

MAIN STREET

The Story of Carol Kennicott

By SINCLAIR LEWIS

"Don't! Or I will go with you, and I'm afraid there might be some slight scandal. Perhaps some day I'll do it. Good-by."

Her hand disappeared in his blackened leather glove. From the turn in the road she waved at him. She walked on more soberly now, and she was lonely.

But the wheat and grass were streaked under the sunset; the prairie clouds were tawny gold; and she swung happily into Main street.

II

Through the first days of June she drove with Kennicott on his calls. She identified him with the fertile land; she admired him as she saw with what respect the farmers obeyed him. She was out in the early chill, after a heavy cup of coffee, reaching open country as the fresh sun came up in that unspoiled world. Meadow larks called from the tops of thin spire-ponce-poles. The wild roses smelled clean.

As they returned in late afternoon the low sun was a solemnity of radial lines, like a heavenly fan of brown gold the limitless circle of the grain was a green sea rimmed with fog, and the willow wind-breaks were pearly sides.

Before July the close heat blanketed them. The tortured earth cracked. Farmers panted through corn-fields behind cultivators and the sweating flanks of horses. While she waited for Kennicott in the car, before a farmhouse, the seat burned her fingers and her head ached with the glare on the fenders and hood.

A black thunder-shower was followed by a dust storm which turned the sky yellow with the hint of a coming tornado. Impassable black dust far-borne from Dakota covered the inner sills of the closed windows.

The July heat was ever more ailing. They crawled along Main street by day; they found it hard to sleep at night. They brought mattresses down to the living-room, and thrashed and turned by the open window. Ten times a night they talked of going out to seek themselves with the boss and wade through the dew, but they were too listless to take the trouble. On cool evenings, when they tried to go walking, the gnats appeared in swarms which peppered their faces and caught in their throats.

She wanted the northern pines, the eastern sea, but Kennicott declared that it would be "kind of hard to get away, just now." The health improvement committee of the Thana-topia asked her to take part in the weekly campaign, and she toiled about town persuading householders to use the fly-traps furnished by the club, or giving out money prizes to fly-swalling children. She was loyal enough but not ardent, and without ever quite intending to, she began to neglect the task as heat sucked at her strength.

Kennicott and she motored North and spent a week with his mother—that is, Carol spent it with his mother, while he fished for bass.

The great event was their purchase of a summer cottage, down on Lake Minneleasah.

Perhaps the most amiable feature of life in Gopher Prairie was the summer cottages. They were merely two-room shanties, with a seepage of broken-down chairs, peeling veneered tables, chromes pasted on wooden walls, and inefficient kerosene stoves. They were so thin-walled and so close together that you could—and did—hear a baby being spanked in the fifth cottage off. But they were set among elms and lindens on a bluff which looked across the lake to fields of ripened wheat sloping up to green woods.

Here the matrons forgot social jealousies, and sat gossiping in gingham; or, in old bathing-suits, surrounded by hysterical children, they paddled for hours. Carol joined them; she ducked shrieking boys, and helped babies construct sand-bastins for unfortunate minnows. She liked Juanita Haydock and Maud Dyer when she helped them make picnic-supper for the men, who came motoring out from town each evening. She was easier and more

natural with them. In the debate as to whether there should be real loaf or poached egg on hash, she had no chance to be heretical and oversensitive.

They danced sometimes, in the evening; they had a minstrel show, with Kennicott surprisingly good as end-man; always they were encircled by children wise in the lore of woodchucks and gophers and rafts and willow whistles.

If they could have continued this normal barbaric life Carol would have been the most enthusiastic citizen of Gopher Prairie. She was relieved to be assured that she did not want bookish conversation alone; that she did not expect the town to become a Bohemia. She was content now. She did not criticize.

But in September, when the year was at its richest, custom dictated that it was time to return to town; to remove the children from the waste occupation of learning the earth, and send them back to lessons about the number of potatoes which (in a delightful world untroubled by commission-houses or shortages in freight-cars) William sold to John. The women who had cheerfully gone bathing all summer looked doubtful when Carol begged, "Let's keep up an outdoor life this winter, let's slide and skate." Their hearts shut again till spring, and the nine months of cliques and radiators and dainty refreshments began all over.

III

Carol had started a salon. Since Kennicott, Vida Sherwin, and Guy Pollock were her only lions, and since Kennicott would have preferred Sam Clark to all the poets and radicals in the entire world, her private and self-defensive clique did not get beyond one evening dinner for Vida and Guy, on her first wedding anniversary; and that dinner did not get beyond a controversy regarding Raymie Wutherspoon's yearnings.

Guy Pollock was the gentlest person she had found here. He spoke of her new jade and cream frock naturally, not jocosely; he held her chair for her as they sat down to dinner; and he did not, like Kennicott, interrupt her to shout, "Oh say, speaking of that, I heard a good story today." But Guy was incurably hermit. He sat late and talked hard, and did not come again.

Then she met Champ Perry in the post-office—and decided that in the history of the pioneers was the panacea for Gopher Prairie, for all of America. We have lost their sturdiness, she told herself. We must restore the last of the veterans to power and follow them on the backwards path to the integrity of Lincoln, to the gaiety of settlers dancing in a saw-mill.

She read in the records of the Minnesota Territorial Pioneers that only sixty years ago, not so far back as the birth of her own father, four cabins had composed Gopher Prairie. The log stockade which Mrs. Champ Perry was to find when she trekked in was built afterward by the soldiers as a defence against the Sioux. The four cabins were inhabited by Maine Yankees who had come up the Mississippi to St. Paul and driven north over virgin prairie into virgin woods. They ground their own corn; the men-folks shot ducks and pigeons and prairie chickens; the new breakings yielded the turnip-like rutabagas, which they ate raw and boiled and baked and raw again. For treat they had wild plums and crab-apples and they wild strawberries.

Grasshoppers came darkening the sky, and in an hour ate the farm-yards garden and the farmer's coat. Precious horses, painfully brought from Illinois, were drowned in bogs or stampeded by the fear of blizzards. Snow blew through the chinks of new-made cabins, and Eastern children, with flowery muslin dresses, shivered all winter and in summer were red and black with mosquito bites. Indians were every-

where; they camped in dooryards, stalked into kitchens to demand doughnuts, came with rifles across their backs into schoolhouses and begged to see the pictures in the geographies. Packs of timber-wolves treed the children; and the settlers found dens of rattlesnakes, killed fifty, a hundred, in a day.

Yet it was a buoyant life. Carol read avidly in the admirable Minnesota chronicles called "Old Hall Fence Corners" the reminiscence of Mrs. Mahlon-Black, who settled in Stillwater in 1848:

(To be Continued.)

WILL A CAVDISH BE BRITAIN'S NEXT QUEEN?

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looted Spanish colonies right and left. In one ship alone he captured 25 pounds in silver, £8,000 in gold and an entire cargo of costly silks; in a single raid he secured more than 40,000 crowns. Space unfortunately will not permit even a briefest resume of his adventurous cruise, but it can be said that he returned to England with wealth enough to buy a fair earldom and that his sails were of damask, his sailors clad in silks, and his top-mast covered with a cloth of gold.

But Captain Cavendish did not enjoy his wealth long. In less than three years he was off to the Main again. This time he commanded an expedition of three ships and two sloops. But the voyage was to end as disastrously as the other was a success. The little fleet was caught in Winter seas off the inhospitable coast of South America, and during the bleak months the crews suffered untold agonies. The sick were put ashore, almost naked and hungry, and perished miserably. Master Anthony Knyvet, one of these unfortunates who survived and returned to England, told terrible stories of their sufferings. Men, he said, removed their socks and found their toes came too; they blew their noses and the nose fell off; and disease rotted away their bones. Many crazed with pain ended their sufferings by committing suicide. At length the fleet separated and Cavendish found himself with men hardly sufficient to navigate his ship. But his spirit was indomitable. He refused to return to England, but the crew rose in mutiny and the ship's course was altered. At last, overcome by his misfortunes, the gallant captain succumbed. He had staked his all on one throw of the dice and lost. But despite his failures and shortcomings the name of Captain Thomas Cavendish ranks high among the foremost sea heroes of England.

THE GREAT DUKE.

Of the many great men and picturesque figures which the House of Cavendish has given to history's pages, none could boast of more ability nor of a greater record of public service than that of William Cavendish, first Duke of Devonshire. A noble of high morality, at a time when public morality had sunk to its lowest depths, Cavendish, then Earl of Devonshire, distinguished himself by standing almost alone against the sycophantic court of James II. He consistently opposed arbitrary government and won for himself the enmity of the King, who, upon the dimmest of pretexts, imposed an almost ruinous fine upon the offending noble. Devonshire was one of the nobles to invite William of Orange from Holland and was the first titled man to meet him when he landed. For his many services to the Crown and the public at large he was later created Duke of Devonshire and given the highest honors within the gift of the King. His last public service was to assist in concluding the union with Scotland. In him it may be said that the glory of the House of Cavendish reached its zenith in more ways than one.

One could write of many more prominent members of the Cavendish family and their names would be those of men of outstanding ability in the realms of science, diplomacy and politics, for the family tradition is that of "service."

Were the Lady Rachel to become the bride of the Prince there is no noble family in England more worthy of this high honor. In spirit and in deed the traditions of her House admirably would fit the Lady Rachel to appreciate to the full the motto of the Prince of Wales, "I Serve."



'IT'S WORTH FETCHING'

Patients from Elginburg. Elginburg, Feb. 4.—The sacramental service for the church was held in the Elginburg Methodist church on Sunday. Percy Frazer has gone to the hospital for treatment. On Thursday last, Miss Jennie, Robert and William McCause were removed to the General Hospital, all three suffering from pneumonia. Miles Stoverson, Kopler, at W. Clogg's; Neil Fitz-Joy and Charles Purdy, Cataragui, at John Silver's; Mrs. McFadden and Mrs. Day at R. Clogg's.

About the time dad thinks he is getting ahead a little and can begin to take it easy he has to furnish a big wedding for daughter and a home for son-in-law.

GOOD ADVICE

"Oh, mother may I go out and skate?"
Asked Eve, her youngest daughter,
"I'm anxious to learn at any rate,
For every girlie oughter



Yes, daughter, go on, but don't be late.
There's no use in my forbidding,
But keep right side up at any rate,
For a girlie looks awful skidding



A Big Bar

A full-size, full-weight, solid bar of good soap is "SURPRISE." Best for any and all household use.

ROYAL YEAST CAKES



As a health builder, Royal Yeast is gaining in popularity every day. It is a food—not a medicine. It supplies the vitamins which the diet may lack. Royal Yeast is highly beneficial in cases where the system seems "run down". Royal Yeast is the richest known source of vitamins, and when taken into the system acts as a corrective agent. Royal Yeast Cakes are recommended for their purity and wholesomeness. It is the purest, the most convenient and economical yeast on the market.

Two to four Royal Yeast Cakes a day will work wonders. A full day's supply can easily be prepared at one time by using one glass luke warm water and teaspoon sugar to each yeast cake. Allow to stand over night in moderately warm room. In the morning stir well and pour off liquid. Place in refrigerator or other cool place and drink at intervals as desired throughout the day.

Send name and address for free booklet "Royal Yeast Cakes for Better Health."

EW. GILLET COMPANY LIMITED
WINDSOR, TORONTO, CANADA, MONTREAL.

Warmth for the Winter Days

The man who eats the right kind of food doesn't cover himself with heavy flannels, and he doesn't shiver under the blasts of Winter. The glow of health is in his face. He never "catches cold"—is always happy and healthy, always on the job. The breakfast he eats is

Shredded Wheat

With HOT Milk

No use trying to warm the body when you eat foods that are lacking in heat-making, tissue-building elements. Shredded Wheat with hot milk makes a warm, nourishing, satisfying meal for all members of the family, and solves the breakfast problem for many a busy housewife who has to get the children off to school.

