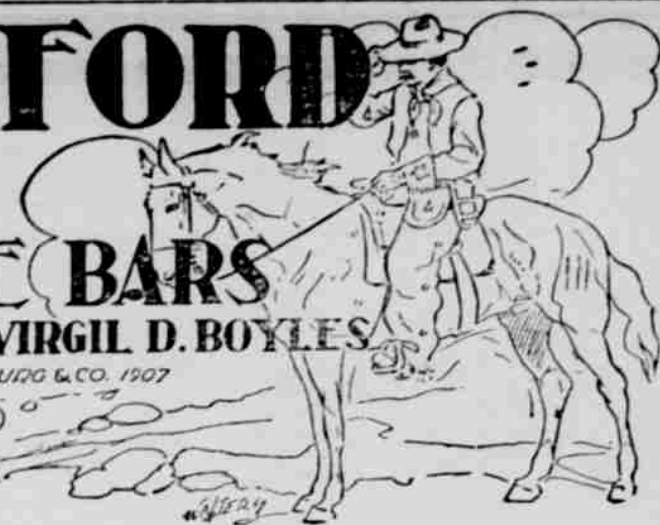


LANGFORD OF THE THREE BARS

BY KATE AND VIRGIL D. BOYLES

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vously apprehensive of plunging her feet into a pool of water. It had not been the pitcher after all. Even after the window was closed there seemed to be much air in the room. The blind still flapped, though at longer intervals. If it really turned cold, how were they to live in that barn-like room, she and Mary? She thought of the campers out on the flat and shivered. She looked out of the window musily a moment. It was dark. She wondered if Gordon had come home. Of course he was home. It must be nearly morning. Her feet were getting cold, so she crept back into bed. The next thing of which she was conscious, Mary was shaking her excitedly.

"What is it?" she asked, sleepily. "Louise! There's a fire somewhere! Listen!"

Some one rushed quickly through the hall; others followed, knocking against the walls in the darkness. Then the awful, heart-clutching clang of a bell rang out—near, insistent, metallic. It was the meeting-house bell. There was no other in the town. The girls sprang to the floor. The thought had found swift lodgment in the mind of each that the hotel was on fire, and in that moment Louise thought of the poisoned meat that had once been served to some arch-enemies of the gang whose chief was now on trial for his liberty. So quickly does the brain work under stress of great crises, that even before she had her shoes and stockings on, she found herself wondering who was the marked victim this time. Not Williston—he was dead. Not Gordon—he slept in his own room back of the office. Not Langford—he was bunking with his friend in that same room. Jim Munson? Or was the judge the proscribed one? He was not a corrupt judge. He could not be bought. It might be he. Mary had gone to the window.

"Louise!" she gasped. "The court-house!"

True. The cloudy sky was reddened above the poor little temple of justice where for day and weeks the tide of human interest of a big part of a big state—ay, a big part of all the north-west country, maybe—had been steadily setting in and had reached its culmination only yesterday, when a gray-eyed, drooping-shouldered man



"Won't Save a Thing."

concealed the limitations of her attire. "What are you going to do?" asked Mary, also putting on clothes which were easy of adjustment. She had never gone to fires in the old days before she had come to South Dakota; but if Louise went—gentle, highbred Louise—why, she would go too, that was all there was about it. She had constituted herself Louise's guardian in this rough life that must be so alien to the eastern girl. Louise had been very good to her. Louise's startled cry about her note books carried little understanding to her. She was not used to court and its ways.

They hastened out into the hallway and down the stairs. They saw no one whom they knew, though many were still dodging out from unexpected places and hurrying down the street. It seemed impossible that the inconveniently built, diminutive prairie hotel could accommodate so many people. Louise found herself wondering where they had been packed away. The men, carelessly dressed as they

would want to save some valuable books he had been reading in his of-ficial quarters. So they went out into

the bleak and windy night. They were immediately enveloped in a wild gust that nearly swept them off their feet as it came tearing down the street. They clung together for a moment.

"It'll burn like hell in this wind!" some one cried, as a bunch of men hurried past them. The words were hurled out of his mouth.

"Flames were bursting out of the front windows upstairs. The sky was all aghast. Sparks were tossed madly southward by the wind. There was grave danger for buildings other than the one already doomed. The roar of the wind and the flames was well-nigh deafening. The back windows and stairs seemed clear.

"Hurry, Mary, hurry!" cried Louise, above the roar, and pressed forward, stumbling and gasping for the breath that the wild wind coveted. It was not far they had to go. There was a jam of men in the yard. More were coming up. But there was nothing to do. Men shook their heads and shrugged their shoulders and watched the progress of the inevitable with the placidity engendered of the potent: "It can't be helped." But some things might have been saved that were not saved had the first on the grounds not rested so securely on that quieting inevitability. As the girls came within the crowded circle of light, they overheard something of a gallant attempt on the part of somebody to save the county records—they did not hear whether or no the attempt had been successful. They made their way to the rear. It was still dark.

"Louise! What are you going to do?" cried Mary, in consternation. There were few people on this side. Louise put her hand deliberately to the door-knob. It gave to her pressure—the door swung open. Some one stumbled out blindly and leaned against the wall for a moment, his hands over his eyes.

"I can't do it," he said, aloud. "I can't reach the vaults."

Louise slipped past him and was within the doorway, closely followed by the frantic Mary.

The man cried out sharply, and stretched out a detaining hand. "Are you crazy? Come back!"

"Mr. Gordon!" cried Louise, with a little sob of relief. "Is it really you? Let me go—quick—my note books!"

A thick cloud of smoke at that moment came rolling down the back stairs. It enveloped them. It went down their throats and made them cough. The man, throwing an arm over the shoulders of the slender girl who had started up after the first back of the smoke had passed away, shielded her gently but firmly outside.

"Don't let her come, Mary," he called back, clearly. "I'll get the note books—if I can." Then he was up—the smoke-wreathed stairs.

and throat. "I've swallowed a ton," he said, recovering himself quickly. "I couldn't get them, Louise." He did not know he called her so.

"Oh, what does it matter?" cried Louise, earnestly. "Only forgive me for sending you."

"As I remember it, I sent myself," said Gordon with a humorous smile. "and, I am afraid, tumbled one little girl rather unceremoniously down the stairs. Did I hurt you?" There was a caressing cadence in the question that he could not for the life of him keep out of his voice.

"I did not even know I tumbled. How did you get back?" said Louise, tremulously.

"Who opened the door?" counter-queried Gordon, remembering. "The wind must have blown it shut. I was blinded—I couldn't find it—I couldn't breathe. I didn't have sense enough to know it was shut, but I couldn't have helped myself anyway. I croaked for it as long as I could without breathing. Then I guess I must have gone off a little for I was sprawling on the floor of the lower hall when I felt a breath of air playing over me. Somebody must have opened the door—because I am pretty sure I had fainted or done some foolish thing."

Louise was silent. She was thankful—thankful. God had been very good to her. It had been given to her to do this thing. She had not meant to do it—she had not known what she did; enough that was done.

"It was Louise," spoke up Mary, "and I—tried to hold her back!" So she accused herself.

"But I didn't do it on purpose," said Louise, with shining eyes. "I—I—"

"Yes, you—" prompted Gordon, looking at her with tender intentness. "I guess I was trying to come after you," she confessed. "It was very—foolish."

The rear grounds were rapidly filling up. Like children following a band-wagon, the crowd surged toward the new excitement of the discovered extension of the fire. Gordon drew a long breath.

"I thank God for your—foolishness," he said, simply, smiling the smile his friends loved him for.

CHAPTER XVIII. An Unconventional Tea Party.

As the flames broke through the roof, Langford came rushing up where the group stood a little apart from the press.

"What's the trouble, girls?" he asked Gordon, quietly.

"I have something to tell you," said Langford, in a low voice. "Come quick—let's go back to your rooms. Why, girls—"

"I'll be right back," he said, with quiet decision. She had caught a glimpse of Red Sanderson's face through the crowd, and she thought he had leered at her. She had been haunted by the vague feeling that she must have known the man who had attempted to carry her off—that dreadful night; but she had never been able to concentrate the abstract, fleeting impressions into comprehensive substance—never until she had seen that sear, and glancing away in terror saw that Langford, too, had seen; but she was not brave enough to lose herself and Louise in the crowd where that man was. She could not. He had leered at Louise, too, last night at supper. They could not ask the protector of Gordon and Langford back to the hotel then, when Langford's handsome, tanned face was white with the weight of what he had to tell.

"It will be best," he agreed, unexpectedly. "Come—we must hurry!"

It was Williston's "little girl" whom he took under his personal protection, diving up the street in the teeth of the gale which blew colder every moment, with a force and strength that kept Mary half the time off her feet. A gentler knight was Gordon—though as manly. All was lark around the premises. There was no one lurking near. Everybody was dancing attendance on the court-house holocaust. Gordon felt for his keys.

"How good it is to get out of the wind," whispered Louise. This proceeding smacked so much of the mysterious that whispering followed as a natural sequence.

They stepped within. It was inky black.

"Lock the door," said Langford, in a low voice.

Gordon complied, surprised, but asking no question. He knew his friend, and had faith in his judgment. Then he lighted a lamp that stood on his desk.

"Why did you do that?" asked Louise, gravely.

"Lock the door." "I don't know," he answered, honestly. "I didn't think you would notice the click. Ask Paul."

"I'll explain in a minute," said Langford. He stepped to the windows and drew the blinds closely.

"Now that I have you safe," he said lightly, "I'll confess I had an old woman's scare. It came to me that as long as you are not, strictly speaking, on kind and loving terms with—every one west of the river—and this being such an all-round nasty night anyway, why, I'd just spirit you home and give the charged atmosphere a chance of clearing a little."

Gordon looked at him steadily a moment. His face did not pale. Yet he knew that Langford had leered—or suspected—more than he intended to tell—then. It was good to see him shrug his shoulders in unconcern for the sake of the two white-faced girls who sat there in his stiff office chairs.

"You are an old duffer, Paul," he said, in pretended annoyance. "You treat me like a child. I won't stand it always. You'll see. Some day I'll rebel—and then—"

"Meanwhile, I'll just trot these ladies back to the hotel," said Langford. "But you must promise to keep your head inside. We're fixtures until we have that promise."

"What, lock me up and run off with—all the ladies? I guess not! Why didn't we round up that way, I'd like to know? This isn't Utah, Paul. You can't have both."

DEATH'S CRUEL DART

Makes a Widow of Theodora Shonts, Only Eleven Weeks a Duke's Wife.

HUSBAND SUDDENLY STRICKEN

Dies in His Wife's Arms at Their Paris Apartments.

Heart Gives Way Shortly After Dinner and He Is Unconscious From Beginning to the Fatal End.

Paris, April 25.—In the presence of his bride of less than three months, Emmanuel Theodora Leonaud, Marquis de Chaulnes, died at the Hotel Langford, in the Rue de Valenciennes, at 11 p. m. He had been in the hospital for several days, his physicians pronounced the disease to be a fatal one. The duke's death was a surprise to all who knew him. He was a young man, full of life and vigor, and his death was a great loss to his family. The duke was a member of the French nobility, and his death was a great loss to the French nobility. The duke's death was a great loss to the French nobility. The duke's death was a great loss to the French nobility.

Had a Weak Heart for Years

Since the arrival of the couple in a month ago they had lived comparatively quietly at the Hotel Langford. In the afternoon, and in the evening, he would visit his friends and go to the theatre. The duke for years suffered from a weak heart, and some time had been the subject of fainting spells. Several times since his arrival here he consulted Dr. H. J. Isenhardt in an effort to obtain relief from his ailment.

Death Struck Him Suddenly

Thursday evening the duke and the duchess, both in the best of spirits, returned from a drive in the Bois de Boulogne. They dined in their private apartments, and an hour after dinner the duke complained of feeling ill and retired. About 11 p. m. he was suddenly stricken for breath and immediately lost consciousness. The duchess was seized with panic and screamed for aid. A maid who responded to her cry was hurriedly despatched for Dr. Isenhardt, while the hotel management summoned another physician. The two doctors arrived simultaneously at the bedside of the sufferer and administered the most powerful of heart stimulants, but their efforts were in vain.

DIED IN HIS WIFE'S ARMS

She Keeps Vigil With Her Dead Throughout the Night.

The duchess was holding the duke in her arms when he expired. She was overcome by grief, and could not be persuaded by some of her friends, who visited the apartment to leave the bedside of her dead husband, and kept vigil there throughout the night. The duke's death was notified by cable of his daughter's bereavement, and a message was received from him saying that he would take the first steamer leaving New York and come to Paris.

The duke's family were notified, and his sister, the Duchess d'Uzes, who was at Biarritz, started at once for Paris. Mrs. H. Millington Drake and other friends did what they could to comfort the distressed widow, who so privately calmed somewhat during the day.

When the death of the Duke de Chaulnes became generally known a steady stream of the duke's friends, including a number of members of the French nobility, called at the hotel to offer words of condolence.

The body of the duke was placed in a double oak coffin and was buried at 5:30 p. m. in the cemetery of St. Pierre de Valenciennes, where it will remain pending arrangements for the funeral, which is expected will not take place until the arrival of Shonts from New York. In accordance with the wishes of the French nobility the funeral will be a pretentious function, and will attract to Paris the representatives of the most ancient families in France, with which the duke's family is allied.

The duke de Chaulnes was born at Paris in 1878. His marriage with Miss Shonts was the end of what is generally accepted as a pure love affair, and the testimony of friends is that they were very happy in their married life. It was said in the United States that at first the bride's father was very much averse to the marriage, but was won over by his daughter's affectionate love for the duke.

Why Marshall Is Retiring

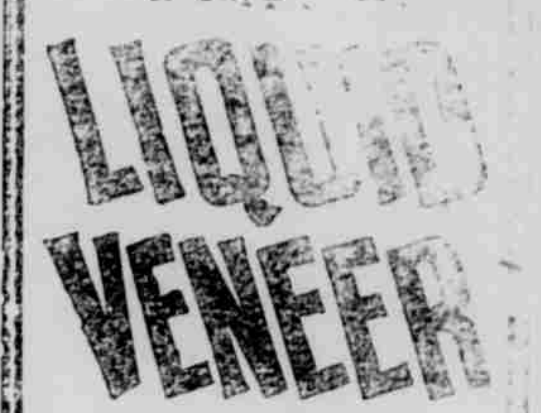
Marshall, Mich., April 25.—Marshall shippers are rejoicing over the fact that freight rates will be reduced through the efforts of E. C. Sandy, local agent for the Michigan Central, the Michigan Central and the Grand Trunk will operate freight rates to through and local points.

Express Train Jumps the Track

Rochester, N. Y., April 25.—Express train No. 4, known as the Chicago Express, jumped the tracks while passing Canisteota at sixty miles an hour. A scow was injured slightly. A broken tire on the engine is believed to have caused the wreck.

SPECIAL NOTICE

We have just received a supply of



The great cleaner and renewer of Furniture, Pianos and Woodwork.

In the New Size 25c. Bottles.

ANDREW KAUFFMAN and DAUGHTER CASH STORE

DEALERS IN DRY GOODS AND GROCERIES

NO REASON FOR IT

When Plattsmouth Citizens Show the Certain Way Out

There can be no just reason why any reader of this will continue to suffer the tortures of an aching back, the annoyance of urinary disorders, the dangers of diabetes or any kidney illness when relief is so near at hand and the most positive proof given that they can be cured. Read what a Plattsmouth citizen says: John Janda, street commissioner, living on the corner of Seventeenth and Pearl streets, Plattsmouth, says: "I cannot say too much in favor of Doan's Kidney Pills. My wife used them for pain in her back and was soon absolutely freed from the annoyance. I also used them with the same satisfactory results. All those who suffer from backache or symptoms due to irregularity of the kidneys will consult their own interest by procuring Doan's Kidney Pills at Gering & Co.'s drug store and give them a trial. Every opportunity I get I will speak a good word for Doan's Kidney Pills and I have already done so on many occasions."

For sale by all dealers. Price 50¢. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, New York, sole agents for the United States. Remember the name—Doan's—and take no other.

In Hospital For Ear Trouble.

W. H. Russell, the foreman of the rip-rap gang and bridge crew for the Burlington, has been having a great deal of trouble with one of his ears, and on account of which he was compelled to go to a specialist. Consulting Dr. Gifford, he was advised that he would have to submit to an operation for relief from an abscess which had formed just behind the ear. Mr. Russell went to the hospital and will be operated upon soon for the trouble.

Girl wanted for housework. Inquire of Mrs. J. C. Cummins, corner Tenth and Pearl streets.



THE CELEBRATED JACK BEN HILL, JR.,

Will make the season of 1908 at the farm of the undersigned at Rock Bluffs, seven miles south of Plattsmouth.

I live in a green painted cottage, barn across the road, right on the mail route through Rock Bluffs.

BEN HILL, JR., is a sure foot getter, and has stood several seasons in this county. He is eight years old, black with white points, stands high and weighs 1050 pounds.

TERMS:—\$12.00 to insure colt to stand and suck.

SAM G. SMITH