

By D. M. AMSBERRY

BROKEN BOW, - - NEBRASKA

LANGFORD of the THREE BARS

By KATE AND VIRGIL D. BOYLES

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SYNOPSIS.

George Williston, a poor ranchman, high minded and cultured, searches for cattle missing from his ranch—the "Lazy S." On a wooded spot in the river's bend that would have been an island had the Missouri been at high water, he discovers a band of horse thieves engaged in working over brands on cattle. He catches them near enough to note the changing of the "Three Bars" brand on one steer to the "J. R." brand, Paul Langford, the rich owner of the "Three Bars" ranch, is sent for by Williston and is informed of the operations of the gang of cattle thieves...

CHAPTER IV. "Maggot."

An hour prior to this little episode Jim Munson had sauntered up to the ticket window only to find that the train from the east was 40 minutes late. He turned away with a little shrug of relief. It was a foreign role he was playing—this assumption of the duties of a knight in dancing attendance on strange ladies. Secretly, he chafed under it; outwardly, he was magnificently indifferent. He had a reputation to sustain, a reputation of having yet to meet that which would lower his proud boast that he was afraid of nothing under the sun, neither man nor devil. But he doubted his ability so to direct the point of view of the Boss or the Scribe or the rest of the boys of the Three Bars ranch, who were on a still hunt for his spot of vulnerability.

The waiting room was hot—unbearably so to a man who practically lived in the open. He strolled outside and down the tracks. He found himself wishing the train had been on time. Had it been so, it—the impending meeting—would now have been a thing of the forgotten past. He must needs fortify himself all over again. But sauntering down the track toward the stockyards he filled his cob pipe, lighted it, and was comforted. He had a 45-minute reprieve.

The boys had tried most valiantly to persuade him to "fix up" for this event. He had scorned them indignantly. If he was good enough as he was—black woolen shirt, red neckerchief and all—for men, just so was he good enough for any female that ever lived. So he assumed a little swagger as he stepped over the ties, and tried to make himself believe that he was glad he had not allowed himself to be corrupted by proffers of blue shirts and white neckerchiefs.

He was approaching the stockyards. There was movement there. Sounds of commands, blows, profane epithets, and worried bawlings changed the placid evening calm into noisy strife. It is always a place interesting to cowmen. Jim relegated thoughts of the coming meeting to the background while he leaned on the fence, and, with idle absorption, watched the loading of cattle into a stock car. A switch engine, steaming and spluttering, stood ready to make way for another car as soon as the present one should be laden. He was not the only spectator. Others were before him. Two men strolled up to the side opposite as he settled down to musing interest.

"Gee!" he swore gently under his breath, "if that ain't Bill Brown! Yep, it is, for a fac'. Wonder what he's shippin' now for?" He scrambled lightly over the high fence of the pen. "Hullo, there, Bill Brown!" he yelled, genially, making his way as one accustomed through the bunch of reluctant, excited cattle.

"Hullo yourself, Jim! What you doin' in town?" responded the man addressed, pausing in his labor to wipe the streaming moisture from his face. He fanned himself vigorously with his drooping hat while he talked.

"Gal huntin'," answered Jim, soberly and despondently.

"Hell!" Brown surveyed him with astonished but sympathetic approbation. "Hell!" he repeated. "You don't mean it, do you, Jim, honest? Come, now, honest? So you've come to it, at last, have you? Well, well! What's comin' over the Three Bars? What'll the boys say?"

He came nearer and lowered his voice to a confidential tone. "Say,

Jim, how did it come about? And who's the lady? Lord, Jim, you of all people!" He laughed uproariously. "Aw, come off!" growled Jim, in petulant scorn. "You make me tired! You're plumb luncy, that's what you are, I'm after the new gal reporter. She's due on that low-down, ornery train. Wish—it—was in kingdom come. Yep, I do, for a fac'."

"Oh, well, never mind! I didn't mean anything," laughed Brown, good-naturedly. "But it does beat the band, Jim, now doesn't it, how you people scare at petticoats. They ain't pizen—honest."

Jim looked on idly. Occasionally he condescended to head a rebellious steer shutwards. Out beyond it was still and sweet and peaceful, and the late afternoon had put on that thin veil of coolness which is a God-given refreshment after the heat of the day. But here in the pen all was confusion. The raucous cattle-calls of the cowboys smote the evening air startlingly.

"Here, Bill Brown!" he exclaimed suddenly, "where did you run across that critter?" He slapped the shoulder of a big, raw-boned, long-eared steer as he spoke. The animal was on the point of being driven up the chute.

"What you want to know for? asked Brown in surprise. "Reason 'nough. That critter belongs to us, that's why; and I want to know where you got him, that's what I want to know."

"You're crazy, Jim! Why, I bought that fellow from Jesse Black 't other day. I've got a bill of sale for him. I'm shippin' a couple of cars to Sioux City and bought him to send along. That's on the square."

"I don't doubt it—s' far as you're concerned, Bill Brown," said Jim, "but that's our critter jest the same, and I'll jest tote 'im along 'f you've no objections. "Any case?"

"Well, I guess not!" said Brown, laconically. "Look here, Bill Brown," Jim was getting hot headedly angry, "didn't you know Jesse Black stands trial tomorrow for rustlin' that there very critter from the Three Bars ranch?"

"No, I didn't," Brown answered shortly. "I guess yes! Williston o' the Lazy S saw this very critter on that island where Jesse Black holds out." He proceeded to relate minutely the story to which Williston was going to swear



I've Got a Bill-of-Sale for Him.

on the morrow. "But," he concluded, "Jesse's goin' to fight like hell against bein' bound over."

"Well, well," said Brown, perplexed. "But the brand, Jim, it's not yours or Jesse's either."

"Quainted with any J R ranch in these parts?" queried Jim, shrewdly. "I ain't."

"Well, neither am I," confessed Brown. "but that's not sayin' there ain't one somewhere. Maybe we can trace it back."

"Shucks!" exploded Jim. "Maybe you're right, Jim, but I don't propose to lose the price of that animal less'n I have to. You can't blame me for that. I paid good money for it. If it's your'n, why, of course, it's your'n. But I want to be sure first. Sure you'd know him, Jim? How could you be so blamed sure? Your boss must range 5,000 head."

"Enow him? Know Mag? I'd know Mag of my eyes were full o' soundin' catarnets. He's an old and tried friend o' mine. The meanest critter the Lord ever let live and that's a fac'. But the boss calls 'im his maggot. Seems to actually chirish a kind o' affection for the ornery critter, and says the luck o' the Three Bars would sort o' peak and pine if he should ever git rid o' the pesky brute. Maybe he's right. Leastwise, the critter's his, and when a thing's yours, why, it's yours and that's all there is about it. By crack, the boss is some mad! You'd think him and that wall-eyed, cross-grained son-of-a-gun had been kind and lovin' mates these many years. Well, I ain't met up with this ornery critter for some time. Hullo, there, Mag! Look kind o' sneakin', now, don't you, wearin' that outlandish and unbeknownst J R?"

Bill Brown thoughtfully surveyed the steer whose ownership was thus so unexpectedly disputed.

"You hold him," insisted Jim. "Ef he ain't ours, you can send him along with your next shipment, can't you? What you wobblin' about? Ain't afraid the boss 'll claim what ain't his, are you, Bill Brown?"

"Well, I can't help myself, I guess," said Brown, in a tone of voice which told plainly of his laudable effort to keep his annoyance in subjection to his good fellowship. "You send Langford down here first thing in the morn-

ing. If he says the critter's his'n that ends it."

Now that he had convinced his quondam acquaintance, the present shipper, to his entire satisfaction, Jim glanced at his watch with ostentatious ease. His time had come. If all the minutes of all the time to come should be as short as those 40 had been, how soon he, Jim Munson, cow puncher, would have ridden them all into the past. But his "get away" must be clean and dignified.

"Likely bunch you have there," he said, casually, turning away with unassumed reluctance. "Fair to middlin'," said Brown with pride. "Shippin' to Sioux City, you said?" "Yep."

"Well, so long." "So long, Shippin' any these days, Jim?"

"Nope. Boss never dribbles 'em out. When he ships he ships. Ain't none gone over the rails since last fall."

He stepped off briskly and vaulted the fence with an lightsome air as though he were bent on the one errand his heart would choose, and swung up the track carelessly humming a tune. But he had a vise-like grip on his cob pipe. His teeth bit through the frail stem. It split. He tossed the remains away with a gesture of nervous contempt. A whistle sounded. He quickened his pace. If he missed her—well, the boss was a good fellow, took a lot of nonsense from the boys, but there were things he would not stand for. Jim did not need to be told that this would be one of them.

The platform was crowded. The yellow sunlight fell slantingly on the gay groups.

"Aw, Munson, you're bluffin', jested the mail carrier. "You ain't lookin' fer nobody; you know you ain't. You ain't got no folks. Don't believe you never had none. Never heard of 'em."

"Lookin' for my uncle," explained Jim, serenely. "Rich old codger from the state o' Pennsylvania some'ers. Ain't got nobody but me left."

"Aw, come off! What you givin' us?" But Jim only winked and slouched off, prime for more adventures. He was enjoying himself hugely—when he was not thinking of petticoats.

CHAPTER V. At the Bon Ami.

Unlike most of those who ride much her escort was a fast walker. Louise had trouble in keeping up with him, though she had always considered herself a good pedestrian. But Jim Munson was laboring under strange embarrassment. He was red-facedly conscious of the attention he was attracting striding up the inclined street from the station in the van of the prettiest and most thoroughbred girl who had struck Velpen this long time.

Not that he objected to attention under normal conditions. Not he! He courted it. His chief aim in life seemed to be to throw the limelight of publicity, first, on the Three Bars ranch as the one and only in the category of ranches, and to be connected with it in some way, however slight, the unquestioned aim and object of existence of every man, woman and child in the cattle country; secondly, on Paul Langford, the very boss of bosses, whose master mind was the prop and stay of the northwest, if not of all Christendom; and lastly, upon himself, the modest, but loyal servant in this Paradise on earth. But girls were far from normal conditions. There were no women at the Three Bars. There never had been any woman at the Three Bars within the memory of man. To be sure, Williston's little girl had sometimes ridden over on an errand, but she didn't count. This—this was the real thing, and he didn't know just how to deal with it. He needed time to enlarge his sight to this broadened horizon.

He glanced with nonchalance over his shoulder. After all, she was only a girl, and not such a big one, either. She wore longer skirts than Williston's girl, but he didn't believe she was a day older. He squared about immediately, and what he had meant to say he never said, on account of an unaccountable thickening of his tongue.

Presently he bolted into a building, which proved to be the Bon Ami, a restaurant under the direct supervision of the fat, voluble and tragic Mrs. Higgins, where the men from the other side of the river had right of way and unlimited credit.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Missed the Towpath. There was a little girl, five years old or so, living in an inland town up the state, according to the Philadelphia Ledger. Near her home there was no river, nor, in fact, any water but the Erie canal.

The child's mother made a visit to New York, and on her return was telling of her trip down the bay, and of how wonderful the sea had looked to her. Her little girl was listening eagerly.

"Tell me just what the sea is like, mamma," she said.

Her mother made an effort. "There's the beach," she said, "all smooth, white sand. You stand on it and look out upon the ocean, and all you can see is water, just moving water, waves coming in and breaking—nothing but water and sky."

The child sat trying to picture it, then, in an awed little whisper asked: "Oh, mamma, isn't there a tow-path?"

Gilding Book Covers. Gilding on book covers is done by means of engraved brass or electrotyped patterns, heated and pressed over the gold leaf, which is fixed by an albuminous size—white of eggs.

NEBRASKA IN BRIEF

NEWS NOTES OF INTEREST FROM VARIOUS SECTIONS.

ALL SUBJECTS TOUCHED UPON

Religious, Social, Agricultural, Political and Other Matters Given Due Consideration.

A Taft organization has been formed at Peru. Hastings is discussing the 6 o'clock closing movement.

Stock sheds, valued at several hundred dollars, were burned at Geneva. Rev. Mr. Buechner has tendered his resignation as pastor of the St. Paul Lutheran church at Blue Hill and asks to be released from his duties in about three months.

The annual Johnson county farmers' institute will be held in Tecumseh on February 11, 12, 13 and 14. Six state speakers will be in attendance and there will be a corn show.

The smallpox condition at the state industrial school at Kearney is much improved, and it is thought that in a short time the quarantine will be raised. There were three cases of genuine smallpox.

Joseph M. Shively, deputy land commissioner, has announced his candidacy for land commissioner, to succeed his chief, H. M. Eaton. Mr. Shively hails from Dodge county, the home of Mr. Eaton.

The diner attached to Burlington train No. 3 took fire between Dorchester and Friend. The burning car was pulled to Friend, where the fire was extinguished, though the car and contents are a total loss.

August Swartlund, a wealthy farmer living near Holdrege, tried to kill himself with a razor. He made two deep gashes from ear to ear, when the razor broke. He was found unconscious, but will probably recover.

A 14-year-old son of Peter Obbody, a Bohemian farmer residing eleven miles south of Friend, lost one of his legs while driving the horsepower of a corn sheller. Physicians amputated the limb just below the knee.

Attorney Charles W. Seymour, one of the best known and, perhaps, the oldest attorney in this state, at this writing is lying dangerously ill at his home in Nebraska City, and no hopes are entertained for his recovery.

Governor Sheldon has received \$9,300 from the government as the semi-annual appropriation for the support of homes for soldiers and sailors in Nebraska, being at the rate of \$100 a year for each member of the homes.

Orland Pierce, by his attorney, John C. Watson, has filed a suit in the district court of Otoe county against the Morton-Gregson Packing company, asking for \$15,000 damages for injuries received while working for said company.

Senator Norris Brown, emphasizing "the importance of the financial legislation now before congress," has written to the secretaries of the commercial clubs, including that of Lincoln, for a statement by the secretary as to the wishes of the members of the club.

Valeria W. Coad, wife of Mark M. Coad of Omaha, filed a suit for divorce in the district court at Lincoln. According to information received in Lincoln, Coad is a ranch owner and erstwhile business partner of W. F. Cody, known as "Buffalo Bill." Mrs. Coad's petition is brief. She alleges non-support.

The state auditor has returned the \$15,000 school bonds of the Sidney district, properly registered. The bonds are in denominations of \$5,000 and run from one to twenty years, drawing 5 per cent interest optional after five years, issued for the purpose of building an addition to the high school building in Sidney.

The railway commission issued two orders, one permitting the Union Pacific to put in a lower rate on feed corn to St. Paul, Amherst, Riverdale, Odessa and Buda and Intermediate, and to permit the Union Pacific to put in a lower corn rate to Genoa, Kent and Merchison and intermediate points.

Succumbing to an attack of nervous trouble, Jerry Hennen, a Fremont drayman, who came into possession of a fortune eighteen months ago by a legacy, died last week. Mr. Hennen, who was in moderate circumstances, was bequeathed a valuable farm, iron and coal land worth \$25,000 by a distant relative, who died in West Virginia.

State Food Commissioner Johnson announces that the requirements of the law in regard to the handling of milk and cream will henceforth be enforced. "The Babcock test must be employed, using a weighed sample of eighteen grams, weighed on a delicate balance and tested in a nine-inch bottle, graduated to at least 5 per cent of the fat column and read between the temperature of 130 and 140 degrees Fahrenheit.

Three fine milch cows belonging to J. A. Zimmerman, who resides northwest of Beatrice, were drowned in the Blue river. The animals disappeared, and after a search of two days their bodies were found in the stream.

Exeter was visited by another fire. It was the West Side livery barn. The contents of the barn were owned by Attorney Delaney and consisted of eleven head of horses, several carriages, a lot of hay and feed, harness, blankets, robes and other things, all of which are a total loss, as there was no insurance.

STATE AID FOR SCHOOLS.

Amounts Due Several Counties Under Legislative Act.

State Superintendent McBrien has prepared his certificate to the auditor, showing the amounts due the several counties that are entitled to share in the appropriation of 1907 under the act providing state aid for school districts whose funds are not sufficient to maintain school for at least seven months. The law provides that no state aid shall be given any public school district until it has voted the maximum levy, and until the accounts of such districts have been audited and approved by the county superintendent of the proper county. No district shall receive in any one year any state aid under the provisions of this act in excess of \$120, which amount shall be applied exclusively to the payment of teachers' wages. Seven hundred and eight districts in forty-five counties have qualified under the law for state aid, and the total amount asked for exceeds \$90,000. The amount due each county will be made in two payments, the first payment in January and the second payment on or before the last Monday in June.

The following counties are entitled to share in this appropriation to the amount set opposite their names:

Table listing counties and amounts: Antelope \$164, Hooker \$100, Banner 1,043, Howard 235, Blaine 387, Keith 694, Boone 109, Keya Paha 1,853, Box Butte 1,045, Kimball 739, Boyd 788, Knox 419, Brown 1,447, Lincoln 2,255, Buffalo 2,859, Logan 230, Chase 898, Phelps 159, Cherry 1,471, McPherson 1,085, Cheyenne 2,505, Nemaha 100, Custer 3,519, Perkins 1,617, Dawson 898, Phelps 159, Dawson 85, Red Willow 1,554, Deuel 1,780, Rock 1,451, Douglas 23, Scott's Bluff 716, Dundy 1,745, Sheridan 1,396, Frontier 1,593, Sioux 894, Furnas 650, Thomas 250, Garfield 768, Thurston 500, Gosper 25, Wheeler 1,811, Hayes 2,303, Hitchcock 2,569, Holt 3,422, Total \$49,992

GOLD, SILVER, COAL AND GAS.

Assortment of Material Found by Saline Prospectors.

Fairbury—Considerable excitement prevails in the vicinity of Western, over in Saline county, over the discovery of valuable minerals in the earth. For some time prospectors have been working about four miles northwest of Western with favorable results. A stop was put to the work temporarily, by the death of the man in charge, but another experienced prospector was secured a couple of weeks ago to proceed with the work. A prospect hole is being sunk on the Frank Nickles farm. The work is being done with a well-boring outfit. At a depth of forty feet it is said the prospectors struck gold, silver, coal and gas, the latter so strong that it came dangerously near asphyxiating the men, one of whom was taken to Tobias for medical treatment.

Land Cases Come In Second.

Omaha—The land cases scheduled for trial during the February term of the United States district court will not be tried until the 28-hour railroad cases are out of the way. The land cases against C. H. T. Babcock, John Agnew, H. C. and Bert Firman; James H. Edmisten; Earl Comstock and E. C. Harris and others; Lawrence E. King, Patrick F. King and F. S. Baird; Charles F. Stewart and Stewart Walker; R. H. Allen; George Townsend, B. M. Fox, George McClintock and W. P. Miles. The indictments are for conspiracy to defraud the government out of lands by fraudulent filings.

FARMER KILLS HIMSELF.

Discharges Contents of Shotgun Into His Breast with Fatal Result.

Humboldt—Cleve Cope, a prominent young farmer of this community, committed suicide by shooting himself through the left breast with a shotgun. He went into an outhouse about 6 a. m., and, standing erect, placed the shotgun against his breast and pulled the trigger. Despondency from ill health the cause.

Human Skull Unearthed.

Fremont—The steam shovel gang working on the Burlington south of the river unearthed a human skull Saturday. The workmen thought there might be some tragedy back of it and brought it to Fremont. The doctors declared it to be that of an Indian who had probably been dead at least half a century.

A Prophet from Nebraska.

Lincoln—State Superintendent J. L. McBrien has accepted an invitation to the toast "A Prophet from Nebraska," at the twentieth annual banquet of the Marquette club at the Auditorium banquet hall, Chicago, on Lincoln's birthday, Wednesday, February 12.

Favorable for Farmers.

Republican City—The open winter has been very favorable for farmers and stock feeders on account of feed of all kinds being high and scarce. Alfalfa is worth \$10 per ton in stack. Corn is now selling for 60 cents per bushel; hogs, \$3.90 per hundred.

COW STEPPED ON HIS JAW.

Clay County Farmer Victim of Strange Accident.

Harvard—While doing the chores about the cow barn, Henry Carper, residing two and a half miles northwest of this city, sustained very serious injuries. He was milking and in some manner lost his balance and fell off backwards just in time to be trampled upon by a cow which entered the barn. His lower jaw was broken in three places, two on the right and one on the left side.

GREAT CULEBRA CUT

IS SCENE OF BATTLE BETWEEN MAN AND NATURE.

More Dirt Being Excavated Now Daily Than During Entire Month of July, 1904—Conquest of Isthmian Jungle.

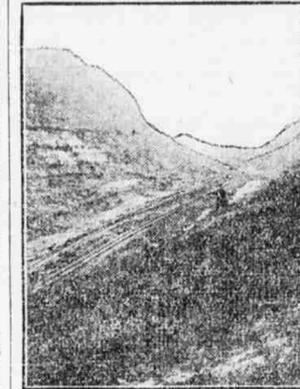
Washington—There are those who have wondered whether, apart from the tropical weather, the difficulties of overcoming the engineering obstacles of Culebra cut were not overestimated.

But when it is remembered that this nine-mile strip, varying from 250 feet to the top of Gold Hill, west of Culebra, is composed of rock, slime, gravel and tropical dirt; when it is borne in mind that the existing prism of this canal is subject to frequent landslides, and when it is considered that this region is washed by a torrential rainfall which exceeds 12 feet yearly, some realization of the difficulties presented will be possible.

It is one thing to blast and shovel a million cubic yards out of Culebra, but it is another problem so to place the excavation that it will be out of the way for all time or so to place it that it will protect the canal channel on the lowlands of the eastern portion of the waterway.

The investigator at Culebra, as on other portions of the ditch, is impressed at the outset with the fact that the railroad is the key to the situation both from an engineering and a sanitary standpoint. This canal cannot be constructed upon a trunk sewer plan. All of us have intelligent friends who seem to think that it is only necessary to excavate and throw the dirt along the banks of the waterway. But as the tourist obtains his first view of the cut at Empire he observes that the rapidity with which the dirt trains are enabled to move out is the measure of the day's achievement.

Through this region, in order to assure a prism of definite width, it has



Section of Famous Culebra Cut.

been found necessary to increase the proposed width from time to time as one landslide followed another; and while that increases the total amount of the excavation it renders possible the placing of tracks one above another to accommodate the dirt trains. During the month of July, 1904, 31,000 cubic yards of dirt were excavated at Culebra cut; one year later the monthly excavation was upward of 80,000 cubic yards, and during the month of July, 1905, 157,000 cubic yards were removed from the nine-mile strip.

It is worthy of notice that on March 14, 1907, the daily excavation was greater than the amount shoveled out during the first month of July cited. The present monthly excavation varies between six and eight hundred thousand cubic yards, and with the passing of the rainy season 1,000,000 cubic yards a month will be the assured excavation record.

But back of this record of monthly excavation and as a preliminary condition essential to the present efficiency of the Culebra army is the story of the conquest of the Isthmian jungle. The canal cut proper has been a constant source of trouble to the health division. In many instances outlets for drainage are impracticable and the water supply can only be ditched in one pool. The progress of each steam shovel leaves in its train new and varied drainage problems.

This has necessitated constructing pools by filling in, deepening ditches, confining the water by rough stone walls and ditching the large side pools, thus turning all the water into the main ditch, where it forms a swift running stream unfavorable to mosquito breeding. Drip barrels of oil have been placed at points where the current slowed down, and this, combined with the rapidity of the current, has reduced mosquito breeding in the canal cut to a minimum.

The malarial reports of the district physicians being tabulated, the number of cases in the different camps is compared with that of the previous three weeks. If there is a decided increase of malaria at any camp the inspector of that district is telephoned to look for the point of infection.

The mosquito inspector takes the list and goes over the whole ground in order of greatest increase, locating or confirming the point of infection, and reports upon the measures best adapted for the removal of the same. All the laborers of the district who can be spared from the daily routine work are at once concentrated at that point to make a swift and effective end to the mosquito breeding places.