

# GUNLOCK RANCH

by FRANK H. SPEARMAN

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WNU Service

## SYNOPSIS

Sleepy Cat, desert town of the Southwest, is celebrating the Fourth of July. Jane Van Tassel, beautiful daughter of Gus Van Tassel, hater of Gunlock ranch, has arrived from the East for the first time. She watches the Frontier Day celebration in company with Dr. Carpy, crusty under-hearted friend of the community. Henry Sawdy of the Circle Dot ranch, tricked in a fake horse race the day before by Dave McCrossen, foreman at Gunlock, plans revenge. He enters Bill Dentson, a handsome young Texas wrangler, in the rodeo which McCrossen is favored to win, and lays heavy bets on him with Harry Boland, saloonkeeper and enemy of McCrossen. Unknown to the crowd, Dentson is a champion horseman.

## CHAPTER I—Continued

Boland sneered again. "An' there ain't going to be no trick ridin' to-morrow. That's a fine proposition of yours, Henry."

"I'll have my boy in the saddle to-morrow for any kind of ridin' you name against any rider you name," retorted Sawdy.

"What odds you askin', Sawdy?" asked Boland, dangerously near to a snarl as he questioned.

"On the showin' the boy's made," responded Sawdy impressively, "and only on the chance he can pull himself together by tomorrow, I'm askin' two to one."

"How much do you cover at that?"

"All you can raise."

"Sawdy," snapped Boland, "I'll go you a thousand, two to one." The judges' bell clanged for the trick riding. Sawdy in consternation rushed toward the stand. "Hold on," he cried throwing up his hands. "Five minutes, gentlemen—just five minutes," he shouted. "My man is changin' his boots. Five minutes, please!"

"Does it take him five minutes to take off his boots?" bellowed Bill Pardaloe. "I c'n kick mine off in five seconds. Start the ridin'!" ordered Bill, clanging the bell impatiently.

"For God's sake, Bill Pardaloe!" shouted Sawdy, "hold on, hold on—give me at least three minutes." If a wink from the foot of a two-story balcony might be described as stentorian, such was the slow, agonizing wink that Sawdy cast up at the impatient judge.

Pardaloe looked at his watch. "I'll give you two minutes," he said sternly. "Be ready or default!" But both men quite understood that this remark was for public consumption rather than literal enforcement.

Sawdy raced hastily back to Boland, who, in fact, had followed him part way to the stand. "You said a thousand at two to one," panted Sawdy. He drew hastily from his pocket a roll of bills and laid the money in Tenison's hands. "Count that—they're mostly fifties. Now, Boland, put up or shut up."

"Just a minute!" Boland conferred with his cronies—a group of them were already about him. There was a turning sidewise, a digging into pockets, an assembling of wads; the thousand was hurriedly put into Tenison's hands.

Boland was excited, Sawdy particularly calm. "Boland," he said casually, "I'm hungry."

"What do you mean, Sawdy?"

"I'm hungry for another thousand, same odds."

"Like hell, I guess."

Sawdy pulled from another pocket a second roll of bills.

"Put up, Boland, or shut up, just's you like."

"Sawdy, I'll bet you five hundred more, even money." It was purely a bluff, but it brought an unpleasant surprise.

"I want to be fair, Harry Boland," retorted Sawdy, "just's you was yesterday. Put up your five hundred, buddy. I'll cover it."

Mrs. Georgia Elmore Cook died Tuesday forenoon at the Sacred Heart hospital in Eugene following a weeks illness. Funeral services were held this afternoon (Thursday) at Mills chapel, Rev. E. E. Coulter officiating. Interment was in the I. O. O. F. cemetery.

Mrs. Cook was born January 3, 1890, at Bullion, Idaho. She was married in 1927 at St. George, Ida. to George Cook, who with her brother, Arthur Brown of Walker, survives. She came to this commu-

The words were a blow to Boland. Sawdy's not even pausing to insist on odds as the money went up told him that somebody, somewhere, had loaded something. Sawdy hustled back to the stand and winked anew at Pardaloe. The bell clanged. The contestants rode up. The wrangler now, as Jane Van Tassel saucily whispered to Dr. Carpy sitting next to her, was a symphony in brown, from head to foot—a skeleton brown jockey cap, close-fitting brown jersey, brown jersey riding trousers, and low, soft, brown boots made up his rig.

McCrossen clung to his scarlet sash and silk shirt—nor had the Indian or the local boy changed.

As the riding went swiftly forward and the tests grew more difficult, the boy and the Indian were eliminated.

McCrossen took these stunts readily, the wrangler riding fourth, and easily, in all the tests after him. These two riders seemed indifferent in all the earlier feats. They rode standing, feet first or head first; twirling rifles, turning lightning-like in the saddle to face forward or backward at full speed.

With the struggle narrowed to the two seemingly even-matched riders, spectators began to wonder how the contest could be decided. The judges, after conference, asked for a further trial of the familiar feat of picking objects from the ground. Already these feats had been made a feature and creditably performed. But some word had reached the judges that there might be further possibilities in this field. The two contestants were asked to propose their own stunts, tossing for first choice. McCrossen won. A lady's white handkerchief was dropped, and, riding at speed, turned backward in the saddle, McCrossen picked it from the ground. The wrangler followed suit.

It was now the Texan's turn. Sawdy ran out on the track to his side. "Give him the saddle-and-bridle trick," he whispered.

The wrangler, still breathing fast, demurred. "He's seen it done. Probably he can do it himself, Sawdy."

"No matter, I'll make a hit, sire him out."

"I'm getting tired of this show myself. It's been pretty long," objected the rider. "Leave it to me, will you? I'll give him one he's never seen." There was a further whispered conference.

"Go to it!" exclaimed Sawdy, after a moment, seemingly confident of his representative. Then he turned to the little grandstand. "Ladies 'n' gentlemen an' honorable judges," he began. "Circle Dot has tried to contribute in a humble way to your entertainment this afternoon. You're all anxious to see this contest, grand as it has been, brought to a decision. Our entry for the prize will now present a feat never before seen in Sleepy Cat."

Reining to the middle of the track, the wrangler drew from a buttoned breast pocket of his jersey a packet of cigarette papers and a small sack of tobacco. Seated on his pawing horse, he rolled his cigarette, put away the makings, hung the cigarette on his lip, and lifted his hat as he looked up at the spectators and felt in another pocket for a match. While doing so he awkwardly dropped the cigarette; it fell from his lip to the dusty track. He bent over in the saddle to look regretfully down at the cigarette where it lay.

Sawdy stepped to the side of the grandstand and, after his usual salutation, began, hat in hand: "Our Circle Dot wrangler seems to be a little awkward today—nervous, maybe. You see, ladies, he hasn't had such a bevy of elegant women to look at for many, many weeks. We've been on a long, hard drive an' haven't seen so much as a pic-

ture of a smart girl for nigh three months—no wonder he's nervous." "Hear! Hear!" cried Carpy and his group. Sawdy, surprised, looked up. "Where?" he demanded. And getting only a laugh, continued: "Whatever the reason, ladies an' gents, the boy has dropped his cigarette. He's makin' motions to me to pick it up. But it's too much to ask of a fat man. Let him pick up the cigarette himself. Go, boy, go!"

As the wrangler cantered leisurely down the track, Sawdy, as speaker, continued to explain: "He will now try ridin' at top speed, to pick up his cigarette. If he succeeds, I am sure you will all be willin' to see him enjoy smokin' it, after a hard hour's work. If he fails under these speed conditions, he will retire as gracefully as possible from the track an' turn a similar job over to his esteemed rival. Our wrangler will use the quirt on his pony for the first time today. All we'll ask is, just please give the boy quiet when he rides up."

The wrangler had wheeled his horse fifty yards down the track and sat waiting for Sawdy's signal. The crowdman raised a warning hand. "Are you ready?" The wrangler nodded. "Go!" shouted Sawdy. Quirting his pony smartly and bending in the saddle as the wiry little gelding sprang in long leaps ahead, the wrangler, nearing the stand, swung over to the right so low in the saddle that he trailed his hand in the dust.

ONLY the soft clatter of the pony's hoofs as he now flew down toward the grandstand struck the ear. A slender streak of dust rose from where the fingers trailed along the track. As he neared the vicinity of the cigarette, the wrangler lifted his fingers just above the dust and bent his straining eyes ahead. He passed the grandstand like a flash.

As he did so, his right hand was flung out, just once, and his fingers struck at the dust. He dashed ahead, straightened himself gradually in the saddle, and, holding his right hand high, checked the pony and rode slowly back.

The judges clambered down from their stand and ran out on the track. They looked in vain circles for a trace of the cigarette; stirred up the dust where it might be hidden. But the wrangler, riding back toward them, held the damaged cigarette.

Boland was wild. He rushed out to join the judges. "It's a plain trick," he shouted. "He pretended to pick up one cigarette an' had another in his hand."

"Where's the cigarette he dropped here in the first place?" asked Pardaloe, pointing to the track. "It was right here. I seen it." He appealed to the other judges. "You seen it." The two nodded assent. "What you talkin' about, Bo?" Boland was industriously searching the track. "Find it! But be careful you don't try to drop another cigarette like it!"

"The horse might have picked it up on his hoof," bellowed Boland. "Yes," commented Selwood. "Yes. Examine the pony's mouth, too, Boland. He may not have swallowed it yet. I say, gentlemen," he added, "the Circle Dot boy has done a clean job. Now, let's see McCrossen perform."

But McCrossen, stubbornly rejecting all his backers' entreaties, refused to perform. "Wouldn't I be a sucker to try to beat a man at his own game?" he demanded. "That trick's no part of frontier ridin'. It's never been done before at a Sleepy Cat celebration."

"It's progress, gentlemen; progress, I call it. If it ain't been done in Sleepy Cat, it's been done plenty at other celebrations. So you," thundered Sawdy, "want a brilliant crowd of fair women and brave men to set here year after year an' be bored stiff with the same old tricks? Gents!" he appealed to the judges. "I call for judgment."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

ing elsewhere in this paper is in error. We have figured the Cottage Grove rates at \$5.20 for 65 kilowatt hours, and the price should be \$4.79. We quoted the Eugene price at \$1.30, whereas the price should be \$1.95.

Business Men's Alliance of Cottage Grove—Wm. Collins, acting president, Millard F. McFarland, acting secretary.

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## WANTADS

WANTADS STRICTLY CASH. One cent a word, minimum 25c; three insertions for price of two; additional insertions for one-third the price of three.

### FOR SALE OR TRADE.

FOR SALE—Twin-cylinder motorcycle engine. Call at Sentinel office for particulars. 8-9

FOR SALE—Sweet corn for canning, ready next week, 10 cents a dozen, bring sacks. Also Gravenstein apples. Claude Arne, Diaston Rte., phone 1-F-4. 11y23p

FRYERS FOR SALE, 25c each. William Beck, phone 123J. 23-a6p

FOR SALE—5 miles out, 40 acres timber and piling. Some improvements. Good spring water. O. O. Veatch. 11y23-a6p

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FOR SALE—6-room house, 3 lots, located Harrison Ave. end of S. 2nd St., \$525, \$200 down, balance at \$8 a month. Might consider cows, chickens, pigs as down payment. R. W. Anderson, Cottage Grove 30p

FOR SALE—Refrigerator, 40-lb capacity, good condition, price reasonable. Mrs. L. S. Goddard, 709 Washington Ave. 11y30tf

HORSES for sale or trade. Span of 2-year-old colts, well matched, and others. Joe Abene, Cottage Grove, B. B. route, phone 23F24, 30c

### WILL BUY

WANTED 5 INCH 7 1/2 FT. SPLIT cedar posts. Quote price f. o. b. shipping point; earliest shipment. Niedermeyer-Martin Lumber Co., Spalding Building, Portland, Ore. 11y 16-30c

WANTED—To buy or trade for second hand windmill. J. E. Cooper, Oakland, Ore. 11y30p

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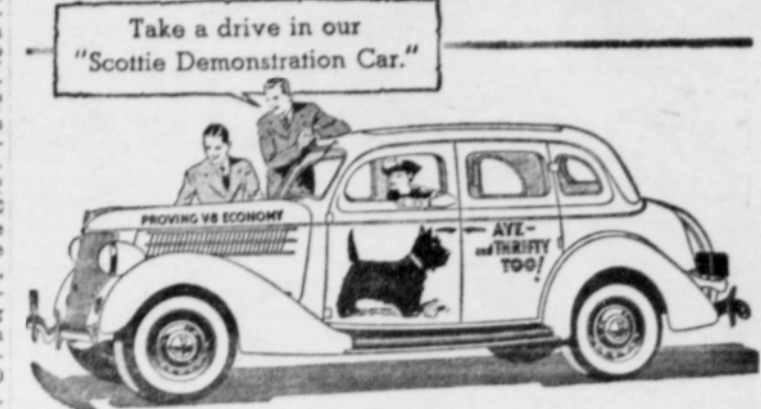
CURTIS PUBLISHING Company desires two men for crew work in the State of Oregon. Inquire of G. H. Fell, 136 No. 8th, Cottage Grove, Friday & Saturday after 5 p.m. 30p

## MISCELLANEOUS

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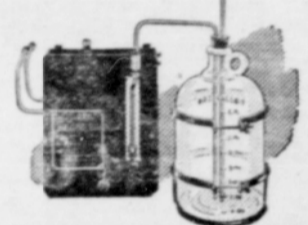


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