

Among the Apple Trees

By Clifford V. Gregory

A Story of Farm Life

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CHAPTER III

THE girls eagerly read over the books and bulletins Mr. Pearson had lent them, and covered crops, cultivation and Bordeaux mixture were their chief topics of conversation. As soon as the ground was in shape in the spring they plowed it and harrowed it until it was reduced to a fairly fine condition, certainly better than anything it had known since it was first set out. The trees blossomed freely, and the orchard with its waving sea of pink flowers was an inspiration to the girls, for it held the promise of a bountiful harvest to come. As soon as the blossoms closed the girls set to work to spray the trees. They were hard at work one day mixing a barrel of Bordeaux mixture when they were startled by the sound of an automobile coming up the driveway.

"It's Harold and Beth!" cried Mabel. "Oh, what'll we do?" She looked down at her spattered dress in dismay. "You might dive into the barrel," said Gladys ironically as she poured in another pail of water. "I'm not afraid of the Du Vals even if they have got an automobile."

The car was close upon them by this time. Harold brought it to a stop with a jerk and leaped lightly to the ground. He lifted his hat as he advanced toward the girls and held out his hand. If he was in any way surprised at their appearance or occupation a slight lifting of the eyebrows was the only manifestation of it. Harold Du Val prided himself upon his ability to maintain his composure under the most trying circumstances. Mabel's face was red as she returned his greeting, and she hurried over to the car to hide her confusion.

Beth greeted her effusively. "I'm so glad to see you!" she cried. "We were out trying our new car, and I made Harry come around this way. We hardly ever see you any more since you left school."

"We—we don't get to town very often," replied Mabel, who had not yet quite recovered from her confusion. "Never mind your dress," said Beth, quickly guessing the cause of her embarrassment. "I wish I lived in the country and could wear old clothes. But what in the world are you doing, anyway?"

The same question had evidently just occurred to Harold. "Just mixing up will for the pigs, are you?" he inquired in his most polite accents, indicating the barrel with a sweep of his hand.

Gladys laughed outright. "I'm afraid the pigs would be rather blue after a dose of that," she replied.

"Well, what is it, then?" persisted Harold.

"It's Bordeaux mixture, if you must know. We are going to spray the apple trees to kill the bugs."

"Rather hard on the bugs, I should say," Harold remarked as he leaned over to brush a speck of dust from one

of his tan oxfords. "But, say, when did you start in the horticultural business, anyway?"

"We've just started," she answered as she filled a pail with water and poured it into the barrel.

"Aren't you afraid you'll spoil your complexion?" Harold asked tensively as the mixture splashed up into her face.

She shook her head as she wiped a spattering drop from her nose. "I don't know that Bordeaux mixture is any worse for my complexion than talcum powder would be," she said.

"You are certainly an attractive advertisement for the Bordeaux mixture," Harold answered.

Gladys did look charming as she stood there in her spattered dress, with her unruly hair blowing across her face—the never could keep those stray locks where they belonged—and the rose hue of her cheeks looking all the rosier in contrast to the spots of lime on her nose.

"I thought you had outgrown those foolish speeches," she said reprovingly as she turned to the tank for another bucket of water.

"Oh, I say!" cried Harold. "Can't you come for a little auto ride? Let the bugs enjoy life a little longer—just to please me," he persisted coaxingly as Gladys hesitated. The comically pleading look in his brown eyes was irresistible.

"I really ought not to go," she said. "But I would like an auto ride. I guess we can go for just a little while, can't we, Beth?"

"If we can have time to put on clean aprons and wash our faces first," Mabel answered.

"Yes, well wait," Harold answered, "though clean dresses can't make you look any prettier than you do just now."

Mabel turned up a little face at him as she turned toward the house. "If you're going to talk like that I won't go," she called back over her shoulder.

In a few moments they reappeared, looking as fresh and dainty as though they had never held a spray nozzle or a plow handle. By skillful maneuvering Harold relegated Beth and Mabel to the back seat and helped Gladys up in front.

"Now for a spin!" he cried as he seated himself beside her and pulled back the starting lever. The machine bounded forward. Gladys clung to the seat, her eyes shining with the exhilaration of the swift motion.

"Isn't it glorious?" Harold cried as he increased the speed to a still faster gait.

After a few minutes he was quickly covered by the tireless machine and they were almost to town when Harold finally turned around and started back at a somewhat slower pace.

"We went so fast that I was almost lost," confessed Mabel. "That's Pearson's just ahead, isn't it?"

Gladys nodded. "And there's Jeff over in the field plowing," she said. She leaned out and waved her handkerchief at him.

He waved his whip in dazed surprise and stood watching the automobile until it was out of sight. He paid so little attention to his plowing the rest of the afternoon that the patient horses turned to look inquiringly at him now and then as if to ask what the matter was. But Jeff was thinking, and his train of thought, though by no means comparable in speed to a fast mail, had all the ponderous inertia of a double headed time freight.

By the time he had finished milking he had come to a conclusion. "I'm going to do it," he said half aloud, slapping his knee. "I'll beat that trucking Du Val yet. And he went into the house and wrote to an automobile company for prices.

But if Jeff had known the trend of the conversation in the touring car he might have been better satisfied with everything in general and with one or two things in particular.

"Who is that fellow?" inquired Harold as they passed Jeff.

"That's Jeff Pearson, one of my best friends," promptly replied Gladys.

"So you like plowboys, do you?" Harold asked, with a quizzical smile.

"I like any one who has ambition enough to do something," Gladys returned. "Did you ever do any work in your life?"

Again Harold smiled that exasperating smile, though it was a trifle less self confident this time. "What's the use?" he inquired. "Father's got plenty of money."

"If I were a boy," the cold contempt in Gladys's voice jarred Harold out of his accustomed self assurance. "I'd be ashamed to have no ambition but to spend my father's money. You don't have to work for a living, but the very fact that you don't makes it possible for you to accomplish much greater things."

"I don't think you're hardly fair," Harold answered. "I'll probably settle down and go to work at something after a while."

"Probably," cried Gladys. "What are you going to do?"

"Oh, I don't know," he replied. "I suppose father will find me something."

"That's it—father, father, all the time. Why don't you learn to depend on yourself a little? Why don't you go to college and learn something and then start out for yourself and do something?"

Harold gave the lever a vicious jerk by way of reply, and neither of them said anything more until they reached home.

"Thank you ever so much for the ride," said Mabel as she stood leaning on the gate.

"Thank you ever so much for going," replied Harold. "And you, too," he added, turning to Gladys. "And the lecture—I'm afraid thanks won't pay for that."

"Indeed they won't," she answered. "The only thing that will pay for that is to see it have some effect, and I guess there isn't much hope of that."

"Thank you anyway, Miss Icebox," he said, with his old self confident smile, as he started the machine. "Goodby."

"Goodby," answered Mabel. "Come again."

"And come in and see us," cried both over the back of the car.

CHAPTER IV

THE days that followed were busy ones for Gladys and Mabel. The apple blossoms faded and the petals fell, leaving tiny apples in their places. And down the rows of trees stretched smaller rows of embryo plants—thousands of them. The girls kept the cultivator going tirelessly. The weeds had not been kept down very well the season before, and the ground was so filled with seed that it often seemed as though the cultivator only made two weeds grow where one grew before. But by dint of an inexhaustible supply of stick-to-itiveness they kept ahead, and at last the weeds gave up. The fight was too hot for them, and they succumbed and allowed the cabbage to grow to un molested maturity.

One day in early August as the girls were helping their mother set the dinner table their father came in with a letter in his hand and a worried look on his face.

"It's Lon," he explained in answer to his wife's inquiring look. "He got his leg broke in a runaway. Carrie wrote for me to come awhile if I could. There isn't any one else they can get to do things, and with all those cows to milk."

"Of course you must go," broke in Mrs. Sanders. "The girls and I will look after things here."

"Yes; do go, papa," spoke up Gladys. "I'd like to try my hand at running this farm awhile."

Mr. Sanders smiled. "Running a quarter section is a bigger proposition than running an acre," he said. "But I guess you'll have to try it for a few days."

Mabel was picking up some windfalls one hot afternoon a couple of days after her father left to take care of his brother when a well dressed stranger drove up to the fence and called to her.

"A fine crop of apples you have here," he remarked as she approached. "A little the finest any I've seen yet. I understand that you and your sister are the best apple growers in the neighborhood."

Mabel flushed with pleasure. "I don't know who could have told you that," she said. "This is the first crop of apples we have ever raised."

"I didn't need to be told. The orchard speaks for itself. You haven't sold them yet, have you?" he added.

"Sold them?" said Mabel inquiringly. "Why, they won't be ready to sell for a month yet."

"You mean they won't be ready to pick for a month yet," corrected the stranger. "There's nothing to prevent your selling them now, is there?"

"No, I suppose not, only it seems queer to sell apples a month before they're ripe."

"Not at all. Lots of business is done that way. I'll tell you what I'll do," he went on. "You have a fine lot of apples here, and if you'll agree to let me have all that you have to sell I'll see that you get \$1.50 a barrel for them."

"A dollar and a half a barrel isn't much for apples, is it?" said Mabel doubtfully.

"It is when they are as plenty as they are this year. Why, I'll bet there'll be 10,000 barrels in this county alone."

"Well," said Mabel, "I'll ask father about it when he comes home."

"But I can't wait," objected the man. "By the time your father gets home I'll have contracted for all the apples I can use and you'll have to sell yours for a dollar a barrel or less. Just figure a moment. Here's at least fifty trees."

"Thirty," corrected Mabel.

"Well, thirty, then. There'll be about ten barrels to the tree, or 157 whole orchard. Not bad, eh?"

Mabel opened her eyes in astonishment. "Four hundred and fifty dollars!" she cried. "I'll—"

"Oh, no you won't, not till you tell me about it," said a voice behind her, and she turned to see Gladys standing beside the half filled apple basket. Her face was stern.

"Tell her about it," said Mabel, turning to the stranger, and he once more explained his proposition.

Gladys smiled quizzically. "Then you'll give us \$450 for our apple crop?" she said inquiringly.

"Well, not exactly, but I'll agree to give you \$1.50 a barrel for all you deliver to me in good condition. There'll easily be 800 barrels."

"We'll be lucky if we get half that," Gladys broke in. "We may get twice as much a barrel, though."

"You won't get 75 cents a barrel if you don't sign up a contract pretty soon, the buyer said, reddening. His mouth hardened.

"Maybe not from you," replied Gladys, "but with the apple crop almost a failure in New York I guess we'll be able to sell them to some one."

"Who said the apple crop was a failure in New York?" exclaimed the stranger.

Gladys held out the paper toward him. "Read it for yourself," she said.

The buyer gathered up his reins, with a scowl. "I'll be a cold day when you sell those apples in this county," he said as he drove off.

"Why didn't you let him have them?" cried Mabel, turning to her sister.

"That surely was a good enough price for us."

"Good enough if we can't get more," replied Gladys. "But we're going to get more."

"How do you know?"

"Mr. Pearson said so. He just phoned over and told me about this fellow. He sold his apples to him last week before he found out anything

about it. Then he began to get suspicious, and he found out that Mr. Sanders, or whatever this fellow's name is, is trying to corner the apple market in this county and sell them for two or three times as much as he is buying them for."

"But what do we care what he sells them for as long as we get our money?" persisted Mabel.

"Why, don't you see, as soon as he gets the price up we'll sell ours and get twice as much as we would if we sold them now. Let's go to dinner."

They stopped at the mail box on the way and found a note from Beth inviting them to a picnic the next Saturday.

"A picnic!" cried Mabel joyfully. "We haven't been to a picnic this year. I'm going to do my hair up on top of my head. Shall we wear our white dresses or our blue skirts?"

"I think you'd better wear your blue skirt," said Gladys judiciously. "White dresses are such a bother to do up. I'm not going."

"Not going?" cried Mabel, staring at her blankly. "Why not?"

"I promised papa to do the chores and look after things."

"Well, so did I. But we can get some one to milk for us at night, can't we?"

Gladys shook her head. "I don't care about going anyway," she said, and Mabel knew it was no use to coax her.

Harold and Beth came out after the girls the morning of the picnic.

"Gladys isn't going," explained Mabel as she handed her lunch basket to Harold and climbed up beside Beth.

"Where is she?" asked Harold. "Let me see if I can't induce her royal highness to change her mind."

But Gladys was down in the back pasture salting the sheep and refused to be found, so the others were forced to start off without her, much to Harold's dissatisfaction.

(To Be Continued.)

YOUTHFUL VICTIM OF CUPID

And the Boy Was Ready With the Excuse That Has Done Duty for So Many Centuries.

John Duncan is six years old, and lives in a nice, comfortable house at No. 2056 East Nineteenth street, says the Cleveland Leader. He started in to get an education at Bolton school not long ago, but the beauty of a little girl of about his own age proved far more attractive to him than did anything that his patient teacher could offer. Whenever the opportunity came this youthful lover would steal over to his heart's desire and fairly smother her with true lover's kisses.

In vain did the teacher protest against these ardent manifestations of affection. The kisses multiplied in number and increased in their warmth until finally a note was sent to John's father, who is an erudite and distinguished lawyer with offices in the Perry-Payne building.

"Why, my boy," said the father, seriously, "how could you disobey your teacher?"

The six-year-old Lochinvar made no reply.

"Why did you keep on kissing this little girl?"

"Well, papa," said Johnny, joyously, "she certainly did look good to me."

And the inquisition ended then and there.

The Rope of Ocnus.

Few persons who use the phrase "Like the rope of Ocnus" to denote profitless labor know the significance of the expression or its great antiquity. "The Rope of Ocnus" was the name of a picture painted by Polygnotus, a distinguished Greek who died in the fifth century B. C. He is reputed first to have given life, character and expression to painting.

Memory and Intellect.

The possession of a great memory does not necessarily mean a strong intellect. Mozart, when only 13 years old, played a new opera from one hearing, which had been composed especially to test his skill. But in addition to reproducing the opera from memory without missing a note, he introduced in the second playing the variations, which struck his cultured hearers dumb with amazement. Blind Tom could probably have reproduced the same opera. He did play Liszt's celebrated Hungarian opera after hearing it once without missing a note, but he could not have created what Mozart did. He had Mozart's memory, but not his intellect.

Evil of Gossiping.

Three old women with a teapot between them can ruin the reputation of a saint.—W. E. Reddick.

First Newspaper Advertisements.

Newspaper advertisements made their earliest appearance in 1652.

Where Wine Is Cheap.

In Spain shoe blacking is mixed with wine instead of water.

According to Pliny he opened the mouth and showed the teeth of his figures, and he was the first to paint women figures with transparent draperies.

Ocnus was a poor but industrious Greek whose extravagant wife spent money as fast as he could earn it, and he related his troubles to his friend the painter. Polygnotus thereupon painted the picture of a man weaving a rope of straw, while behind him stood a donkey eating the rope as fast as it was woven. It is pleasant to relate that the silent lesson had the desired effect upon the wife of Ocnus and that it was through her subsequent frugality and thrift that Ocnus ultimately rose to a position of great prosperity.

Of the pigmies of northwestern Rhodesia a modern traveler writes: "The Batwa stand about four feet high and are long armed, short legged and ugly, being usually prognathous. The legs are disproportionately short, the feet large and the body is covered with a sort of down. Both sexes affect a state of comparative nudity. They have their own tongue, but usually know a little of the language of their big neighbors. No attempt is made to till the open forest glades; they depend for food on game and what they steal from the fields and plantations of the surrounding tribes."

Farmers Buying Autos.

The number of automobiles owned by farmers is growing rapidly. Out of 10,000 autos in Iowa, 5,000 are owned by farmers. Kansas farmers spent \$3,200,000 for automobiles during 1909, and \$2,750,000 in 1908. In one Nebraska town of 800 population, 40 autos were sold last year to farmers near the town and retired farmers in the town. Careful estimate of the number of automobiles owned by farmers in the entire United States is 76,000.

Homely Philosophy.

"Sometimes it pays to be sleep-goin'," said Uncle Eben. "De faster you travels de harder you bumps if dars a collision."

Literature.

Literature gives life to the ideas of the moment, and poetry crystallizes ideas into forms that can be remembered.

An Author's Maxim.

The proper study of mankind is a room where womanhood can't get in.—Lippincott's.

Literary Note.

The best ten novels: Ours and nine others.

FOR SALE—FOR RENT—TO EXCHANGE—

Classified Advertisements

ONE CENT PER WORD EACH INSERTION—NO AD. RECEIVED FOR LESS THAN 15 CTS.

WANTED—FOUND—LOST—

WANTED.

Wanted—Young calves, F. E. Bills, Sixth street, phone.

Wanted—Places for 14-year-old boy on farm. Charles H. Foster, 105 May street, Marshalltown.

Wanted—Boards and roomers, 401 East Main.

Wanted—Place on farm for boy of 13, work for board, Address M-12, care this office.

Wanted—Public to know that my grocery store phone is 654. Store 709 East Main street, Marshalltown, Iowa, Jacob Schirmayer.

Wanted—You to try D. A. Moore for wall paper cleaning. Phone 1361 green.

Wanted—Leave your wants at the Marshalltown Employment Agency, Phone 783.

Wanted—Let your wants be known. Carl's Employment Agency, Phone 950.

HELP WANTED—MALE.

Wanted—A young, experienced grocery clerk. Address with references and salary expected. Alfred Price, Clarksville, Iowa.

Wanted—At once, sixteen teamsters, \$2 per day, free transportation to Harward, Iowa. Also good woman cook, \$20 per month and expenses. John Herbert, 701 South Second street, Marshalltown, Iowa.

Wanted—Barber. First class reliable man. Steady job. No students. R. A. Buck, State Center, Iowa.

HELP WANTED—FEMALE.

Wanted—Experienced makers and apprentice for millinery department. Call at once. Burch Bros. Company of the New England store.

Wanted—Good girl for general housework. 402 East State street.

Wanted—Dishwasher. Henry Sundell, 31 North Center street.

Wanted—Three good girls. Palace Steam Laundry. Good wages.

WANTED—SALESMEN.

Wanted—A salesman of ability to introduce our line of high grade lubricating oils and greases. Exceptional inducements. Champion Refining Co., Cleveland, O.

AGENTS WANTED.

Wanted—Good men and women agents at once for "Roosevelt's Famous Hunt For Big Game," also for "Traffic in Girls." Immense sellers. Price \$1.50. 50 per cent commission. Outfit free. Send fee for mailing. Both outfits payment installment plan. Permanent work. \$2,000 to \$5,000 per year profits. Particulars free. Address, A. B. Kuhlman Company, Chicago, Ill.

Agent Wanted—For best proposition, selling high grade household specialty; exclusive territory free. Write today to M-7, care T-R.

WANTED—LAND AGENTS.

Prefer practical farmers to represent the finest of South Dakota farm land bargains. The greatest land movement on record is now under way. Also write us if interested in large tracts for dividing up, which can be sold on easy terms and low prices. Interstate Land Agency, Merriam, Neb.

BUSINESS CHANCES.

The Lake Andes Concrete, Stone and Brick Company has received a contract to furnish concrete blocks for the Peterson livery, Geddes, S. D., to the amount of \$2,700. They offer 20 shares of stock for sale, \$100 per share. Ten per cent semi-annual interest. A 5 per cent dividend guaranteed. Address the Lake Andes Concrete, Stone and Brick Company, Dr. N. B. Baldwin, secretary, Lake Andes, S. D.

FOR SALE—MISCELLANEOUS.

For Sale—Hot water plants in old Birchard property, including all radiators. Must be removed at once. B. W. Sinclair, chairman committee.

stands, one bookcase, fruit jars and jelly glasses, Mrs. Edmondson, 105 South Fourth street.

For Sale—Sewing machine, cheap. Inquire 107 North Eleventh street. Phone 812 yellow.

For Sale—Stavur rubber tired surrey, good as new. A. E. Myers.

For Sale—First class shoe repair shop; only one in town of 1,400 inhabitants. P. P. Smith, Grundy Center, Ia.

Candy floss machine for sale. Used only short time. Will sell cheap. E. M. Lathrop, Belmond, Iowa.

For Sale—Tested seed corn. I have on hand just out of test Calico seed corn. Am still testing. My record to date is 235 bushels sold and none returned. Ninety-five per cent guaranteed. Six grains tested from each ear. Five dollars per bushel. See me if you have to replant. Telephone Bannock, or write to Clemons. W. J. Winslow.

For Sale—The fixtures of a blacksmith shop. All in good order. Bargain for a cash customer, if sold soon. Tallman Auto Company, Clarion, Iowa.

For Sale—600 bushels late seed potatoes. E. S. Crouse, Liscomb.

For Sale—My Staver "30" automobile, almost new. A. J. Clark.

For Sale—On easy payments, bar fixtures and new second hand billiard and pool tables, billiard and bowling supplies. We lead in cheap prices. The Brunswick-Balke-Coller Company, Marshalltown, Iowa.

FOR SALE—POULTRY AND EGGS.

For Sale—Eggs from choice thoroughbred Partridge Wyandottes, three pens to select from. First pen, headed by superior cockerel, mated for fine stock in both males and females, \$3 per setting of fifteen. Second pen mating, \$2; third pen, \$1. Combination settings, pens 1 and 2, \$2.50; 2 and 3, \$1.50. No prettier or better bird for all purposes is obtainable than the Partridge Wyandotte. Address Rodney C. Wells, Marshalltown, Iowa.

LIVESTOCK, HORSES, ETC.