

Treasure Trail

By Frederick Niven

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CHAPTER III

Angus Drives To The "T. T. Ranch"

The bunch of returned horses was down in the home pasture. They were whinnying to their old fellows by the time Tremaine reached home. And by the time Piccolo got to the ranch-house Tremaine had let them all in.

It was good to be back, in Piccolo's eyes, to see again the foot breadth of water running along in the irrigation ditch. Even the stove-pipe sticking up out of the roof it was good to see again! When he had hung his saddle on its peg he went indoors to find his partner filling his tobacco pouch at the big tin.

"A smoke, Pic, my lad," said Jack. "A smoke before anything. No more knock-knock muck."

Piccolo flung off his heavy coat and went out for cordwood to start the stove, and Tremaine smoked meditatively. He had something on his mind, but it was not till after supper that he spoke it, pushing back his plate.

"That old man Angus MacPherson is sure all prospector," said he.

"I guess he is. He's not so very old, Jack."

Puff-puff went Tremaine.

"You didn't notice the way he looked at the bits of stone you threw out of your pocket, Pic?"

"Yes. When you were dusting out your pocket like a kind of a shy school kid under the eyes of his daughter."

"Oh, gwan!" said David Thomas.

"I guess there's nothing in it," said Tremaine, "and yet I don't know. I'll be turning into a writing sharp if I get imagining. But there seemed more than him just being bugs on looking at rocks. Got any more bits in your pocket?"

Hestated at Piccolo. He frowned. He wondered what was the meaning of his partner's expression. Really what Tremaine said had conjured back a picture into Piccolo's mind, a picture hardly noted at the time. He remembered how Mark Bantling had watched him when he sat his horse before the Benwell House veranda answering the silly questions of that fellow What's-his-name.

"It's queer, you know, how mineral has been found in this Western country," Tremaine remarked, persistent. "Most unexpected ways. Accidents! Devil's own luck, as the saying goes."

"Guess I wouldn't know paying mineral even if I saw it," said Piccolo. "Copper in a stone don't always look like copper in a penny piece. Silver in a stone don't always look like half a dollar. Might be tin for all I'd know. Once I thought I'd got gold and a darned old prospector laughed himself red over me. Mica it was."

"Well, man tin's valuable. Mica is

valuable if you get the right kind and in the right quantity."

"Oh, shoot!" said Piccolo. "Above ground for me! No delving like a mole."

But though the subject seemed to be thus dismissed it stuck in Tremaine's mind, in Piccolo's. He could not rest. Supper over that night, because of his thoughts set a-going by Jack's remarks, he came to a decision regarding a course of action. But shy of telling what he was about he announced:

"Guess I'll saddle up and go back to Colvalli. I want some cig papers."

"Smoke a pipe, man," said Tremaine.

"No. I want some papers."

"There's some there, then. On top of the grand piano."

Grand Piano was their name for an old packing-case turned into a cupboard.

"Ah, but they're white. I want wheat straw."

"Gee, you are surly particular."

Piccolo waited for no further repartee, strolled leisurely out. To ride five miles for (ostensibly) a packet of cigarette papers—brown, when white were procurable, as well as a pipe—was perhaps odd. To ease his conscience, rather than to have them to show to Jack, he certainly bought wheat papers in Colvalli before doing aught else. Shades of night were taking the gold light out of the rolling prairie. Distances were purple instead of green, sifted with blue. He left his horse hitched at Inman's Store, and strolled along to the Benwell House. There were few men there, so he sat on the veranda edge, legs dangling over, and rolled a cigarette. Then he dropped his tobacco sack—and the papers. He had to light a match to find them. When he had found them his face, to the considering gaze of Movie Bill, sitting there again (reading no more, the dim light forbidding), had a worried look. An ingenious sort of man, thought Movie.

"Looking for anything?" he asked.

"Me? Why no."

"Oh!" said Movie Bill.

Piccolo eyed him sidewise in the dusk.

"I saw a man pick up something there just after you went today," Movie added, "and I wondered."

Piccolo thought he had better be clever before those deep-set meditative eyes.

"Guess it was nothing I dropped," said he.

"All right," replied Bill, laconically.

Whistling gently, hands in pockets, Piccolo strolled round the gable, lost in thought, came to his horse. There might be something in what Jack imagined, thought he. What should he do? So he wondered. The notion took him to ride back to Angus MacPherson's and—he hesitated. What could he do there? They might not sit on the veranda so late. How, even if they did,

would he see? He could not pretend to drop things there and light matches. He would be ashamed to seem clumsy, "all thumbs", before Miss MacPherson. For a moment he thought of going up to the MacPherson house quietly and examining the ground stealthily before the veranda, for the dropped stones. Then he remembered the dog. It would, for sure, give tongue if he prowled about that way.

A gentle night breeze fanned down the straggling street, stirred the dust, was cool on his cheek. He felt himself fool. Stupid notion, that of his partner's! He wondered if he should go back and ask Jack's advice; but to do so he would have to tell of dusting out his pocket before the Benwell House, and Jack somehow seemed always able to see inside him. Jack would say: "That was what you remembered when I was talking about the dropped stones at MacPherson's!" Piccolo had a sensitiveness in his make-up, his constitution, his harmless ego. He had always dreaded not-being able to play the man in an emergency; and yet in all the emergencies he had met he had done so. Still, he had that sensitiveness. He would go home, he decided—and sleep on it.

"To sleep on it has helped many a man," he mused.

If he had only known it Angus MacPherson was quoting the very same adage to himself scarcely a mile to north—and quoting it without avail.

Slowly homeward rode Piccolo through the dusk, the red glow of his cigarette head to his silhouetted saddle-horn as he took the twining road along the benches.

And Angus, in his buckboard, saw that figure as he drove south also, on one of the backward loops of road.

"Eh man," he murmured, "a wonderful hand for what the painter bodies call 'effects'! What a figure is you against the last of the day! What would we call it? The Last of the Cowpunchers! Eh, man, a caller air; a grand atmosphere!"

He flicked the whip and hummed a few bars of his favourite song:

"... my heart will ever be
At home in dear old Scotland, wi' my
ain folk!"

The last of the cowpunchers (that Angus, joggling along in the buckboard did not recognize as Piccolo in that light, or lack of light) drifted down beyond the roll of plain. A sickle of moon showed like a paring of silver in the deep blue sky. The Dipper was bright, with its pointers pointing to the North Star, and over against it belted Orion stood above the rolling world.

"It's better to be quixotic than close," thought Angus; and he arrived at the T. T. ranch so little in rear of Piccolo that the latter stood waiting to see who came, framed by the oblong of lit ranch door.

"Good-night," said Angus.

"Oh, it's you," said Piccolo, and his voice at that moment was scarcely higher than a whisper.

"I beg your pardon?" said Angus.

"I said, 'Oh, it's you!'" repeated Piccolo.

"Ay, that's right. Oh, it's me and no doubt—no doubt." He sighed, as one sighing over his own folly. "Could I have a word wi' ye, Pic?" he enquired.

CHAPTER IV

Maps and Smell of Wood Smoke

Angus and, sitting down, pushed well away from him on the table the book he had been reading. His face had the expression of: "I told you so!"

"Well, evidently you don't know," said Angus. "Evidently I am all quixotic in coming to you. You don't deserve to be told! It's a galena."

He set it on the table.

"There," he said, "it's yours! You go back to where you got it from and look for more, follow it up. Go hunt for more to see where this came from, whether fallen from above near at hand, or washed to where you found it by freshets. And when you find the mother-lode stake it."

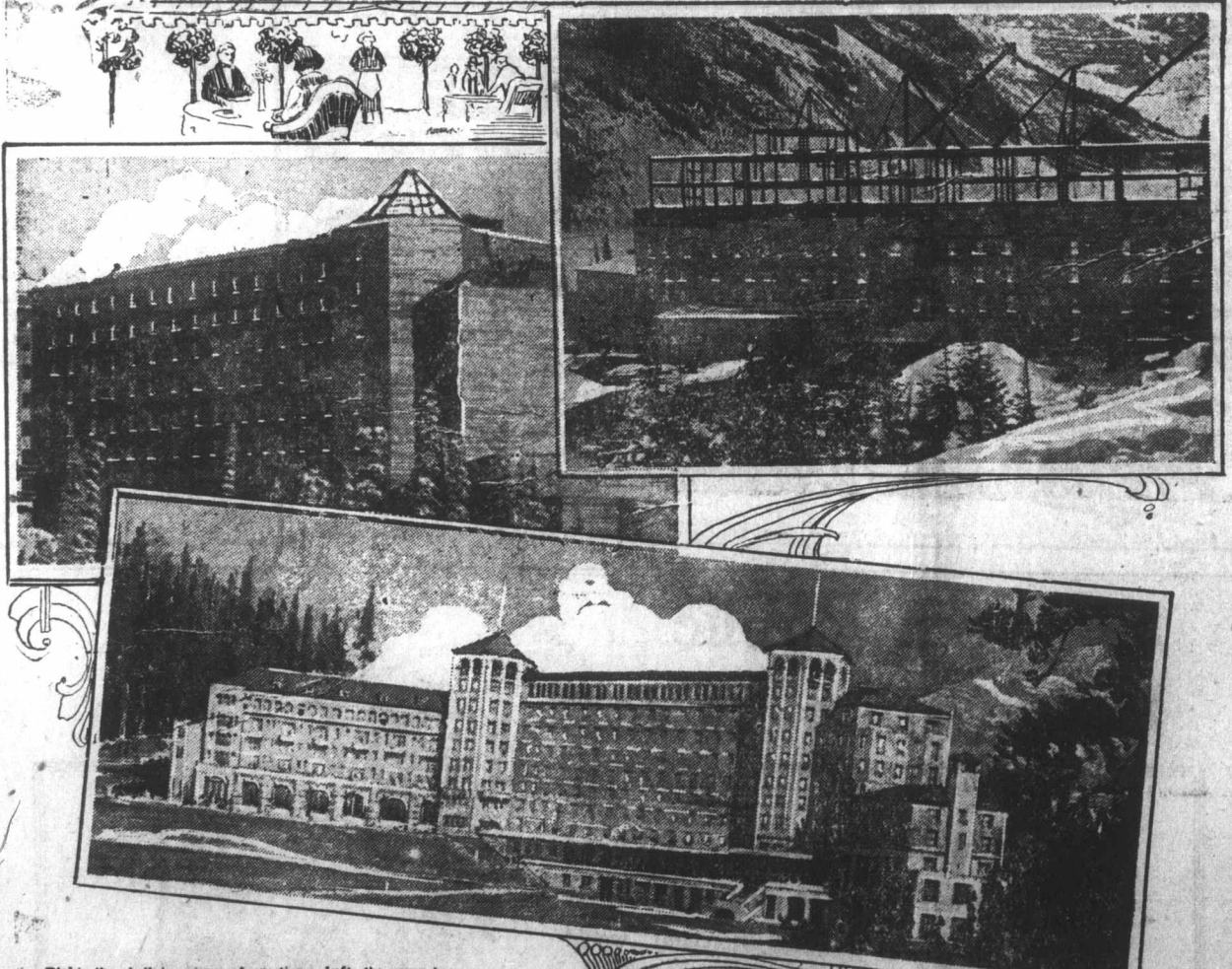
(To be continued.)



GUELPH'S FIRST HOUSE TO BE RESTORED

At the instance of the Wellington Historical Society, the old Priory building of Guelph, Ontario, erected nearly a century ago by John Galt, the founder of that city, is to be restored. The various trades unions in Guelph have offered to contribute to the restoration and an energetic campaign is now being carried on among the citizens to raise the balance of the money required to rebuild. In 1827, the building as it stood on completion ninety-seven years ago. The old building was removed from its original site many years ago, and some of the original logs were replaced with new ones, but there are still many of the timbers remaining that were placed in position by the Canada Company's axemen in 1827. For some years the old Priory building was utilized as a passenger station by the Canadian Pacific, but it was abandoned as a station when the town of Guelph outgrew it. Tradition has it that Galt, taking an axe from one of the axemen struck the first blow against the first tree to be felled, after which he and his party drank to the prosperity of Guelph.

Extraordinary Construction Feat at Famous Mountain Resort



Right, the shell in course of erection. Left, the cover beneath which the construction work is going on. Below, Chateau Lake Louise, as it will appear upon completion.

Architects and builders all over America are much interested in the progress of the re-building of the Canadian Pacific hotel at Lake Louise, Alberta. The site of this building is over a mile above sea level, and the thermometer frequently takes a sensational drop, there being winter days when 56 below zero is on record. It was imperative that the new wing, which is being built to replace that burned down last summer, should be finished and open for the coming season, and that work on it should, therefore, not be interrupted by winter weather.

Several architects and contractors from United States cities, who have visited the site, expressed doubts as to whether the job could be done during the cold weather, particularly in view of the fact that so much of the work consisted in pouring cement. This had to be safeguarded from freezing, and it was finally decided to build a huge wooden, tar-paper lined, shell around the entire space to be occupied by the new wing of the hotel. On the inside of this shell were hung thousands of feet of temporary steam coils, kept hot by 380 horse-power steam boilers, the effect of which was to provide a safe, summer-like atmosphere for the carrying on of the work.

The erection of so important a building in a position so comparatively difficult of access, as is the Lake Louise Chateau, is a matter calling for unusual engineering skill, the task of getting the materials to the site being by no means an easy one. With a night and day service, in spite of ice and snow, over 26,000 tons of material and coal are being delivered by the winding narrow-gauge tramway on a four per cent grade for a distance of 3 1/2 miles from Lake Louise depot to the Chateau. Canadian Pacific forces are supervising the work, supplying steam and electricity and delivering material to the site.

This extension will enable the Chateau to accommodate seven hundred guests in a fireproof building, with every modern convenience, and one of its features will be the magnificent view of the lake and the group of mountains surrounding it from the ball room, rotunda, lounge and dining room through enormous plate glass windows which feature the whole length of the building. The extension was designed by Messrs. Barrett and Blackader, of Montreal, who have done other important work in connection with Canadian Pacific hotels and the contract was undertaken by Messrs. Carter-Halls and Aldinger, of Winnipeg.

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Vol. XLIV, N... BIG FALLING

1,206,506 Less To... Scotia in 1924

The Nova Scotia fiscal year Septemb... tember 30, 1924, w... according to the Min... the Local House... Hon. William Ch... Mines.

The output for t... September 30, 1923... or a decrease in t... 1,206,506 tons.

The coal sales for... were 4,448,168 tons, the previous year's... decrease of 1,059,7... (All figures are tons.)

The quantity of... end of the fiscal y... shows, was 85,147... 551 tons in 1923... tons.

The number of m... coal mines in 1924... with 12,806 in 192... The total number... colliery days, in t... was 2,480,004, as de... 204 in 1923, a decre... The quantity of... consumption in the... fiscal year under r... tons, as against 2.1... a decrease of 335,000.

In the fiscal year... the United States v... as compared with... assist in active p... rance market tota... compared with 1.6... previous year, a de...

GREEN

Mr. and Mrs. W... "The Ridge" had... (a son) arrive at... March 3rd.

Miss Harriet Ra... few months here... friend, Mrs. Lilla... turned to Wolfville... Three of our girl... assist in active p... got ready by Miss... ville. They consen... rehearsal down th... feel proud of our... their success in the... play.

Mr. and Mrs. Re... ceiving congratula... on the arrival of... last Friday (6th)... baby both are doin... drew's home here.

Mr. Aleck Andro... ville hockey team... against the Acadia... A good audience... of the G.C.F. on F... usual enjoyed the... Rev. D. B. Hemm... finish. The subje... ments in Animal... common one, was... handled. This we... with good fun. M... Miss Edna Colli... days last week at P... to her home here.

Mr. Borden Fra... railway station, w... Belleisle, Annapol... day, to spend the... on Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. Fo... spent the week end... and Mrs. Arthur... Mr. and Mrs... White Rock, spent... of their friends, I... Fenwick, here.

Rev. E. L. Curry... here on Sunday af... splendid sermon... solo by the choir le... was also much enjo... were added to the... A good number v... vice at the Baptist... Sunday evening; ab... people walked to W... service at the Uni... Mrs. Marshall an... Wolfville, were gue... Monday of Mrs. T...

India's demand f... puzzling bankers... can never unders... should want money

TO TOUN

A London (Engl... published a report... temulates making... "It is understood... circles in Great Bri... shes, that there... reached between th... Mussolini, in wh... proposed to unite...