neighbors and partly to be refreshed for the following day's journey, for from this point the pack train would continue to the west. Bertha and her escort would take a course over the trailless plains and mountains to the south.

After she had retired to a bed of straw, this girl found a comfortable home in Scotland had plenty to think about before she fell asleep. This barren plain and mountains, which she had passed during the past few days, and the trackless desert before her looked gloomy enough, but the probable attack from Indians and a long trip through a barren country to her destination were calculated to increase her anxiety, while the reference of the leader of the escort to the danger from Indians and the same tribe who, it was alleged, had murdered her father thickened the mantle of gloom that hung about her, and besides, she did not like the appearance of the man under whose charge she had fallen. Woman's intuition had properly aroused her suspicions on this point.

How long she had been asleep she did not know when awakened by the hoarse yell that had ever pierced her ears, and these intermingled with the discharging of firearms and a din of oaths and shouts as if a thousand demons were engaged in war. And it was a war, and the men fought like demons! The packers and cowboys, though outnumbered five to one, stood their ground until the struggle became a hand to hand one, and until she had been snatched from her bed and dragged a short distance and bound on the back of a horse, and was being rushed out through a deep canyon in the mountains, surrounded by a band of Indian warriors, each seemingly claiming her as his prize, did she fully realize that her people had been lost and that the red skins had won.

It was fortunate for Bertha that she did not remove her clothing upon retiring that night, and that she placed her shoes on her feet upon being first awakened, for the chill night air of that attitude even penetrated these.

CHAPTER IV.

The Chase.

The following morning showed the effects of the Indian raid. Two of the packers lay dead upon the ground, their scalps taken, while one of the escort had been killed, and three mortally wounded. Not a horse or mule remained in the vicinity. These, an important object of the attack, had been driven away and treasured more highly even, than the fair captive, whom they had taken, for stock of all kinds was scarce with them. They had been forced into the rimrocks and lava beds by the United States soldiers, and the scanty vegetation there had caused their animals to disappear almost as rapidly as the pangs of hunger, which prompted the decaying race in butchering and eating them. While viewing the band of fat mules and horses from the crevices of the rimrocks the previous evening, the eagle eyes of old Egan, the chief, saw Bertha Lyle in the camp and she was indeed a rare picture in this section of country, and especially so after the proposition that had come from

the lips of Martin Lyle, the Lord of the Desert. As it were, it was the killing of two birds with one stone with the chief. It was the obtaining of animals for his hungry and hard beset tribe and obtaining a prize of far more personal value, which meant more wealth for his tribe and a white squaw for his wigwam.

After the surprise of the attack of the previous night the men rallied to defend the camp. But it was too late, the work was done. While the main body of the red men had charged on the camp, detachments of the party had not been idle. They corralled the horses and had them on the road, ready to join the main band with their captives. They disappeared as silently as they came and the handful of whites that still survived knew that it was useless to follow them in the dark, besides, they did not know but that a reindeer lurked behind every boulder on the mountain sides.

They had spent the remainder of the night in ministering to the wounded, and preparing the dead for burial. They were in a predicament indeed. They had neither horses to pursue the marauding band of Indians or to continue their journey. While some of the members of the party argued at the fate of the white girl, were willing and anxious to pursue the Indians on foot, all saw the futility of such an attempt, and the leader of the escort showed no concern about her capture, no inclination to follow her captors, but rather cursed the fate of being left afoot. The morning was consumed in burying the dead and the afternoon in reconnoitering. The trail of the Indians was discovered, which showed that they had gone in a southerly direction, a course that led to the east of the stone house, on Mount Juniper.

Fortunately, that night another pack train arrived from the west. It had a few surplus horses, and as these men of pioneer days were always willing to lend a helping hand to the distressed, they supplied the stranded party with a few horses. The straggled packers returned with this train to Fort Boise, while four members of the escort with the daring equal to those times, and against the admonition of their leader, entered into a solemn oath that they would follow the Indians and would never return until they had recaptured Bertha Lyle and placed her in the stone house with her uncle. Early the following morning, armed and provisioned and mounted these four started out on the trail of the bandit Indians. The packers moved on, taking the wounded cowboys with them, all of whom died and were buried at Boise City. Dan Follett and the others started for the Stone House.

The four cowboys who went in pursuit of the Indians were familiar with that part of the desert, and being on comparatively fresh horses made better time than the Indians, so that by night they came to where the red men had stopped to prepare their dinner the same day. Each camping place of the Indians was marked by the carcass of a mule, for hungry as they were, and their party was so large that it required a full grown animal for every meal. Arising bright and early the following morning they reached the camp of the Indians of the previous night and came upon the Indians at noon. The latter were conscious of their power and boldly set their dinner in full view of the whites, and took their time about moving on, shouting out words of defiance as they went.

The brave four were rewarded by seeing



Old Egan saw Bertha in camp.

ing Bertha from the rimrocks, still well and unharmed, but it was with a shudder that they beheld the attention that she received from the leader of the band.

The Indians numbered about forty warriors and were a set of as ugly and vicious looking fellows as ever won the unenviable name of "Redskins." The white could do nothing but follow at a distance with the hope that something might transpire by which they would be enabled to relieve the young woman from her dilemma. But now that they were discovered by the Indians their prospects seemed the less flattering than when they first started out.

Strategem was their only hope. To make the Indians believe that they had abandoned the chase and, thus throwing them off their guard, approach the camp by stealth at night and rescue the woman was the plan they formed.

So in full view of the Indians they saluted them as if bidding them good bye, and turned and rode away as if they had abandoned the chase.

But as soon as they were fairly hidden behind the rimrocks at the crest of the mountain overlooking the plain in which the Indians had camped they turned down a gulch, and continued, cautiously, traveling in a direction parallel to that taken by the Indians.

As already described, travel among the rimrocks is difficult. Opening up the way are few, and subwalls lead off in many directions. The traveler must needs go a zigzag course and frequently travel many miles out of his course to reach a given point, so that when night came the little pursuing party had lost sight of the objects of its pursuit, and the succession of walls of rimrocks and level plains lay alike in every direction.

There was but one hope and that was when it grew darker to abandon their horses and climb to the top of the highest rimrocks and try to discover the campfires of the marauders. Selecting a spot near where a seep of stagnant water flowed from the rocks, with which they were compelled to quench their thirst, they pitched a temporary camp and waited.

As the night grew darker the stars grew brighter and the wild howls of the coyote rang in the distance. Interspersed now and then with the wild cry of the hungry mountain lion.

CHAPTER V.

Two Villains.

It is the fourth night after the Indians attacked the pack train. At the Stone House the Lord of the Desert sits at his accustomed place, sipping from a goblet of old Scotch whiskey. Of late years he has done but little besides drink from the flowing bowl. One day he deadens all sense of feeling, to rise the following with a keener appetite and a conscience more stinging. On this night his eyelids are heavier than usual, his eyes look more glassy and the grimaces are deeper in his face.

No wonder, if Dan Follett, the Canadian Frenchman, has followed his instructions and old Egan, the Indian chief, has kept his eyes open and been prompt in action, another crime had been added to his life. He stares now the vacant darkness and this, so still and gloomy on the desert, reminds him of a distant cave in the rimrocks, and the picture there causes a shudder to come over the great frame of Martin Lyle, the Lord of the Desert.

The welcome bark of the dogs, announces the arrival of one who is not a stranger. In his eagerness, the Lord of the Desert rises and paces the floor, now and then stopping at the arm chair and taking a sip from the goblet. Presently a lank form enters the door. His dark heavy eyebrows, and the natural scowl upon his face, his careless ambling walk, depict the character of the man at a glance. But nothing ever tells the inmost thoughts of Dan Follett. Whether after victory or defeat, or during anger in a happy mood, the oily black eyes of this man never change. It is only when he speaks or acts that his mood is known.

Upon entering the house, and after greeting his Lord, he soon unburdens himself.

"I saw from the smoke above the distant rimrocks the evening before," said Follett, "that old Egan was ready for action, but in spite of my efforts the clash came in a way that several lives of our men were lost. I tried to have the surprise so complete that the girl and animals should be taken away without the loss of a life, but our boys were on their feet instantly and fought bravely, and it was certainly a miracle that any of them escaped after they engaged such odds." Then he detailed the circumstances of the fight as the reader knows them.

"Do you think there is any chance of those four dare-devils rescuing the girl?" inquired Lyle.

"None in the world," replied the Frenchman. "They will either lose their lives by their foolishness or come in in a few days starved out, as I saw to the fact myself that they took but few provisions with them."

"How did the girl take her captivity?" inquired the Lord of the Desert.

"I only saw her for a moment by a flash of the campfire after she was secured, and she wore a bold look of firmness and defiance, as if she feared not even the devils into whose hands she had fallen."

"She's a Lyle!" muttered the Lord of the Desert.

"This is a costly affair, Martin," insisted Follett.

"Yes, I know," replied the man of wealth, "but old Egan wanted animals for his men and would not do the other work, you know, without the horses as he said his men would not be satisfied with taking the girl alone."

"The twenty-five head which I am to deliver at Gray Butte and the forty head they got the other night," said Follett, "are a pretty heavy tax, besides the men we have lost. Better if you had let the girl come on and made away with her as I did with her father."

"That would never have done," replied Lyle. "The notoriety of her rescue here would have led to an investigation, but now that the Indians have done the work it is a natural turn of affairs in this country and the American 'Uncle Sam'—will reward Egan and his warriors by giving them a reservation and feeding and educating them. The English would reward the whole gang by hanging them. But enough of this. Tomorrow arrange to deliver the twenty-five cayuses to the old brute, but before you do it require positive proof that he's performed his part of the contract, he has to kill her, you know!"

"And the deed to the Spring Creek Valley," replied Follett, "don't forget that. While Egan must be rewarded for his damnable deeds, I must be paid for my bloody ones!" and he gave the Lord of the Desert a piercing look like a coward.

At this time Follett's companion came in from attending to the horses and the three repaired to the dining room, while the owner of the Stone House sat down and drank and thought, and drank and thought.

(To be Continued.)

A \$5,000,000 Palace.

Seven hundred artisans, backed by Clarence H. Mackay's millions and directed by Mrs. Mackay, have set about building near the little village of Roslyn, L. I., the most beautiful country home in America. Already the work is well under way, and the wilderness of

wooded hills is fast becoming a land of perfect enchantment. The vastness of Mr. Mackay's plan is fairly illustrated by the fact that his estate is almost as large as Central Park, and that the estimate of the cost in the end will closely border upon \$5,000,000. The gateway, or lodge, alone will cost \$150,000. The structure is of granite, and is 228 feet long from east to west and 100 feet broad from north to south. It will in every way be a palace.



THE PUMPKIN.

Oh, greenly and fair in the lands of the sun,
The vines of the gourd and the rich melon run,
And the rook and the tree and the cottage
With broad leaves all greenness and blossoms
all gold,
Like that which of Nineveh's prophet once
grew,
While he waited to know that his warning
was true,
And longed for the storm-cloud, and listened
in vain
For the rush of the whirlwind and red fire-
rain.

On the banks of the Xenil, the dark Spanish
maiden
Comes up with the fruit of the tangled vine
laden,
And the Creole of Cuba laughs out to be-
hold
Through the orange leaves shining the broad
arcs of gold;
Yet with deeper delight from his home in
the north,
On the fields of his harvest the Yankee
looks forth,

Where the crock-necks are coiling and reel-
ing
low fruit shaken,
And the sun of September melts down on
his vines.

Ah! on Thanksgiving Day, when from east
and from west
From north and from south come the pil-
grims
and guest,
When the gray-haired New-Englander sees
round his board
The old broken links of affection restored,
When the care-worn man seeks his moth-
er or more,
And the worn matron smiles where the girl
smiled before,
What moistens the lip and what brightens
the eye?
What calls back the past, like the rich
pumpkin pie?

Oh, fruit loved of boyhood! the old days re-
calling:
When the wood grapes were purple and
brown
nuts were falling,
When wild, ugly faces were curbed in their
sin,
Gleaming out through the dark with a sae-
dle
within!

A THANKSGIVING FOOTBALL STORY

IT was Charlie Town's first year at the Valley "Prep" School, and he had made the varsity! This is a most unusual thing for a freshman to do, for most of them are away below the average of strength and weight necessary to the "line" and "backs," who, as a rule, are two or three years older, and that at a period of growth when two or three years permit a wonderful increase in bone, sinew and muscle. Still, by virtue of his athletic activity and phenomenal sprinting abilities, Charlie was a fixture at the all-important position of quarterback.

When the door opened and he was evicted by his classmates, less fortunate; his companionship sought by the seniors, and—oh! supreme pinnacle of joy—he was praised by the coach and the principal.

"I tell you it is a perfect shame," growled Barnes. "Here you are the only freshman who has ever made quarter on our varsity, and now, just as we are to have the hardest game of the season on our hands, and not another fellow who can pass the ball without fumbling and give signals without mixing them up, you go to go home and eat turkey with your father! Where do you think we come in, anyway?"

"I don't care," said Charlie.

"I guess he's come up here and eat it!" said the now angry Barnes.

"I guess he can put up with the rest of us will we, can't he?"

"There's an epidemic," explained Charlie. "Every infant that could manage it in our little town has the diphtheria or whooping cough or something, and those that are not sick are trying their best to catch it, and my father is the only doctor in the place. It is out of the question for him to leave, and we have never yet failed to be together on Thanksgiving Day. You see, there are only two left in the door tonight, and you, my friend, fellow entered just in time to have the last words. He was the Captain of the team. He took a seat on the edge of the narrow bed and eyed Charlie sternly. "What's this I hear," he said, "about your not playing in the game with Millville on Thanksgiving Day?"

"I have to go home to spend Thanksgiving, that's all," answered Charlie.

"Barnes has told me how you feel about it," continued the Captain, "but see here, Town, we have been Millville four years straight, although always by a narrow margin. Now, we haven't a chance this year without you, and you desert us just now, when we have not been defeated this season, right here in the face of the very hardest game of all, will you?"

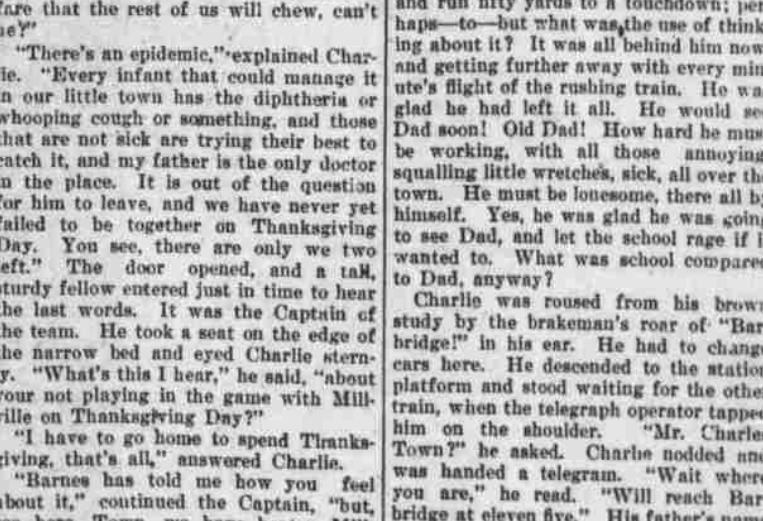
"I must go, Dick," cried Charlie in despair. "I don't want to be forgiven if I did not."

"But how about my sister, your 'opp'?" She has counted upon your taking her to the game and then seeing you do all sorts of things to Millville, making forty-yard runs around the end and goals from the field, you know. Have you thought about that?"

"I haven't thought of anything else for a week," groaned Charlie, "but I can't help it. I shall have to tell her at supper tonight."

"Well, in that case we can't rank you as one of the varsity," said the Captain, rising. "You will have to go on the playing lists as substitute, that's all," and he went out, closing the door not too gently behind him.

The Valley Preparatory School was a co-educational institute, and the scholars of both sexes only met at classes and at the long tables in the dining room. The boys and girls were seated on opposite sides of these tables, and the owner of that particular pair of bright eyes smiling at one from across the table was known as "my opp," a more or less affectionate abbreviation for "opposite." Charlie sat at the training table, where, of course, no girls were allowed, but before he had been elevated to this position he had had for his "opp" Millie Barr, the Captain's sister, and the prettiest girl in the school. Charlie's place, opposite here, was still vacant, and he slid into it at supper that night and remained there in conversation with her until the meal was served, when he went to his place at the training table with the rest. She had not grown angry and scolded at his resolution like his team, or tried to ar-



gue him out of his intention, as did her brother, but quite agreed that he must go to his father, although she did not see that she should be greatly disappointed by his absence.

Charlie started upon his homeward journey in a very unsettled state of mind. He felt that the entire school considered him a deserter, and if they lost—well, he would be blamed for the stigma of defeat. How hard he had worked for his place on the varsity and how proud he had been of it—the only freshman quarterback that had ever played on Valley School! Then, he had given the signals, always like clockwork, with a smoothness and precision that got the ball in play so rapidly and behind such perfect interference that the broken list of victories was, after all, a result to be expected if he did not have that list marred by a defeat, and at the hands of Millville, their keenest rival! His muscles tightened at the thought of the grim pleasure of the struggle. No, Black could not handle the team. He had never grasped the signals as he should, and he lacked all the speed of the other players with the necessary accuracy, either, although in this respect he was much better than Anderson, the other "qb." Well, Valley School would be defeated at last, and he might have guided the team to victory. And what would Millie Barr think? It had been very nice about her, but quite sure that she should go home at this time. But she must have been fearfully disappointed. Well, perhaps she did not mind so much, after all. Some other fellow would take her. He gritted his teeth at the thought of that. Then, perhaps, she would not mind so much if he were to go to the game. He had been at the game, and he had seen her there. He had seen her with the necessary accuracy, either, although in this respect he was much better than Anderson, the other "qb." Well, Valley School would be defeated at last, and he might have guided the team to victory. And what would Millie Barr think? 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