

MOUNTAIN MAN

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A Banner Fiction Serial
By HAROLD CHANNING WIRE

CHAPTER XVII—Continued

Irene unlocked the turtle-back and Breck looked in. Folding chairs, folding tables, folding beds lay there. He drew them out, uncovering boxes of fresh fruit, a tin of wafers, three bon voyage baskets of candy.

"Irene," he asked, "are you sure you have plenty of real food?"

"Oh yes! Heaps!"

"How much flour, rice and bacon?"

"No flour. I brought crackers. You know, Gordon, I never eat rice. And bacon . . . just a minute. I had Toby buy everything." She turned to the chauffeur. "Toby, how much bacon?"

"Six half pound packages. I think."

Breck grinned. "No flour, no rice, three pounds of bacon." He waved toward the house. "You rest in there—all of you. I'll do the packing."

"And I'll watch!" Irene asserted with suspicion. "I know what you're going to do. I've got the cutest little mattress with springs that squish down. I must take it. And I suppose you would throw out an evening dress."

"You didn't bring one!"

"Of course. Won't we dance?"

"Yes," Breck promised, thinking of Temple's rodeo, "we'll dance. But the only evening gown you'll need is the one you sleep in!"

When the others had gone into the house, he and Divine sorted what little of the equipment there was that could be used.

"I've seen some right pretty camp junk," the packer observed, standing among the sets of furniture painted red and blue, with striped covers to match, "but this is plumb grand!"

They selected about one-fourth the car's contents and made up kyacks for three mules. Immediately Breck lashed on the bedding and drew cinches tight, and so had it all covered before the family returned. When they did come from the house he hustled them into their saddles.

He put the Senator in the lead and gave him a mule to tow. Then Mrs. Sutherland with her maid next; a middle-aged woman whose tight lips showed disapproval of the whole affair. Toby followed, surprising Breck with a good knowledge of horses. Irene chose her own place next himself at the rear.

The start was made noisily, with Dick Divine grinning from his door. Breck turned and waved, at the same time seeing they were not to be alone on the upward trail. It was plain that Art had waited deliberately. Now he was getting his salt train into line.

CHAPTER XVIII

Much could be read in this act, but if Art had a definite purpose he was in no hurry to show it. For two hours Breck pushed his tourist string up the wall, ascending in short, hair-pin turns directly over the pack camp. It was hot when they started. Soon the Senator took off his white coat and tried to sit on it. A moment later he removed his tie and hung it on the saddle horn. He seemed inclined to dispose of his shirt also when Mrs. Sutherland spoke to him.

At the end of two hours they came onto a shelf where the first long-needle pine offered shade and a spring trickled from the rock. Breck called a halt, telling everyone to get off and stretch their legs.

It was while they rested on the shelf that Art Tillson came swinging up the trail, driving eight mules and leading two. He made a strong, rugged picture. His mules, stalwart, lean-legged fellows, bore the weight of salt bags with no effort and marched past in close formation, furry ears flopping with each step. Art himself rode with all the unconscious grace of a born horseman, with broad-shouldered body rolling to the animal's gait, his gloved right hand, holding the lead rope, braced against his thigh.

From the moment he cleared the bend of the trail his eyes were upon Irene. He held them there until he was almost abreast, then looked away for a time but turned in his saddle before passing out of sight further on.

"Well!" Irene gasped. "Who is that handsome beast?"

Breck scowled. "He's a cowboy with a herd of cattle here in the mountains."

"Did he never see a woman before? Those eyes! Was he looking at me or through me?"

"It's hard to tell," Breck answered vaguely, preparing to move on. "That boy is a character up here. You won't see him again."

"Won't I, though! My dear, when a man looks like that, must I be blind?"

Breck paused in gathering up his reins. "Yes, Irene, you must."

"What? Why Gordon! Is this an official order—I mustn't want to see him again?"

"Don't use any of your tricks on him, that's all. I can't explain now."

"But, my dear," Irene smiled, "he's such a fine animal!"

Breck laughed but put sincerity into his warning. "You mind the ranger!"

After starting the party upward again, he rode in silence, deep with his thoughts. At this moment he would rather have been bringing a load of dynamite into the mountains than Irene. She was ruthless. He knew it was not beyond her to take a curious interest in Art, play him until that was satisfied, then cut him.

Once more that afternoon she turned their talk to him, asking, "What will you bet that I don't see my cowboy friend before night?"

"You won't," Breck asserted.

"He'll be halfway over the roof by the time we reach the summit."

But woman's instinct was better than man's reasoning. When they came into Summit Meadow at dusk, a campfire was burning at the further end. Tillson's mules grazed nearby, and the cowboy sat cooking his supper over the flames.

Immediately Breck turned off toward a stream of water that

Yess, he had changed. In one way, at least, he had changed completely.

Breck's train was late to start the next morning, for stiff bodies were hard to get on the move. He was up at dawn and saw Art Tillson pull out at daybreak, but it was eight o'clock before his tourists could take the trail.

Breck fell in at the rear of the string as usual, but Irene did not resume her place with him. Instead she took the lead, and maintained that aloof distance throughout the morning. He was both amused and troubled; for it was always a danger signal when Irene felt exclusive.

They came into Temple's camp at eleven o'clock, and the old man, hobbling from his cabin, heartily invited them to get off and eat.

"Louie just rode in," he said, "hungry as a coyote. I'm puttin' steaks on the fire."

The girl had not appeared.

"Where is she?" Breck asked.

Temple waved a hand backward. "Yonder. Fixin' up."

In a moment Louise came to the door of her own cabin and Breck rode to her. He wanted a word

just the stirrup that needed no adjusting, then regained his saddle.

"Thank you so much," Irene caressed him. "It does feel better."

She drew her horse's head around. "Mister Temple was very kind, offering us lunch, but mother looks so tired. Really, if she ever gets off her beast she'll never get back on. And when we reach your station I don't believe I will move for a month!"

So it was settled. The Senator, campaigning from long habit, had already won Tom Temple and said steaks sounded good. But Irene begged him to think of mother.

"Why, Mother is all right," he insisted.

Irene fumed. "You never understand!"

The Senator resigned and climbed aboard his animal.

"Well anyway," Temple said agreeably, "you can figure to come back for the barbecue."

Breck groped for some excuse to ride again to Louise; yet knew that would be foolish. There was nothing. Besides, Irene was still close to him. She remained there as the party started on, and riding almost knee to knee gave him a sense of being hovered.

As soon as they had passed through Temple's gate and were in the forest, she burst with laughter. "Oh, my dear! That costume! Those boots! A real cowgirl!"

Breck faced her from his saddle. "Yes; a real girl."

She sobered. "I said cowgirl."

Suddenly her dark eyes surveyed him in disbelief. Disdain spread over her face. Her lip curled. "You don't mean it! Gordon, you're not really—in this primitive country I suppose it's called—courting her? Oh my, oh my. That's dreadful. Almost indecent."

Before Breck could answer she lashed her horse cruelly and loped ahead.

Rock House at sunset brought cries of wonder from the tourists, weary as they were. The train dropped out of the eastern notch and into a bowl of opal light, through which the grass bottom, the fences, the cabin far across appeared more as a bit of fairyland than a ranger station in the Sierra Nevada.

Halfway into the meadow, Kit threw his ears forward and whinnied. The call was answered. Breck recognized Custer and smiled. But immediately there followed a chorus from mules braying further on, and then he saw Art Tillson bivouacked under a lone pine near the tourist pasture gate.

CHAPTER XIX

A rap on the cabin door aroused Breck from the table where he was writing out his week's report. The camp had been lifeless when he woke at daybreak, and he had taken his time to complete the diary. Glancing at his watch, he saw it was now ten o'clock.

"Come in!" he called.

The door opened. Art Tillson confronted him.

Breck stood up, and looking at the cowboy's face, was puzzled. He expected trouble. Instead, Art forced a grave expression to cover a queer grin. He had shaved very close. A few spots of powder clung to stubble that had not yielded to cold water and a dull blade.

"This is a ranger station, ain't it?" he demanded.

Breck nodded, making certain the boy was not drunk.

"And you give out information here, don't you?"

"What is it, Art?" Breck asked flatly.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Ossification of the Organs of a Living Person Odd Disease; Man's Eyes Affected

The eyes of a man in Pasadena are gradually turning to stone in his head.

Cases of ossification—when the tissues and organs of living persons turn to stone—are rare. Only 71 have been recorded in medical history—and of that number the case of the Pasadena man, referred to as "Mr. Z." by American medical authorities, is the only one known where the disease has affected the eyes, observes a writer in Pearson's London Weekly.

"Mr. Z." has been a victim of the disease since 1933. Complete ossification may take from 10 to 15 years. The only known cure is said to be the surgical removal of the parathyroid gland.

Recently an Australian was saved from being literally pressed to death by having a casing of stone round his heart chipped away by surgeons.

Not only the heart and the eyes may be attacked by stone deposit. Sometimes it is the lung. Rarely does the whole body become the field of the hardening process and the "living statue" become reality. But this is possible. A young American girl who was affected in this way died in 1934.

The disease is caused by over-activity of the parathyroid gland, which causes the transfer of the calcium from the bones to the soft tissues of the body. Everyone of us carries about within us a load, several stones in weight, of limestone, or potential limestone. Should this solidify in one mass, ossification sets in.

The disease is exemplified in a minor way when the lime settles out in organs, forming gallstones or kidney stones.

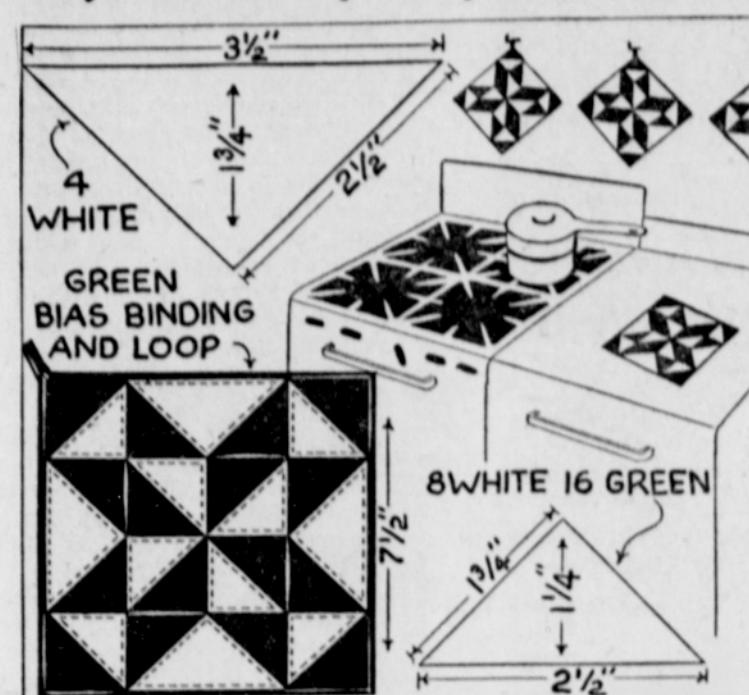
A case is known in New South Wales of a man's head growing three and a half inches all round owing to limestone deposits.

Nail-Cutting Superstition

There is a superstition that, when cutting the nails, unless one gathers up the fragments and burns or buries them, after death he will be sent back to look for them. A race track enthusiast, paring his nails at the track, was told this and warned to gather the pieces. "But, why should I?" smilingly answered the skeptic. "If I'm to be sent back to look for the pieces—what better place could be picked out than the track?"

HOW TO SEW

by Ruth Wyeth Spears



Patchwork pot holders hanging in a row.

A GREEN and white kitchen is as fresh and crisp as a lettuce leaf. I stepped into one the other day with white walls, green floor and green organdy curtains. Everything was green and white, and over the stove hung a set of patchwork pot holders like a row of bright green and white tiles. All of us love old quilt patterns. For those who do not have time to make quilts, here is a modern use for your favorite designs.

Perhaps you were put to bed as a child under this eight-pointed star? The sketch gives the dimensions for the patterns for the two triangles used in making it for the pot holder. Piece eight small squares of two triangles; then

eight oblong blocks of three triangles. A layer of sheet wadding is used for padding. The backing for the holder is white. The three layers are quilted together by sewing just inside the white triangles of the pieced top.

Have you sent for your copy of the new Sewing Book No. 3? Every homemaker will want a copy for it contains useful ideas for home decorating; as well as original ideas for things to use as gifts, and to sell at bazaars. You will be delighted with this new book. The price is only 10 cents postpaid. Send coin with name and address to Mrs. Spears, 210 S. Desplains St., Chicago, Ill.

ASK ME ANOTHER

A Quiz With Answers
Offering Information
on Various Subjects

The Questions

1. Are zebras black with white stripes or white with black stripes?
2. White persons constitute what per cent of the people of the British empire?
3. Why do people generally walk in circles when lost?
4. In what cities would you find the following districts: The Loop; The Barbary Coast; The Bowery?
5. In what wars did the United States draft troops?
6. What country is designated by the sobriquet Cousin Michel?
7. Are animals other than horses spoken of as thoroughbred?
8. What is the difference between a dove and a pigeon?
5. Civil and World wars.
6. Germany.
7. Other animals eligible to be recorded are spoken of as pure bred.
8. A dove is a pigeon.

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3 In the same tests, CAMELS HELD THEIR ASH FAR LONGER than the average time for all the other brands.

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