

RANCH MYSTERY

A Story For Children

By Paula Norton

Beth is a girl from Illinois who interested, but honest, now, I sure aim to try for water."

Chapter 9.

THE next morning at breakfast, Uncle Walter told Tim he was in need of a broken part on the drill for the new well, and glad of an excuse to go to town, Tim was off before the others had finished eating.

Beth went out with Ron to follow the other men and Uncle Walter. While they walked along, they studied and argued and figured. Should they drill here, in the north end of the pasture or

down there where the dry creek makes that turn around the rocks!

By noon the men had carried the tools up to the pasture near the gate . . . the gate where Beth had rushed to beat Ron and Tim that day long ago when she had taken her first riding lesson.

At the lunch table the men were filled with talk of the new well and their hopes that they would find water.

Before lunch was over Tim came riding into the yard. Luckily, he'd been able to get the tool-part at the general store. He proudly untied it from his saddle.

"Say, dad," said Tim as he heaped his plate with fried potatoes. "I saw Mort Russell at the store. He wanted to know what I was buying a part for a drill for."

"Good old Mort," smiled Uncle Walter. "Always interested in everything. Did you tell him, son?"

"Sure," said Tim, through a mouthful of potatoes. "I told him we're well drilling. He said, 'That's pretty dry country, Tim, for your dad to expect to get much in the way of water. I wouldn't hope too much.'"

"Now, he's a nice cheerful cuss," said Ron.

And Uncle Walter smiled that slow, almost sad smile of the man who has been disappointed so often that one more let-down can hardly make much difference.

Meanwhile Beth sat listening in amazement . . . knowing what she knew . . . or at least was pretty sure of . . . that Mort Russell was one of the men who visited her uncle's ranch the night of the last raid. Hadn't she found the rowel off his spur? Didn't he admit that he had lost a rowel? And didn't he deny having been on her uncle's ranch? Why did Mort Russell . . . who had land and cattle and everything else a man could wish . . . want to run her uncle from his land?

Then . . . Mort Russell rode past the window and hitched his black horse to a post near the kitchen door.

Uncle Walter and the boys hurried out to greet him . . . Beth hung back. She had no faith in the man's friendliness.

Finally her curiosity got the better of her and she wandered out to the field where the men were already setting up the tools for the well-drilling. Mort Russell was talking fast.

"I tell you, Walter, you're crazy as a coyote to go wastin' your time drilling for water on this land. That one measly lit'l' well that's been supplying you is all there is. And it will soon be dry."

"Well, Mort," said Uncle Walter, "you're mighty nice to be so

"Well, this ain't never gonna be fit land for anything but dry grazin' . . . then he lowered his voice so Beth had to strain forward to hear. "I need a little more grazin' land, Walter. I'll buy this 40 from you."

"No . . . no, thank you, Mort," Beth relaxed. "I need every little speck of grazin' land I've got, even if my cattle have been cut down in number lately. I aim to borrow and get a few more later on. I need this land."

"Walter, I'll tell you what I'll do. Just because I know you've had hard luck lately . . . and because I want to help you . . . He took Uncle Walter's arm and led him away from the drillers. Beth trembled for very anxiety.

"I'll buy the place from you, Walter . . . turn the whole thing into grazin' land. It ain't fit for nothin' else. You can buy up that Henneay place up near town. It's got a truck-garden and everything."

Uncle Walter looked interested. Beth walked up beside him in time to hear Mort Russell say, "I'll

pay you just what your pappy paid for this place before you . . ."

"Uncle Walter, Uncle Walter," shouted Beth at the pause, "Aunt Mary says for you to come to the corral gate. Hurry! It's one of the colts . . ." Before the man could ask for a

him across the field, through the fence, and out of sight.

Then she took hold of her Uncle's shoulders and looked earnestly into his questioning face.

"Uncle Walter, please, please," she pleaded, "Don't sell the ranch to Mort Russell. I can't prove anything, yet, but I've got every reason to believe he's the person who's been trying to discourage you and run you off the land. Please don't sell, not today, anyway."

"Why, honey, what makes you think things like that about Mort Russell?" He looked surprised and curious.

"Uncle, I HAVE got proof that he has been on the ranch . . . in the very place where you're drilling . . . and it was very recent."

"Honey, is that straight?" "Yes."

"Then I'll go back and tell him I have to think it over."

(Continued next week)

RESTORING A LION

ANYONE interested in lions will like the effort of the American Minister in Athens, who is asking for subscriptions to restore the ancient lion of Amphipolis. The huge marble statue has been lying, more or less in pieces, on the River Strymon since the fifth century B.C. The Greeks, led by the post Palamas, want the lion repaired and set upon its proper pedestal—if Americans will supply the money. Address Mr. MacVeagh, Athens, Greece.

LAMPS FOR BUDDHA

A WEALTHY woman in Ceylon is owner of 84,000 coconut oil lamps, which she donates to the old temple at Buddha Gaya, near Calcutta. The woman is following the early example of royalty—the pious King Asoka, who ruled the Indian Empire 2000 years ago was the first to flood his temple with light. Worshipers apparently prayed in darkness for the past 20 centuries, but now will enjoy their rites under the weird light of thousands of candles burning day and night.

YOUNG EXPLORERS

AMERICAN school boys can benefit by following the example of England's Public Schools' Exploring society, which this summer will take 48 public school boys to Newfoundland. Here the boys will go into the wild part of the country and live close to nature. The aim of the training is to teach them to act for themselves, and to build up a group of pioneers for expeditions to Lapland. There are still frontiers to penetrate.

★★★★★ "Eyes In The Night" ★★★★★

A Story of Two Boys Who Were Pals

By ROBERT THOMPSON, 13, of Los Angeles, California

CRAIG and Nino were inseparable pals. Craig was the English boy who lived on Windsor Road in Millville, and Nino was the little Italian boy who lived around the corner. They were going on a hike the next day, and as they wanted to leave early, Nino came to Craig's house (they decided on Craig's because he had two beds in his room), and the two retired about 7 o'clock.

Both awoke around 6 o'clock, dressed hurriedly, and stealthily crept downstairs and out the back door without awakening anyone. They hiked about four miles and finally reached the old Hillcock Woods where they were going to stay all that night and hike home next morning.

They began hunting for a place to camp and finally found one near an old oak. Unpacking their sleeping bags and cooking utensils, they began clearing a place for the bags to lay. They then took out their rods and ran to the creek for a morning of fishing.

In about ten minutes Craig landed a nice, fat catfish and yelled across the creek to Nino, "I landed a whopper and that's enough for my dinner tonight."

"Aw," replied Nino, "wait until I catch mine. It will be twice as big as yours."

NINO'S brag came true in about half an hour. He landed a catfish at least twice as big as Craig's, and right away he yelled, "Ha, ha, Craig, you sure are a swell fish catcher, you are. Oh yeah!"

"Aw," answered Craig, "I was the first one to catch anything, anyhow."

The boys had brought some sandwiches with them and were eating them on the way to their camp. When they arrived they began to think of something to do the rest of the afternoon. Suddenly Nino said, "Let's go in swimming!"

"Gee, that's an idea, but we didn't bring our bathing suits," replied Craig.

"Aw, it's okay," answered Nino. "There isn't anybody around." In an instant they were both running at top speed toward the old swimming hole so well known by all the boys in Millville, and in no time were swimming and diving. Suddenly they heard voices and the sound of footsteps coming up the path. Lo and behold, around a corner walked Barbara Norton and Bessie Dickason, two of the girls in Craig's and Nino's class!

Instantly both boys dove under water and began swimming toward the shore, thinking they might hide in some weeds and stay there until the girls had gone. However, instead of the girls walking right by, Barbara said, "Let's sit down here and rest and talk some more."

"All right, let's," answered Bessie. "It's so nice and shady here."

THE girls talked for about 20 minutes. Finally Bessie said, "Let's begin walking towards home. We might be late for dinner if we don't hurry. When the boys heard this they were re-

lieved, and when the girls disappeared both boys jumped out of the weeds and ran for all they were worth toward their clothes. When the boys arrived at their camp they began to gather some wood for a fire. They soon had enough to last them all night. By the time they had finished

that he was looking into the face of some large animal. He, too, let out a yell and at the same time jumped up and ran behind a tree.

Just then he heard Nino laughing, and he stuck his head out from behind the tree to see the moon shining on the huge bulk of an old cow.

Craig sauntered out and exclaimed, "Boy, he sure gave me a scare!"

NINO, somewhat subsided from his laughing spell, replied, "I was sleeping swell when suddenly I felt something wet rubbing my face. I let out a yell and opened my eyes to see this big cow jump over towards you. I guess my yell scared him and he jumped."

"Yes, and imagine how I felt, suddenly looking into the ugly face of that old cow."

"Well, let's chase it out of here and get back to sleep," replied Nino. "I'm sleepy."

"So am I," answered Craig, "but it's going to be hard to go to sleep after this harrowing experience."

In about ten minutes they both fell asleep. They awoke about 6:30 o'clock and both ran toward the swimming hole for a couple of hours of good fun. After they had finished their swim the two went back to their camp and packed their belongings and began the hike home. On the way back they talked about how they had never had such an exciting night or such a swell time as they had experienced in the last 24 hours.

THE Pilgrims—that little band of people seeking a place where they could practice their chosen religion without someone saying they couldn't—made their famous voyage to America at a very bad time of the year. They sailed in the month of September.

The Mayflower wasn't a very high-powered boat anyway; so it took her two months to cross the ocean.

They were headed for Virginia to establish a new freedom of worship, to work their way into the ever-growing tobacco industry.

The skipper of the Mayflower managed to get about 900 miles off his course, and finally landed his travel-weary passengers in a little snow-covered bay.

Indeed . . . "The breaking waves dashed high on a stern and rockbound coast." Some of them rebelled and said they'd not stay in the little camp they called Plymouth. No, sir; they were for finding Virginia and all that it promised in pioneer comforts.

Well, it looked as though there wasn't going to be much of a Plymouth company, what with rebellions and sickness and death.

Then up came the strong-willed members of the party. These forceful gentlemen held a meet-

ing and drew up an agreement, which, strange as it seems, everyone signed.

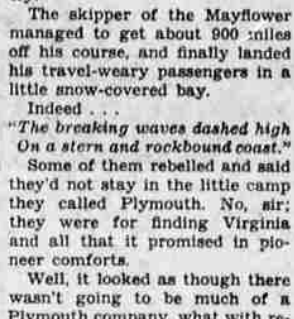
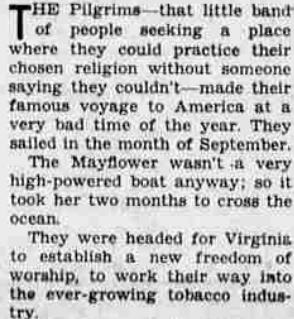
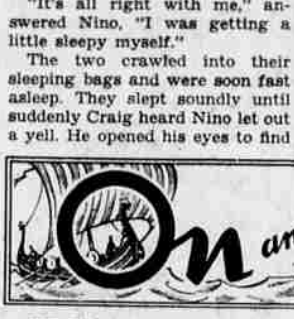
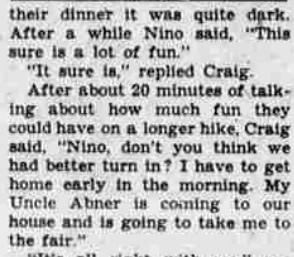
Even the disappointed ones, who were determined at any cost to find Virginia, finally signed. Thus they promised to do all that was right and proper to keep the Plymouth company together.

Oh, you want to know about the Indians around these parts? Well, fortunately for the Pilgrims, the natives of this neighborhood had nearly all died off with smallpox shortly before the arrival of the Mayflower.

That was a pretty tough winter for the brave Pilgrims—snow and sleet and all that that means. Theirs was no picnic party, and only the strong rule of the determined heads of the little colony held them together; they let them live and let them worship according to their own desires.

A brave band they were, fighting the dread of winter, making shelters, caring for the sick, attending their little wilderness church, burying their dead kin in the frozen soil of a strange land, and helping to make a new country—a free country . . .

"Amidst the storm they sang, And the stars heard, and the sea; And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang To the anthem of the free!"



Over the Captain's Coffee Cup

Travel Tales From Everywhere

by Whit Wellman

EVERY wanderer knows the feeling . . . days grow gloomy, nights are long. The zest of living has departed. Climbing jungle slopes of South Sea islands, chatting over coffee in a waterfront tavern . . . or sitting before a log fire with a book and knocking ashes discontentedly from a pipe . . . the best of skippers work hard at times to keep an even keel.

There's a story—

About a Shah of Persia who had the same trouble, being a human sort of fellow. Like most of us, he wanted to do something about it. He wanted action. So he called his wise man and gave the trembling sage a plain gold ring. "By morning you will inscribe on the inner band of this ring a motto which will cheer me in adversity, and make me humble in prosperity."

"A hard task," the wise man murmured. "If I fail—"

"You lose your head." Night brought the sage no sleep. He thought long thoughts. Then he leaped from his rug with

a shout. On the ring he engraved these words: "This too shall pass."

YET A FEW THINGS

do not pass away. Balinese beauty continues to blossom under Dutch rule. A friend with the wanderlust is returning reluctantly to his desk in Vancouver. He found that Bali is the one enchanted island which changes not at all. The strange thing was that although he saw the most beautiful native women in the world, the Balinese have no word for love. The girls marry early, and apparently that's an end to love making. Seventy-five per cent of the population is feminine. The women are the business men—with an equal choice in selecting mates. They are as strong as men, with generations of living out of doors . . . working in fields, carrying burdens on their heads. As to dress—a girl binds her hips in a length of colorful batik, or kain. It drapes about her, long ends falling to the ankles. Above the waist—nothing, save an embroidered jacket on festive occasions. "Why not?" asks our friend. "A modest woman has nothing to hide."

At dusk he visited the Bat's Cave near Karang Asem . . . the hour when bats fling a black cloud of wings into the sunset. Suddenly, thousands of wings whirled over him. Bats flew into droves, wheeling upward in dark circles . . . making little queer cries.

THE SMALLEST

newspaper in the world is The Daily Pilot, published on Thursday Island. It's the size of a letter head, runs about 133 lines of small print, one or two small ads of shops. It costs sixpence.

It's at Thursday and nearby islands that great sea turtles come ashore to lay their eggs in the sand, and swim back with the high tide.

ONLY PAPUA CAN BOAST

these incredible isles. A letter brings news of the Rossel Islanders, mild-mannered little men who live without weapons. Smiling, happy, they are the most determined murderers alive. Their ancient method is the same with man or beast—the art of smothering.

A chief dies. A meeting is held to decide which youth shall accompany him. Village braves wander about discussing the question. Suddenly they agree. One of their friends will satisfy the gods, and the cook. The victim is not seized at once. He gets a nice head start into the jungle. Later he is followed, captured, and—expertly smothered. Later—eaten by epicures.

The island is amazingly beautiful. A gem set down in the tropical seas. White cockatoos flit against the green forest. Natives keep clean huts, neat gardens of flowers, and support sleek pet cats—which they never eat. They point with pride to the deeds of their ancestors—who captured 326 shipwrecked Chinese, set them ashore on a barren island, and fed them like so much livestock. Feast days came regularly, and one by one the Orientals contributed to the cook pot. All but one old Chinese, who escaped to tell the tale.

A MASTER OF SAILING

ships sends a true yarn from Yakima, Wash. T. Tansley (we guess his first name is Tom) has seen things. He's traded for copra in the South Pacific, sailed to the Bering Sea for salmon and cod.

In the last year of the war he was first mate of the Alaska Packer's schooner *Metha Nelson* . . . in the latitude of the doldrums, "sometimes lazy, sometimes ferocious."

The wind blew strong. He sighted a deserted ship wallowing in the heavy sea, the *Cuadro Hermanos*. Tansley got the "best boat ready for boarding, but the weather was getting worse, and Captain Charles Weiss and I held a confab." They feared that fever had stricken the *Hermanos*. Tansley insisted on boarding, but the tropical storm decided differently. They drifted away.

Tansley's ship went into dry dock at Eagle Harbor, and he met a chief engineer who pieced out the tragedy. The engineer said: "I was with the *S. S. Catharine* a little south of the equator. A lifeboat was sighted. We altered our course and found a woman and four men delirious, their tongues cracked open from thirst. We took them aboard and gradually restored them . . . the only survivors of the *Cuadro Hermanos*. The Chilean captain had died; his crew deserted, rowing for land. Their last beaker of water was exhausted. Delirious—salt water looked as good as any other. Finally, in their insanity they jumped overboard."

BRIEF EXPERIENCES

of adventure in foreign ports and strange corners of the world will be used in this column . . . if they're short. Not over one typed page. Credit is given, of course, to the contributor.



by DON ROBERTS

SITTING around the hangar above this wet morning—and sort of hoping that we don't have to stir our stumps—seems to be a good time to dig up some yarns, not all of 'em old.

Seems that every time anybody starts talking stories, they always go back to the "good old days." Shucks, these days, a few years from now, will be the "good old days," and here we are thinking that there's no fun left.

Well, let's see. How about some yarns from the barnstorming days.

Barnstorming was good training, if you lasted. Take a look at this series of "minor" incidents in the life of a certain captain we know:

He learned to fly before the war and was barnstorming when Uncle Sam let out a call for flyers. Joined up—and had to go to school to learn to fly! After the war, married, he started barnstorming again. This time in the usual Jenny. His wife tipped us off that they had so many forced landings in soft, muddy pastures, she got more used to dropping head first out of the nose-overship than she did getting out the regular way!

Hopping passengers at \$5 per (and never stopping the motor) he was going strong, one day, when rain started. After about two hours, with a couple of cash customers in front, he gunned his Jenny and took off. Fifty feet up, and the fabric, well soaked, started to peel off the top wing. Did he land in a hurry? Sat right down in the biggest mud puddle he could find!

This same fellow had a job to do some stunt flying over the Indianapolis races one Memorial Day. His wife was to go along in the old DH. Tied up in traffic, she was luckily too late. A couple of thousand feet over the speedway, the DH caught fire—as they were wont to do—and friend husband had to slip all the way in. Everything would have been rosy, but the tail surfaces were half burned off and he didn't notice it in time. Result: one sound smack, but no great injuries.

Another hunch for collectors: posters from the world's airways. Early posters of the first established airlines someday will be worth plenty.

As a matter of fact, we'll bet you don't know when or where or what the first line was. Well, not to get too stuck up about our facts, we'll let you in; in 1910, the German Airship Transportation Company ("Delag") inaugurated the world's first line when Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin piloted the "Deutschland" from Friedrichshafen to Düsseldorf by way of Stuttgart, Mannheim and Cologne. By 1914, the "Delag" had carried 37,250 passengers on 1600 flights (3200 hours in the air and 90,000 miles).

STEAMSHIPS

THE first steamship to cross the Atlantic Ocean was the *SARVANAH*. Its weight was 350 tons. It was built in New York and crossed from Savannah, Georgia, to Liverpool in 26 days. This was in June of 1819.

The *S. S. PACIFIC* crossed the Atlantic in 9 days, 19 hours, 25 minutes. This was in May, 1851.

The United States warship *LEXINGTON* steamed from San Pedro, California, to Honolulu, in 72 hours, 36 minutes. The trip was made in June, 1928.

WINTER HIDING

THE bear is not the only animal to hibernate in the winter. The dormouse, the bat, and the badger sleep away the winter, too. Or most of it, anyway.

★★★★★ Close On The Scent ★★★★★



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