

# The Great K. & A. Train Robbery

BY PAUL LEICESTER FORD

AUTHOR OF.....

"The Hon. Peter Stirling," &c.

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(Continued.)

## CHAPTER X.

### WAITING FOR HELP.

If ever a fellow was bewildered by a single speech, it was Richard Gordon. I walked up and down that platform till I was called to breakfast, trying to decide what Miss Cullen had expressed, only to succeed in reading 50 different meanings in her parting six words. I wanted to think that it was her way of suggesting that I deceived myself in thinking that there was anything between Lord Ralles and herself; but, though I wished to believe this, I had seen too much to the contrary to take stock in the idea. Yet I couldn't believe that Madge was a coquette. I became angry and hot with myself for even thinking it for a moment.

Fuzzled as I did over the words, I managed to eat a good breakfast, and then went into the Cullens' car and electrified the party by telling them of Camp's and Fred's despatches, and how I had come to overhear the former. Mr. Cullen and Albert couldn't say enough about my cleverness in what had really been pure luck, and seemed to think I had sat up all night in order to hear that telegram. The person for whose opinion I cared the most, Miss Cullen, didn't say anything, but she gave me a look that set my heart beating like a triphammer and made me put the most hopeful construction on that speech of hers. It seemed impossible that she didn't care for Lord Ralles and that she might care for me; but, after having had no hope whatsoever, the smallest crumb of a chance nearly lifted me off my feet.

We had a consultation over what was best to be done, but didn't reach any definite conclusion till the station agent brought me a telegram from the postmaster-general. Breaking it open, I read aloud:—

Do not allow service of writ and retain possession of letters according to prior instructions. At the request of this department the secretary of war has directed the commanding officer at Fort Whipple to furnish you with military protection, and you will call upon him at once, if in your judgment it is necessary. On no account surrender United States property to territorial authorities. Keep department notified.

"Oh, splendid!" cried Madge, clapping her hands.

"Mr. Camp will find that other people can give surprise parties as well as himself," I said, cheerfully.

"You'll telegraph at once?" asked Mr. Cullen.

"Instantly," I said, rising, and added, "Don't you want to see what I say, Miss Cullen?"

"Of course I do!" she cried, eagerly, jumping up.

Lord Ralles scowled as he said:—

"Yes. Let's see what Mr. Superintendent has to say."

"You needn't trouble yourself," I said. But he followed us into the station. I was disgusted, but at the same time it seemed to me that he had come because he was jealous, and that wasn't an unpleasant thought. Whatever his motive he was a third party in the writing of that telegram and had to stand by while Miss Cullen and I discussed and drafted it. I didn't try to make it any too brief, not merely asking for a guard, and when I might expect it, but giving as well a pretty full history of the case, which was hardly necessary.

"You'll bankrupt yourself," laughed Madge. "You must let us pay."

"I'll let you pay, Miss Cullen, if you want," I said. "How much is it, Welpy?" I asked, shoving the blanks in to the operator.

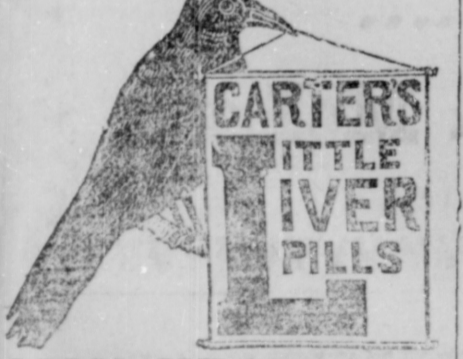
"Notin' for a lady," said Welpy, grinning.

"There, Miss Cullen," I said. "Does the East come up to that in gallantry?"

"Do you really mean that there is no charge?" demanded Madge, incredulously, with her purse in her hand.

"That's the size of it," said the operator.

"I'm not going to believe that!"



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cried Madge. "I know you are only deceiving me, and I really want to pay."

I laughed and said, "Sometimes railroad superintendents can send messages from me!"

"How silly of me!" exclaimed Madge. Then she said:—"How nice it is to be a railroad superintendent, Mr. Gorder! I should like to be one myself."

That speech really lifted me off my feet, but while I was thinking what response to make I came down to earth with a bounce.

"Since the telegram's done," said Lord Ralles to Miss Cullen, in a cool, almost commanding, tone, "suppose we take a walk."

"I don't think I care to this morning," answered Madge.

"I think you had better," said his lordship, with such a manner that I felt inclined to knock him down.

To my surprise, Madge seemed to hesitate, and finally said, "I'll walk up and down the platform if you wish."

Lord Ralles nodded, and they went out, leaving me in a state of mingled amazement and rage at the way he had cut me out. Try as I would I wasn't able to hit upon any theory that supplied a solution to the conduct of either Lord Ralles or Miss Cullen, unless they were engaged and Miss Cullen displeased him by her behavior to me. But Madge seemed such an honest, frank girl that I'd have believed anything sooner than that she was only playing with me.

If I was perplexed, I wasn't going to give Lord Ralles the right of way, and as soon as I had made certain that the telegram was safely started, I

joined the walkers. I don't think any of us enjoyed the hour that followed, but I didn't care how miserable I was myself so long as I was certain that I was blocking Lord Ralles, and his grumpiness showed very clearly that my presence did that. As for Madge, I couldn't make her out. I had all ways thought I understood women a little, but her conduct was beyond understanding.

Apparently Miss Cullen didn't altogether relish her position, for presently she said she was going to the car. "I'm sure you and Lord Ralles will be company enough for each other," she said, giving me a flash of her eyes, which showed them full of suppressed indignation, even while her face was grave.

In spite of prediction, the moment she was gone Lord Ralles and I pulled apart about as quickly as a yard-engine can split a couple of cars.

I moped around for an hour, too unsettled mentally to do anything but smoke, and only waiting for an invitation or for some excuse to go into 218. About eleven o'clock I obtained the latter in another telegram, and went into the car at once.

Telegram received—I read triumphantly—A detail of two companies of the Twelfth cavalry, under the command of Captain Sizer, is ordered to Ash Forks, and will start within an hour, arriving at five o'clock.

"C. D. OLMSTEAD, Adjutant."

"That won't do, Gorden," cried Mr. Cullen. "The mandamus will be here before that."

"Oh, don't say there is something more wrong!" sighed Madge.

"Won't it be safer to run while there's still time?" asked Albert, anxiously.

"I was born lazy about running away," I said.

"Oh, but please, just for once," Madge begged. "We know already how brave you are."

I thought for a moment, not so much objecting, in truth, to the running away as to the running away from Madge.

"I'd do it for you," I said, looking at Miss Cullen, so that she understood this time what I meant without using any emphasis, "but I don't see any need of making myself uncomfortable when I can make the other side so. Come along, and see if my method isn't quite as good."

We went to the station, and I told the operator to call Rock Butte. Then I dictated:

Direct conductor of Phenix No. 3 on its arrival at Rock Butte to hold it there till further orders.

"RICHARD GORDON, Supt."

"That will save my running and their chasing," I laughed, "though I'm afraid a long wait at Rock Butte won't improve their tempers."

The next few hours were pretty exciting ones to all of us, as can well be imagined. Most of the time was spent, I have to confess, in manoeuvres and struggles between Lord Ralles and myself as to which should monopolize Madge, without either of us succeeding. I was so engrossed with the contest that I forgot all about the passage of time, and only when the sheriff strolled up to the station did I realize that the climax was at hand. As a joke, I introduced him to the Cullens, and we all stood chatting till far out on the hill to the south I saw a cloud of dust and quietly called Miss Cullen's attention to it. She and I went to 97 for my fieldglasses, and the moment Madge looked through them, she cried:—

"Yes, I can see horses, and oh, there are the Stars and Stripes! I don't think I ever loved them so much before."

"I suppose we civilians will have to take a back seat, now, Miss Cullen?" I said. And she answered me with a demure smile, worth-well, I'm not going to put a value on that smile.

"They'll be here very quickly," she almost sang.

"You forget the clearness of the air," I said, and then asked the sheriff how far away the dust cloud was.

"Yer mean that cattle drive?" he asked. "Bout ten miles."

"You seem to think of everything!" exclaimed Miss Cullen, as if my knowing that distances are deceptive in Arizona was wonderful. I sometimes think one gets the most praise in this world for what least deserves it.

I waited half an hour to be safe, and then released No. 3, just as we were called to dinner, and this time I didn't refuse the invitation to eat mine in 218.

We didn't hurry over the meal, and toward the end I took to looking at my watch, wondering what could keep the cavalry from arriving.

"I hope there is no danger of the train arriving first, is there?" asked Madge.

"Not the slightest," I assured her. "The train won't be here for two hours, and the cavalry had only five miles to cover forty minutes ago."

must say they seem to be taking their time."

"There they are now!" cried Albert. Listening, we heard the clatter of horses' feet going at a good pace, and we all rose and went to the windows to see the arrival. Our feelings can be judged when across the tracks came only a mob of thirty or forty cowboys, riding in their usual "show up" style.

"The deuce!" I couldn't help exclaiming in my surprise. "Are you sure you saw a flag, Miss Cullen?"

"Why—I—thought"—she faltered. "I saw something red, and—I supposed, of course."

Not waiting to let her finish, I exclaimed, "There's been a tuck somewhere, I'm afraid, but we are still in good shape, for the train can't possibly be here under an hour. I'll get my fieldglasses and have another look before I decide what."

My speech was interrupted by the entrance of the sheriff and Mr. Camp.

(To be Continued.)

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The hallman or starter shouts "Going up!" to the people coming into the hall, and the elevator man stands in front of the cage and politely asks his passengers to "step in," while he remains on the outside until the starter shouts "L right!" Then he cuts his sentence short, steps into the cage, starts the elevator and slams the door after the ascent has begun.

Most persons "step in" when asked to do so, but occasionally a man with an eye to self preservation refuses to do so, and one of that class made the complaint. The man who insists on the elevator man being in the car before he will go in is usually locked upon by the man of many ups and downs as foolishly careful, but owners of buildings who are held responsible for the safety of their tenants while riding in the elevators are pleased to see them firm on that point. It may look well for a uniformed man to step aside and ask the passengers to precede him into the elevator cage, but many persons will agree with the man who made the complaint that it is a case of politeness which should be discouraged in the interest of safety.—New York Tribune.

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