



THE STORY

CHAPTER I—Ben Elliott, from "Yonder"—stands in his entry into the lumbering town of Tincup by defeating Bull Duval, "king of the river," and town bully, in a log-birding contest. Elliott has brought along an old man, Don Stuart, who had been eager to reach Tincup, but Nicholas Brandon, the town's leading citizen, resents Stuart's presence. To force him to leave town and Elliott, resenting the act, knocks him down. Elliott is arrested.

CHAPTER II—Elliott finds a friend in Judge Able Armitage, to whom he confides that he has come to town because he had heard it was a tough nut to crack. The judge hires him to run the one lumber camp, the Host Owl, that Brandon has not been able to grab. This belongs to Dawn McManus, daughter of Brandon's old partner, who has disappeared with a murder charge hanging over his head.

CHAPTER III—Brandon seizes Duval, Duval, to beat up Ben, and Ben wrestles him in a fist fight and throws him out of camp. Old Don Stuart dies, leaving a letter for Elliott, to be used when the going becomes too tough. Ben refuses to open the letter at this time, believing he can win the fight by his own efforts.

logs as a boxer watches his opponent's blows, he went up that zooming, booming avalanche as it came down. He danced to the left as the end of one stick swung out to clout him to a pulp. He ran rapidly over three that lumbered down beneath him and paused. Two came riding together, one atop the other, a moving barrier as high as his waist. Buller opened his lips in a cry of warning but thrusting out one hand, touching the topmost of the pair ever so lightly, Ben vaulted over, landing on another that rolled and grumbled behind the two. Crevasses between logs opened and closed before him. Sticks popped out of the tremendous pressure and rolled down slantwise, imperiling him. He did not run rapidly. At times he seemed to move with painful, with dangerous deliberation. But he was watching the logs and his chances and did not make a move until he was certain of where he was going.

Slowly the deck settled. Half of what had been piled logs now bobbed and swayed and rolled in the pond. The rest, reduced from the height to which it had towered a few seconds before, came to rest. And Ben Elliott, on its lowered crest, stood still a moment until certain the movement was ended and then came slowly down, looking not at the men who gaped at him but at the logs over which he walked with a critical, appraising eye.

"Atta boy!" an unidentified voice yelled above the roar of the carriage exhaust, but if Elliott heard this he gave no indication.

"Now, if Buller can't get that locomotive going by noon," he said to the pale and visibly shaken Able, "we'll telegraph for a new spider. No use taking more chances. Come on, Buller, let's look at the stuff you've got piled."

CHAPTER III

Not so in the camp where men and horses toiled to make decks of logs by night out of what at dawn had been standing trees. Nearly half the crew were Flinns, stolid, uncommunicative fellows, good enough workmen but difficult to speed up.

"We ought to have a new boss for camp. That crew needs riding if they're going to produce. Ruppert means well but he doesn't know how." Ruppert was the camp foreman.

"That's part of the hard shell of this nut, Ben; lack of good men who've got the sand to stick here and work for anybody but Brandon."

The next morning—Sunday—Ben sat over a table in his tiny office working with paper and pencil when Bird-Eye Blaine burst in.

"The Bull's here?" the little Irish man exclaimed in a whisper, closing the door behind him hastily. "The Bull's here and wearin' his river boots!"

"Yeah?" The other's marked agitation did not disturb Elliott, who looked up from his work with that frown which the financial situation had set on his brows.

"The Bull!" Bird-Eye repeated and swallowed. "He's come, folks he's come to other camps. He'll have every damned Finlander 'nd Injun hitting the road to escape him."

Ben shoved back his chair then. "What's this?"

"Ah, it's Brandon that's sent him! He's Mister Brandon's pet bull 'nd he'll clinch this camp av men like he's done many a time before! He's wearin' river boots 'nd swillin' whisky!"

"Where?" Elliott got to his feet.

"In th' men's camp,"—gesticulating with his thumb. "He's just now comin' 'nd they're commencin' to sift out th' damned yellow bellies!"

Without stopping even for his hat, Ben stepped out and crossed to the men's camp. He did not burst into the place, but opened the door casually and slipped inside.

In the center of the room, close to the heating stove above which stood a lung from drying racks, stood Bull Duval. His cap was fitted on his head, he leaned backward from his hips, in his uplifted right hand was a quart whisky bottle nearly full and his voice belloyed the words of a woods classic.

In the far end of the room a half dozen men were huddled. From several upper bunks concerned faces watched the Bull. The men were clearly afraid, certain that this hilarity was only a prelude to a melee in which heads would be broken and bodies bruised.

The swaying of Duval's body, as he moved to the measure of the ballad brought him facing the doorway.

Ben Elliott stepped forward two or three paces and stood watching him. His gaze was steady, and in his eyes danced a warning flame. The Bull broke short his song.

"Good day, Mister Elliott!" he said heavily, in mock respect. "I heard you was th' new boss at Host Owl and likely you're lookin' for good men. Here's one, Elliott. Here's th' best man you'll get a chance to hire until th' next blue snow!"

Ben, heedless of the increased tension which showed on the faces of the onlookers, crossed the floor slowly.

"You want to work for me, Duval?" he asked.

"Think I come over to spunk you?" the other countered insolently. "Have a drink!"

He extended the bottle, holding it in his great hand, grinning at Ben.

"In the first place, I don't want to hire you," Elliott said. "In the second, there's no hooch allowed in this camp."

He snatched the bottle, swung and sent it crashing against the stove. For a brief moment the hiss of its contents against scorching metal had the place while the Bull's head thrust slowly forward and his small eyes grew red with rage. His lip drew back, exposing yellow teeth.

"Will you walk out, Duval?" Ben asked. "Or do you want me to throw you through the door?"

"Throw me out?" Duval cried thickly. "Throw me out? Why, kid, th' best day you ever seen you couldn't—"

He got just that far in his boast. His hands had knotted into great fists, his body swayed, but before he could strike that first blow or fall into that initial clinch or carry out whatever plan of attack had formed in his truculent mind, knuckles bashed into his lips, driving the words back into his teeth.

It was a hard blow, with everything Ben Elliott had from knuckles to ankle put behind its drive. The savagery with which he struck threw Ben off his own balance, but hard as he had hit, quick as he had been, the blow was not enough to put Duval down.

He closed with a roar, one great arm clamped about Elliott's waist, the other hand smearing across Elliott's face, shoving Ben's head backward as the fingers sought the eyes. Ben twisted away from that menace of gouging, strained against that crushing embrace and struck hastily with both hands. But the Bull's chin was safe against his own shoulder, his forehead burrowing into Elliott's chest for protection and not until Ben lifted his knee with a drive like that of a piston did Duval

let go. He reeled backward then, cursing immoderately, pausing and heaving forward again from his spiked stance on the rough floor as he struck with all his might. His blow went home, a stinging, crushing impact on Ben's cheek bone and Duval's great weight followed, bearing the other to the floor, flat on his back. The Bull spread arms and legs in a smothering sprawl as he went down but before he could pin Ben close and helpless he was writhing, threshing over, shading a hand which clawed for his throat, grasping Duval's leg, lifting, straining, finally throwing him off, lurching to his knees and then got to his feet, pitching forward off balance as he ran, and coming to a halt against the bunks.

He faced about sharply to see Duval standing, blood on his mouth, bent for



The Bull Gave Up Trying to Close.

ward, arms hooked and extended, like some great jungle creature stirred to killing fury.

Elliott did not try to elude him. With a grunt he charged, head down, one arm before his face, the other drawn back, and when he struck the sound was like that of a club on a quarter of beef. The blow spun Duval off about and the next rook him, he grappled for Ben but Ben was one. He rushed for Ben but Ben overstepped and struck Duval as he reached past.

The Bull gave up trying to close. He cruck out, now, with renewed surgery as they stood toe-to-toe for a

moment. He nudged a brace of drives which, it seemed, would have felled a horse, so great was the effort behind them, and then, fainting, sent in a slashing uppercut.

The great fist landed squarely on the point of Ben's jaw, lifted him from his feet and sent him reeling, clawing the air, over on his back again.

Elliott was dazed by that blow. Bells clanged thunderously in his ears and lights flashed and flickered before his eyes but as he crashed down to the floor Bird-Eye's voice, shrill and frantic, cut through the fog that had solidified over him:

"Th' boots! Th' boots!"

Boots, yes. Bull Duval did not fling himself on his prostrate adversary, this time. Erect, he strode forward two measured paces—three, and on the fourth he bent backward from the hips, lifted his right foot and raked it out before him; raked those many spikes in the sole straight at the face of his fallen adversary.

But his river boot only swung across the place where a face had been. One lone spike ripped the skin over the cheek bone; a companion left a bright red trace. Ben had jerked his head sideways, moved it that quarter inch which left his face still a face and not a mass of raw flesh ribbons.

Duval teetered on his left foot, hopping for balance and cursing because he had missed, as Ben, reeling to his feet, shouted:

"Keep out! My fight!" He had seen, as he came erect, Bird-Eye Blaine leap for the wood box and grasp the heavy iron poker. "My fight!" he repeated and his hoarse voice was commanding.

Bird-Eye fell back, clinging to the poker, lips moving. It was Elliott's fight, indeed. He had seen many men fight before, had Bird-Eye Blaine; born to a rough life, he had lived it fully. He had seen countless battles but never had he witnessed such a fury as Ben Elliott loosed then.

He drove out with both fists, needless of defense, blind to Duval's counter offensive. He shouted as he struck. He used a knee to break another hold, he bit when Duval tried to throttle him with the grip of both hands. He danced as the Bull sought to trample his feet with his river calks, and all the time he was striking. Again and again his hard knuckles found their mark.

A bench went over as they waltzed into it. Their combined weight, crashing against the bunks as Duval tried desperately to clinch again, smashed an upright and sent men in the upper deck scurrying. Dust rose thickly. The sink was ripped from its place as Ben drove the Bull into it with a body blow, and a chair was wrecked as Duval caught by another punch, went over it backward with a crash.

Ben stood still, spread legged, breathing hard, hands swinging in a swift rhythm of rage.

"Get up!" he panted. "Get up! I've only started!"

Duval rolled over, his back to Elliott, and shoved himself to his feet. Not until he had risen and faced about did the other move. Then he closed with another of those flying rushes, with

one drive pinned Duval against the wall, with another sent his head crashing against the window frame.

The Bull gave a bubbling roar and tried to grapple. His hands were struck down. He swung mightily, slowly, and missed, and as he went by, off balance, a chopping stroke on the back of the head floored him.

Again Elliott waited. "Get up!" he cried thickly. "Get up, Duval, and take the rest!"

The other started to move, looking over his shoulder with one eye that remained open. He saw a tall, supple young man, hair awry, shirt ripped open from neck to belt, cheek bleeding, jaws set, stand there swiveling one fist as though the knuckles were wild to strike again. He sank back to the floor, shuddering.

On that Elliott relaxed and moved close.

"Enough?" he asked, sharply, prodding the Bull with a toe of his pac.

Duval moaned and shook his head. He made as if to rise again and Ben stepped back, giving him every chance. A mutter arose behind him.

"Finish—th'—!" a man cried. But the boss at Host Owl would not do that. He asked no odds.

The Bull did not get to his feet. He started to draw a knee beneath him, heaved and then sank back to a hip. He swore heavily and lunged his head, propping it on both great hands spread wide on the floor.

"Through Duval?" Ben asked and it seemed as though his hand and battered face tried to twist in a grin. The other gave no intimation of having heard. "There's more on tap. Or have you got enough?"

And then, when to reply came Elliott stooped, grasped the Bull's shirt in his hands and half lifted him.

"Let go!" the man blurted. "Let go or I'll—"

He tried to twist away, tried to strike Ben's legs, but his strength was gone, beaten from his great body. He was dragged across the floor, river boots trailing over the boards, straight to the doorway. With one foot Elliott kicked open the portal and with a heave hove Duval, the Tincup terror, into the tramped snow outside.

A half hour later Bull Duval, who had washed his bleeding head and face in the horse trough against the shout of protest of Bird-Eye Blaine that it would be unfit thereafter for his teams to drink from, shoved himself erect and wiped trembling hands on his mackinaw.

The door of the van opened and Elliott emerged. He walked straight to the bull and examined his visible injuries critically.

"Fair job," he said enough to himself, and grinned. "A fair job, Duval. But remember this: if you ever set one of your feet in this camp again, or on any operation where I'm in charge, I'll give you a kicking you'll remember!"

The Bull whimpered.

"I know when I got enough," he said and his one serviceable eye blood-shot eye searched Elliott's countenance. "I didn't mean no harm," he whined. "I was drunk."

"No, you weren't drunk. If you'd been drunk I wouldn't have hit you. You knew what you were doing. Now, Duval, why'd you come out here this morning? Who sent you?"

Duval looked away.

"Nobody," he said weakly. "I got drunk. But . . . but if you're needin' a man, I can work for a better man than I am."

Ben shook his head. "No use, damn. You're going to tell me why you came and was sent you. Was it Brandon?"

"No"—evasively.

"Sure? How much did he give you to come here? Or are you on the payroll to do such chores?"

"I—I, he didn't—"

"You're a worse liar than you are a fighter by a mile or two, Duval. Mine was a good guess, wasn't it? What were his orders?"

"Well, he said if I didn't that he'd—"

"Good! That's all I want to know. There's the road. And you can take this little message with you to Brandon: Tell him that he needs to send more and better men here the next time. And as for you: I hire no men who can be hired to fight another man's battles. Make tracks, Duval!"

(To Be Continued Next Week.)

Corn And Hog Program Outlined For This Year

The county agent's office has just received a list of the growers and dealers in the state who have clover, soy beans, cow peas, lespedeza, and velvet beans for sale together with the prices of each. The dealers in this county and farmers who wish to order from approved seedmen, should get in touch with the county agent's office. Farmers who plan to plant lespedeza this spring should get their seed at the earliest possible date. There is a great shortage of dependable seed. Farmers having land that needs improvement should try lespedeza.

A few more Asiatic chestnut trees are available to farmers of this county who wish to get them. Anyone desiring these trees for 1935 should communicate with the county agent's office at once. It is almost time to let the department know how many trees to allot to this county.

There is a great shortage of cattle in this country, both beef cattle and dairy cattle. The fact is, we are short on poultry and all forms of livestock. Stocker and feeder cattle

have advanced in price two dollars per hundred in the last thirty days. Our people have enough feed and pasture to raise 100,000 more cattle than they have. We need 5,000 more sheep. We need 50 laying hens on every farm; two or more milk cows on every farm. What can Haywood county expect for a new day unless we get busy at once and pull out of our idleness? Is it possible that we are going to sleep on the job until too late? The organization work and the machinery is now available to enable us to work out our problems. What are you doing about it?

Every farmer in Haywood county who secured a production credit loan last year and who plans to use this form of loan this year should attend a district meeting in Asheville next Thursday, January 29, at 3 p. m. With the proper support and cooperation this organization can be made to serve the farmers most economically.

All of the community farm meetings held in the county have been well attended and the interest shown has been most gratifying. Committees have been elected in all townships. These committees are now giving thought to farm selection and management at an early date. This setup will be announced through the county agent's office. We are expecting 100 or more farmers and business men to attend the Western North Carolina meeting in Asheville at 10 o'clock Jan. 24. The TVA is offering to cooperate with us in this program and we do not wish to see our people fail to show their appreciation of this cooperation.

On Tuesday of this week representatives of twelve of the fourteen counties which comprise the Haywood, et al Corn Hog Control Association met in all-day session at the court house here. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Chambers from the office of Mr. Shay, director of Swine Extension work, in Raleigh. The purpose and subject of the meeting was to acquaint the county leaders and committeemen with the 1935 Corn-Hog contract and district setup of the Agricultural Adjustment.

The new 1935 Corn-Hog contract has just been received at the county agent's office. All farmers who have been producing 10 acres or more corn and have already reduced it are willing to reduce and receive payment will be eligible to sign.

Under the 1935 Corn-Hog contract corn production may be decreased by any where from 10 to 30 per cent of the average production in 1932-34; that the adjustment payment will be based on the rate of 35 cents per bushel of the yield estimated for the number of acres by which the corn land area is kept below the 1932-34 average. There will be no instructions on the use of the land shifted from corn production.

Chairman Hyatt La For Raleigh Monday

The board of commissioners met their regular third Monday meeting last Monday. Other than the routine of business no special orders were disposed of. Chairman W. A. Hyatt left immediately after the board adjourned for Raleigh where he will attend a conference regarding legislation for the county. County attorney W. T. Nash is in Raleigh and will be in touch with Mr. Hyatt.

SCALDS IN TUB Mamaroneck, N. Y.—William K. Mer, 53, was scalded so severely he fell into a bathtub.

Advertisement for 'If Your Shoes Need Repairing Take Them To THE CHAMPION SHOE SHOP NEXT TO WESTERN UNION'

Advertisement for '666 COLDS AND FEVER' with 'Liquid—Tablets—Salve—Nose Drops'

Advertisement for 'SMITH'S Cut-Rate Drug Store' listing various medicines and their prices.

Advertisement for 'Get a LIFT with a Camel!' featuring Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith and a bank teller.

Advertisement for 'CLOTHING For Men and Boys C. E. Ray's Sons A COMPLETE CLOTHING SERVICE'