

The Great K. & A. Train Robbery

BY PAUL LEICESTER FORD

Author of "The Hon. Peter Stirling," &c.

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(Continued.)

When the news of the robbery was over, they called on the sheriff, who arrived opportunely, to take us into 97 and search the three of us, a proceeding that puzzled Fred and his kinsfolk not a little, for they weren't in the fact that the letters hadn't been recovered. I presume the latter will some day write a book dwelling on the favourite theme of the foreigner—that there is no personal privacy in America. The running remarks as the search was made seemed to open Fred's eyes, for he looked at me with a puzzled air, but I winked and frowned at him, and he put his face in order.

When the papers were not found on any of us, Camp and Baldwin both nearly went demented. Baldwin suggested that I had never had the papers, but Camp argued that Fred or Lord Ralles must have hidden them in the car, in spite of the fact that the cowboys who had caught them insisted that they couldn't have had time to hide the papers. Anyway, they spent an hour in ferreting about in my car, and even searched my two drawers, on the possibility that the true letters had been passed on to them.

While they were engaged in this I was trying to think out some way of letting Mr. Cullen and Albert know where the letters were. The problem was to suggest the saddle to them without letting the cowboys understand them, and by good luck I thought I had the means. Albert had complained to me the day we had ridden out to the Indian dwelling at Flagstaff that his saddle fretted some galled spots which he had chafed on his trip to Moran's Point. Hoping he would "catch on," I shouted to him:—"How are your sore spots, Albert?" He looked at me in a puzzled way, and called, "Aw—I don't understand you!"

"Those sore spots you complained about to me the day before yesterday," I explained.

He didn't seem any the less befogged as he replied, "I had forgotten all about them."

"I've got a touch of the same trouble," I went on, "and if I were you I'd look into the cause."

Albert only looked very much mystified, and I didn't dare say more, for at this point the trio, with the sheriff, came out of my car. If I hadn't known that the letters were safe, I could have read the story in their faces, for more disgusted and angry-looking men I have rarely seen.

They had a talk with the sheriff, and then Fred, Lord Ralles and I were marched off by the official, his lordship demanding sight of a warrant and protesting against the illegality of his arrest, varied at moments by threats to appeal to the British Consul, minister plenipo., her Majesty's Foreign Office, etc., all of which had about as much influence on the sheriff and his cowboy assistants as a Moqui Indian snake dance would have in stopping a runaway engine. I confess to feeling a certain grim satisfaction in the fact that if I was to be shut off from seeing Madge, the Britisher was in the same box with me.

Ash Forks, though only six years old, had advanced far enough toward civilization to have a small gaol, and into that we were shoved. Night was come by the time we were lodged there, and, being in pretty good appetite, I struck the sheriff for some grub.

"I'll get you something," he said, good-naturally, "but next time you shove people, Mr. Gordon, just quit shovin' your friends. My shoulder feels like"—Perhaps it's just as well not so say what his shoulder felt like. The Western vocabulary is expressive.

The average clergyman is not a healthy man. There are many reasons that contribute to make him delicate. He leads a sedentary life. He doesn't take sufficient exercise. Just the same he is a hard-working man. He takes too much trouble about other people's troubles to trouble much about his own. He thinks too much about other sick people to look after his own health. The result is that the hard-working clergyman becomes a semi-invalid early in life.

There is no necessity for this. A clergyman adds nothing to his usefulness, but greatly detracts from it, by neglecting his health. If a man, be he clergyman or layman, will resort to the right remedy just as soon as he feels out of sorts, and knows that he is a little bilious, or that his liver is torpid, or his digestion is out of order, he will remain healthy and robust and add much to his usefulness and many years to his life. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery restores the appetite, makes digestion and assimilation perfect, invigorates the liver, purifies the blood and tones the nerves. It is the greatest of all known blood-purifiers and flesh-builders. It cures 98 per cent. of all cases of consumption and diseases of the air passages. Thousands who were given up by the doctors and had lost all hope have testified to their complete recovery under this marvelous medicine. It is the discovery of an eminent and skillful specialist, Dr. K. V. Pierce, for thirty years chief consulting physician to the Invalids' Hotel and Surgical Institute, at Buffalo, N. Y. All medicine dealers sell it.

"Eight years ago I was taken with what my doctor called liver complaint," writes N. E. Kendrick, Esq. of Campion, Gratton Co., New Hampshire. "I began doctoring for it taking sarsaparilla and other medicines. Last February I had a bilious attack, and I could not sit up long enough to eat. I began taking Dr. Pierce's medicines. I have taken one bottle of Golden Medical Discovery, and one vial of Pleasant Pellets. I find no other medicine equal to yours in helping me."

Without an equal for constipation and biliousness—Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets.

The moment the sheriff was gone Fred wanted the mystery of the letters explained, and I told him all there was to tell, including as good a description of the pony as I could give him. We tried to hit on some plan to get word to those outside, but it wasn't to be done. At least it was a point gained that some one of our party besides myself knew where the letters were.

The sheriff returned presently with a loaf of canned bread and a tin of beans. If I had been alone, I should have kicked at the food and got permission for my boys to send me up something from 97, but I thought I'd see how Lord Ralles would like genuine Western fare, so I said nothing. That, I have to state, is more, or rather less, than the Britisher did after he had sampled the stuff, and really I don't blame him, much as I enjoyed his rage and disgust.

It didn't take long to finish our supper, and then Fred, who hadn't slept much the night before, stretched out on the floor and went to sleep. Lord Ralles and I sat on boxes—the only furniture the room contained—about as far apart as we could get, he in the sulks, and I whistling, cheerfully. I should have liked to be with Madge, but he wasn't, so there was some compensation, and I knew that time was playing the cards in our favour. So long as they hadn't found the letters we had only to sit still to win.



"Well, Mr. Gordon, you've played a pretty cute gamble."

About an hour after supper the sheriff came back and told me Camp and Baldwin wanted to see me. I saw no reason to object, so in they came, accompanied by the judge. Baldwin opened the ball, by saying:—"Well, Mr. Gordon, you've played a pretty cute gamble, and I suppose you think you stand to win the pot."

"I'm not complaining," I said. "Still," said Camp, angrily, as if my contented manner fretted him, "our time will come presently, and we can make it pretty uncomfortable for you. Illegal proceedings put a man in gaol in the long run."

"I hope you take your lesson to heart," I remarked, cheerfully, which made Camp scowl worse than ever. "Now," said Baldwin, who kept cool, "we know you are not risking loss of position, and the State's prison for nothing, and we want to know what there is in it for you."

"I wouldn't bet my chance of State's prison against yours, gentlemen. And while I may lose my position, I'll be a long way from starvation."

"That doesn't tell us what Cullen gives you to take the risk."

"Mr. Cullen hasn't given or even hinted that he'll give anything."

"And Mr. Gordon hasn't asked, and if I know him, wouldn't take a cent for what he has done," said Fred, rising from the floor. Instead, I replied "Mr. Cullen's party has the stock majority in their favour, and would have won a fair fight if you had played fair. Since you didn't, I'm doing my best to put things to rights."

Camp cried, "All the more fool"—but Baldwin interrupted him by saying:—"That only shows what a mean cuss Cullen is. He ought to give you \$10,000 if he gives you a cent."

"I merely shook hands, but I wanted the worst way to say it—"

CHAPTER XIII. A LESSON IN POLITENESS.

Within five minutes we had a big surprise, for the sheriff and Mr. Baldwin came back, and the former announced that Fred and Lord Ralles were free, having been released on bail. When we found that Camp had gone on the bond, I knew that there was a scheme of some sort in the move, and taking Fred aside, I warned him against trying to recover the proxies.

"They probably think that one or the other of you knows where the letters are hidden," I whispered, "and they'll keep a watch on you, so go slow."

He nodded, and followed the sheriff and Lord Ralles out.

The moment they were gone, Mr. Baldwin said, "I came back to give you a last chance."

"That's very good of you," I said. "I warn you," he said, threateningly, "we are not men to be beaten. There are fifty cowboys of mine in this town who think you were concerned in the holding up. By merely tipping them the wink they'll have you out of this, and after they've got you outside I wouldn't give the toss of a nickel for your life. Now, then, will you hand over those letters or will you go to the State's prison for ten minutes?"

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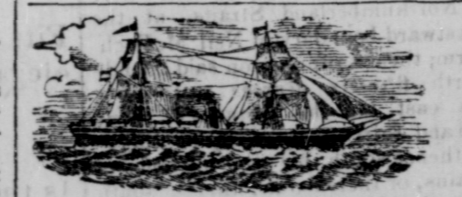
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