

The Great K. & A. Train Robbery

BY PAUL LEICESTER FORD

—The Hon. Peter Stirling, &c.

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(Continued.)

CHAPTER VII.

A CHANGE OF BASE.

We did not reach Flagstaff till 7, and I told the stagecoach to take possession of their car, while I went to my own. I took me some time to get freshened up, and then I ate my breakfast, for after riding 72 miles in one night even the most heroic purposes have to take the side track. I think, as it was, I proved my devotion pretty well by not going to sleep, since I had been up three nights, with only such naps as I could steal in the saddle, and had ridden over 150 miles to boot. But I couldn't bear to think of Miss Cullen's anxiety. When I had finished eating, I went into 218.

The party were all in the dining-room, but it was a very different look from the one with which that first breakfast had been eaten, and they all looked at me as I entered as if I were the executioner come for victims.

"Mr. Cullen," I said, "I've been forced to do a lot of things that weren't pleasant, but I don't want to do more than I need. You're not the ordinary kind of road agents, and, as I presume your address is known, I don't see any need of arresting one of our own directors as yet. All I ask is that you give me your word for the party that none of you will try to leave the country."

"Certainly, Mr. Gordon," he responded. "And I thank you for your great consideration."

"I shall have to report the case to our president, and I suppose to the postmaster-general, but I shan't hurry about either. What they will do I can't say. Probably you know how far you can keep them quiet."

"I think the local authorities are all I have to fear, provided time is given me."

"I have dismissed the sheriff and his posse, and I gave them \$100 for their work and three bottles of pretty good whiskey I had on my car. Unless they get orders from elsewhere, you will not hear any further from them."

"You must let me reimburse what expense we have put you to, Mr. Gordon. I only wish I could as easily repay your kindness."

"Nodding my head in assent as well as in recognition of his thanks, I continued, "It was my duty as an official of the K. & A. to recover the stolen mail, and I had to do it."

"We understand that," said Mr. Cullen, "and do not for a moment blame you."

"But," I went on, for the first time looking at Madge, "it is not my duty to take part in a contest for control of the K. & A., and I shall therefore act in this case as I should in any other loss of mail."

"And that is"—asked Frederic.

"I am about to telegraph for instructions from Washington," I said. "As the G. S. has tied up some of your proxies, they ought not to object if we do the same, and I think I can manage so that Uncle Sam will prevent those proxies from being voted at Ash Forks on Friday."

"If a galvanic battery had been applied to the breakfast table, it wouldn't have made a bigger change. Madge clapped her hands in joy. Mr. Cullen said, "God bless you!" with real feeling. Frederic jumped up and slapped me on the shoulder, crying, "Gordon, you're the biggest old trump breathing."

While Albert and the captain shook hands with each other in evident jubilation. Only Lord Raltes remained passive.

"Have you breakfasted?" asked Mr. Cullen when the first joy was over.

"Yes," I said. "I only stopped in on my way to the station to telegraph."

"May I come with you and see what you say?" cried Fred, jumping up.

I nodded, and Miss Cullen said, questioning, "Me too?" making me very happy by the question, for it showed that she would speak to me. In a moment we were all walking toward the platform.

Despite Lord Raltes, I felt happy, and especially as I had not dreamed that she would ever forgive me.

I took a telegraph blank, and, putting it so that Miss Cullen could see what I said, wrote:—
Postmaster-General, Washington:—
I hold, awaiting your instructions, the three registered letters stolen from No. 3 Overland Missouri Western Express on Monday, Oct. 14, loss of which has already been notified you.

Then I paused and said:—"So far, that's routine, Miss Cullen. Now comes the help for you." And I continued:—
The letters have been tampered with, and I recommend a special agent. Reply Flagstaff, Arizona.

RICHARD GORDON,
Superintendent K. & A. R. R.
"What will that do?" she asked.

"I'm not much at prophecy, and we'll wait for the reply," I said.

All that day we lay at Flagstaff, and after a good sleep, as there was no use keeping the party cooped up in their car, I drummed up some ponies and took the Cullens and Ackland over to the Indian cliff dwellings. I don't think Lord Raltes gained anything by staying behind in a sulks for it was a very jolly ride, or at least that was what it was to me. I had to tell them all how I had settled on them as the criminals. To hear Miss Cullen talk, one would have inferred I was the greatest of living detectives.

"The mistake we made," she said, "was not securing Mr. Gordon's help to begin with, for then we should never have needed to hold the train up, or, if we had, we should never have been discovered."

What was more to me than this ill-deserved admiration were two things she said on the way back, when we two had pulled off and were a bit behind the rest.

"The savagery and the whiskey

"I'm so grateful for the trouble you took."

"It was a pleasure," I said.

"And, Mr. Gordon," she continued, and then hesitated for a moment, "my—Frederic told me that you—you said you honoured me for—"

"I do," I exclaimed, energetically, as she paused and coloured.

"Do you really?" she cried. "I thought Fred was only trying to make me less unhappy by saying that you did."

"I said it, and I mean it," I told her.

"I have been so miserable over that lie," she went on, "but I thought if I let you have the letters it would ruin papa. I really wouldn't mind poverty myself, Mr. Gordon, but he takes such pride in success that I couldn't be the one to do it. I ought to have known you would help us."

I thought this a pretty good time to make a real apology for my conduct on the trail, as well as to tell her how sorry I was at not having been able to re-pack her bag better. She accepted my apology very sweetly, and assured me her belongings had been put away so neatly that she had wondered who did it. I knew she only said this out of kindness and told her so, telling also of my struggles over that pink ribboned and belaced affair in a way which made her laugh. I had thought it was a ball gown and wondered at her taking it to the canyon, but she explained that it was a dressing sack. That made me open my eyes, thinking that anything so pretty could be used for the same purposes for which I use my crash bath gown, and, while my eyes were open, I saw the folly of thinking that a girl who wore such things could ever get along on my salary. In that way the incident was a good lesson for me, for it made me feel that even if there had been no Lord Raltes I still should have had no chance.

On our return to the cars there was a telegram from the postmaster-general awaiting me. After a glance at it, as the rest of the party looked anxiously on, I passed it over to Miss Cullen, for I wanted her to have the triumph of reading it aloud. It said:—
Hold letters pending arrival of Special Agent Jackson, due in Flagstaff, October 20th.

"The election is the 18th," Frederic laughed, executing a war-dance on the platform. "The G.S.'s dough is cooked."

"I must wait with someone," cried Madge, and before I could offer she took hold of Albert and the two were whirling about, much to my envy. The Cullens were about the most jubilant road-agents I had ever seen.

After consultation with Mr. Cullen, we had 218 and 97 attached to No. 1 when it arrived, and started for Ash Forks. He wanted to be on the ground a day in advance, and I could easily be back in Flagstaff before the arrival of the special agent.

I took dinner in 218, and they toasted me as if I had done something heroic instead of merely having sent a telegram. Later four sat down to poker, while Miss Cullen, Fred, and I sat on the platform, and Madge played

on her guitar and sang to us. She had a very sweet voice, and before she had been singing long we had the crew of a "dust express"—as we jokingly call a gravel train—standing about, and they were speedily reinforced by many cowboys, who left the

to be sold by public auction, at the Court House, in Charlottetown, on Tuesday the 9th day of November, next, at the hour of 12 o'clock noon, under and by virtue of a power of sale contained in a certain Indenture of Mortgage bearing date the twentieth-third day of December, A. D., 1897, made between Henry Taylor, and Mary Jane Taylor, his wife, of the one part, and Philip Large, of the other part.

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For further particulars apply to Mr. W. S. Stewart, Solicitor, Newson's Block, Charlottetown.

Dated this 25th day September A. D., 1897.

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TROUBLE IN CUBA.

Madrid Government Cannot End the War by Granting Autonomy to Cuba.

MATANZAS, Island of Cuba, Oct. 19.—The business element here in Havana seems to have arrived at the conclusion that the Madrid government cannot end the war by arranging to grant autonomy to Cuba, among the autonomists who are loyalists there are sufficient persons to hold public office, at least that is the claim of conservative Spaniards make. In addition, the latter express the belief that the autonomists, even if they were placed in power, would not be able to preserve peace and protect life and property from the lawless elements. In view of this state of affairs, a number of important merchants and sugar planters of Spanish origin, in conjunction with several Cubans of prominence, have been holding secret meetings and have been corresponding with people in various parts of the island with the object of ascertaining the views of the commercial and planting community in Pinar del Rio, Havana, Matanzas and Santa Clara as to the future for Cuba, as most likely for their own interests and those of the island in general. It is expected that the majority of the replies received will be favourable to advocating the annexation of Cuba to the United States. The plan of Senor Sagasta, the new Spanish premier, to give autonomy to Cuba, far from giving satisfaction here, has greatly increased the feeling of discontent existing. The autonomist party, it is pointed out, exists only in name, the actual majority of the autonomists being in the insurgent ranks. With the exception possibly of Senor Montore and a few other prominent autonomists the masses of that party are in sympathy with the insurgents. Among the newspapers here there is considerable difference of opinion as to the policy which should be adopted by Spain towards Cuba. The *Diaria de la Marina*, in an editorial just published, sustained the policy of autonomy, and credited Senor Sagasta with inaugurating it, while urging the reformist party to adopt it. El Pais, organ of the autonomist party, in reply held that the autonomist party policy favored by Senor Sagasta was what the autonomists in Cuba had been advocating for the last 19 years, and that therefore the premier could not be credited with having inaugurated it. At the same time; El Pais intimated that Senor Sagasta was really only following in this connection the policy adopted by the late Premier, Canovas Del Castille, and that the Cubans are therefore more indebted to Castilla than to Sagasta in this matter.

Laluch, in an editorial headed "Autonomy for the autonomists," claimed that no party had more right to inaugurate autonomy than the autonomists themselves, who had advocated and defended the policy of autonomy for the past 19 years, and who had remained firm to their convictions in spite of everything.

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