

# RANCH MYSTERY

A Story For Children

By Paula Norton

When Beth came out West to spend a few months on her Uncle's cattle ranch she expected things would be pretty dull. Instead she found herself helping her Uncle and his sons, Ron and Tim, to find the gang of men who had been raiding the ranch and stealing cattle.

It looked, for awhile, as though Uncle Walter was to be driven from his land. Then Beth discovered that the very man who was urging her Uncle to sell and get out, was the man who had come on several secret trips to the ranch. (Beth found a rowel, lost from his spur, in a pasture.) The very deadline day for the sale (and Uncle Walter was tempted to be rid of the hard-luck ranch), oil was discovered in the pasture where drillers had been seeking water.

Chapter 12

**A**FTER the discovery of oil on Uncle Walter's ranch, no one seemed to settle down to normal living. Ron and Tim couldn't be dragged away from the activity at the well. They had to see all the "doings" and they asked a

and he told his foreman he'd write to him from the East."

"That's okay with us," murmured Tim. "We'll be here when he DOES come back."

All this while Aunt Mary had been watching the girl. Now she leaned across and took her hand. "Beth . . . would you like to go back and bring your mother out here? Don't you think a little vacation would be good for her, too?"

Beth was speechless with happiness. She did want to see her mother, yet she hated having to leave the ranch. But, the thought suddenly occurred to her, it would cost a great deal for such a trip and mother needed all the little she made.

"I know what you're thinking, Beth," smiled her uncle. "You forget we ain't poor ranchers any more. We'll fix you up with money, and THAT, by the way, is the nicest speech I ever made."

**B**ETH flew around the table and clasped her brown arms around the man's shoulders. "You're the very best man in the whole world, Uncle Walter." She could think of nothing that ex-



million questions and had to be forced to do the chores at the barn.

Ranchers came from far and near and the town people kept the road dustclouded. The place was filled with the rumble and rattle of cars.

At the end of the second week, however, the excitement died down, and one night the family sat at the table long after supper was over. Beth had had a letter from her mother that day.

"I think your mama misses you a lot, honey," said Uncle Walter. "Would you like to go back now?"

"I like it here so much, Uncle," said Beth. Everyone looked at her and they noticed for the first time that she was a very different girl from the Beth who had come to them only a few months ago. She had filled out and she was as tan and healthy looking as either of the boys.

Beth didn't exactly like the prospect of leaving all this great country that she had grown to love. She changed the subject.

"Funny about those initials of the Geological Society, huh? No wonder Mort Russell knew there was SOMETHING on this ranch besides sage brush."

"Did Claude have anything to say about Mort today?" asked Ron.

"Yes," answered Beth. "He said Mort left the day the oil came in

pressed her feeling more truthfully."

Three days later Beth waved good-bye to her Aunt and Uncle. Back she rode along the same road she had traveled with Tim and Ron on that first far distant morning. Tim and Ron were with her now and there was no shyness; rather there was a flood of rambling chatter. Plans were made for Beth's return, plans for her mother, plans for the things they'd do for Claude (maybe buy him a new horse and rig). Ron suggested a mail-plane for him, but he was hooted down.

When Beth boarded the train, happy to leave because she knew she would return soon, happy to feel the secure feeling of the money her Uncle had given her (carried in a little bag around her neck).

As she climbed up the steps of the pullman car, she turned to Tim and said, "This time I'll eat every meal in the dining car, and if there is any boy or girl traveling alone on the train I'll take them in to eat with me." She still remembered the flatness of the box lunch on her trip out.

She ran to the rear platform of the train and waved until the little station and the boys were tiny specks in the distant haze.

She did not have the lonely feeling she had had when she left the East, because she was coming back, soon.

(The End)



**SHELL MOUSE TRAP**  
THERE was a strange case of mouse-catching in Perry, N. Y., the other day. It seems Silas Stevens left some oysters in his cellar to keep cool. One of those oysters must have been pretty active, for when Stevens returned to the cellar to get his oyster supper, he found one oyster had caught two mice. The mice were dead, caught in the oyster shell.

**SHIPWRECK**  
We all know the old saying, "Rats will always desert a sinking ship." But such was not the case with a little crew of three cats aboard the Greek steamer *Stefanos Costomensis*.

When the sailors were ready to leave the sinking ship, they looked

for their cat mascots. They could not be found. The cats hid somewhere on the vessel and went down with the craft.

**POLICE DOGS**  
The headquarters for trained police dogs is in Munich, Germany. The dogs are really shepherds. Captain Max von Stephanitz formed the Society of German Shepherds 31 years ago. Now there are branches of this society all over the world.

**FIREFLIES**  
Fireflies are not just a pretty sight in the summer twilight in Japan and China. There they are an important industry in themselves. Expert firefly catchers are hired, and some of these workers have been known to catch as many as 3000 in a night. The flies are used in the manufacture of drugs in the Orient. Firefly grease is used to make bamboo wood rigid.

**CLASSIFIED**

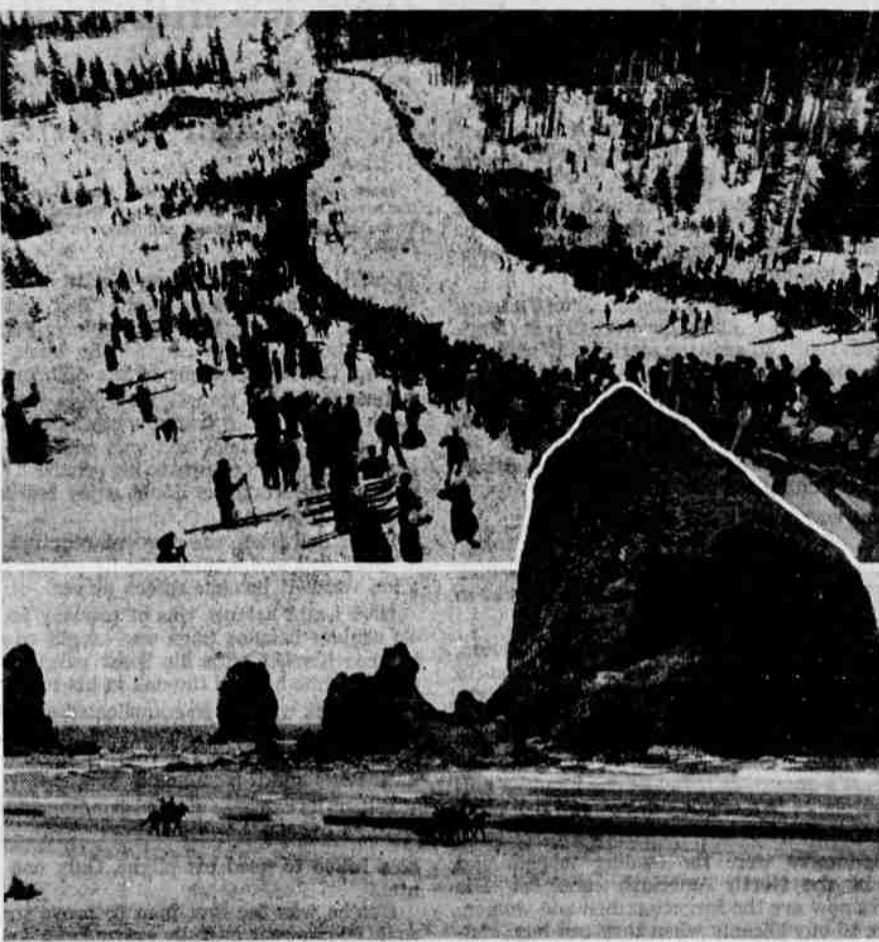
**FILMS DEVELOPED**

Rolls Developed Two Beautiful Double Exposures and 4 Guaranteed Never Fade Perfect Tone Prints 25c each. RAYS PHOTO SERVICE, La Crosse, Wisconsin

**MANUSCRIPTS WANTED**

WANTED: ORIGINAL POEMS, SONETS, MEMOIRS. Dept. All. Studio Bldg., Portland, Ore.

## Oregon's Highways Lead to Varied Vacation Lands



By way of magnificent Oregon highways, tourists journey to the unexcelled playgrounds of the Northwest. Above are two typical Oregon scenes. Top, skiing on Mount Hood. Lower, horseback riding along Cannon Beach at Haystack Rock. This is one of the renowned Oregon public beaches.

### PAPUA MEDICS

**N**EW GUINEA recently welcomed home a group of native doctors—18 medical students who completed their medical courses at Sidney University, Australia. Educated, scientific, these children and grandchildren of wild head hunters, formed themselves into the world's first Medical Scout Troop. In their regulation Scout uniforms, they will invade the tropical New Guinea jungles, bring modern medical knowledge to their race.

Which is only fair: when civilization takes disease to the primitive tribes, it can do no less than cure it.

### VIENNESE SYMBOL

**T**HROUGH revolution and hardship, Vienna folk keep their joy in living. A short street car ride from Vienna takes you to Grinzling, where every season the making of new wine is an excuse for a festival. Wine growers are privileged to sell wine without licenses in their own gardens, without interference of whatever government may be in power. To indicate the elixir of life which they offer, a small bush is fastened to the door of the home. Viennese say of this quaint symbol, "Die Herr Gott steckt die Hand Hieraus" — or, "The Mr. God puts His Hand about Here!"

## CONTACT CLUB

By Don Roberts

**H**I, HIGH fliers—how are all your happy landings?

Just looking over a couple of issues of "Plane Talk," the little weekly publication of the U. S. S. Saratoga—the aircraft carrier, in case you get it mixed up with some ordinary run-of-the-mine battle wagon.

Here's a table explaining the Navy's way of marking her airplanes from "Plane Talk." Maybe it will come in handy in identifying a squadron some day:

V is for Heavier than Air	VH
H is for Ambulance	VH
O is for Observation	VO
F is for Fighting	VF
T is for Torpedo and Bombing	VT
S is for Scouting	VS
P is for Patrol	VP
N is for Training	VN
B is for Bombing	VB
R is for Transport	VR

Army identification initials differ considerably from those of the Navy, so don't get them mixed up.

**B**EING in pretty much of a spring feverish mood today, we'll shirk too much work and dig up some dope:

Well, first thing on the list seems to be an item that came to mind while we were scanning some old photos the other day. Everyone hangs "pants" on the undercarriage these days to cut down wind resistance through streamlining. But it's not a new stunt, as usual!

The 1911 model of the Gastambide and Mengin Antoinette monoplane had "pants" in addition to complete enclosure and internally braced wings. It was produced for the French Military trials—and we imagine, just off-hand, that all the wise lads hooted at it.

And then here's another curiosity from Russia—the folding glider. Yep, the lads simply lug a lot of assorted bundles to the nearest hill, stick the hinged fuselage, wings, etc., inside a flock of fabric and take off. And did you know they have two-place gliders?

Let's see now—hm, how about looping? Pilots do it to get in

shape for breakfast nowadays. The spectators nearly dropped dead in September of 1913 when, at Issy, France, Pegoud made the first intentional loop. Shortly afterward, Anthony Fokker became the first German to do the trick. It's really easy—and quite a safe, as well as useless, maneuver.

In Los Angeles, the Cornelius "free wing" experimental monoplane is flying all around the place. The ship has no ailerons; wings are hung to the fuselage in such a way that they rock back and forth, thereby keeping themselves and the ship on an even keel.

Germany is now testing her newest Zeppelin, designed for regular trans-Atlantic passenger flights, and soon will start construction on a "sister" for the same purpose. (But the United States still has the only helium gas available in commercial quantities.)

While United States airlines did an about-face by cutting down the size and shape of commercial liners, as well as the number of motors, foreign countries still go in for three and four motored jobs. We were lucky enough to get a close-up view of the Junkers all-metal transport, "Von Hindenburg," in Berlin. Double wheels on the landing gear are a couple of feet taller than a six-foot man. Four motored, it carries 50 passengers. (But has considerably less speed than, say, the Boeing, Douglas, etc., in use here.)

**N** MEXICO, none but Mexican born pilots may fly the airplanes. That put a lot of American pioneers out of work—but it's a government order.

Do you know what is meant by "pulling up to 9 G's" in speaking of testing an army or navy ship?

The "G's" represent the force of gravity, and at nine "G's" there's nine times more weight on the wings than in normal flight. It's no cinch, that test piloting!

Military jobs are dived to "terminal velocity," which means, simply as fast as they'll go, then pulled out sharply until the "9 G" mark is reached. It's some strain on the plane—and plenty, too, on the pilot.

## Over the Captain's Coffee Cup

Travel Tales from Everywhere

By Whit Wellman

**T**HIS spinning earth you live on is an interesting planet—full of variety, full of obscurities. So much about it is still unknown, and explorers will be busy forever stumbling into new discoveries every year.

You can mock at geologists—say that they tell the age of fossils by the age of the rock containing them, and the age of the rock by the sea when the fossil flourished. Like other professions, the study of the comparatively new world is also new—we're continually finding uncomfortable facts to blast old theories.

### THEORY VS. FACT

are the basis of a grand argument. One excellent theory accounts for the formation of mountain ranges: our two-billion year old earth cooled off and grew solid—on the outside. As the inside became cooler and cooler, it contracted, leaving a vast and fairly thin crust—a kind of suspended arch without pillars to rest upon. Simple figuring showed that this crust cracked wide open from time to time—settling down to relieve the strain. The process happened again and again, until some more it collapsed. Some seven great crumbings have been traced, which left in their wake—mountains and valleys. So easily and satisfactorily are heights and depths accounted for in theory.

But facts have a habit of being stubborn—in this case the fact of the Pacific Ocean, covering about half of the earth's surface. Its size doesn't fit at all neatly with the "contracting crust" theory. It isn't always wise to doubt accepted text-book laws—but here goes! Why is almost all of the land pushed into one hemisphere? One school insists that the great Pacific depression was left when the moon was dragged out of it—flung into the heavens to dangle a few million miles above. If so, the earth was solid when this happened, and mathematicians say "No!" The moon, they say, only moved to its present distance very gradually. Once it was closer to us—or to our ancestors. Its capacity to raise tides is estimated to have caused tides three miles high, which made deeper the already deep Pacific basin.

We still aren't too sure what made the mountains, or the Pacific—around the edge of which live millions who take its existence for granted. But let's speculate—if we don't solve anything.

### A SOUTHERN WRITER

demands "in the name of Neptune and his sons, and his seven choirs of mermaids, a full page—a blue page, to celebrate the doings of a great navigator, and his visit to the Pacific Coast in 1597." It's a note from Frank Martin of San Diego, a sailing master who has cruised more

## New Nasturtium Strain, 'Gleam', Brings Renewed Prominence to Flower

Break From Old Types Improves Plants, Increases Their Beauty and Even Gives Them Perfume!

By Cecil Solly

**D**URING the last four years, the advent of a new member to the nasturtium family has brought this much-used, but much-abused, plant into prominence again.

This new strain, commonly known as "Gleam," is a distinct break from the types that our grandfathers and great-grandmothers knew.

It is most amazing that such a break could have been made all at once, the way it has. Just study the description of this new type. Every color that the nasturtium family knows is now found in the varieties and hybrids that are fast becoming fixed. The flowers are intensely doubled. They stand well above the foliage, an advantage which alone would make it well worth while. Added to their wonderful form and attractiveness is the fact that this new strain is quite strongly perfumed. If you can compare its odor with that of the older types you will realize how good it is.

What a plant to suffer the harsh treatment that is usually meted out to it! Who ever thinks to study where and how nasturtiums should be planted? No! Just drop

in the seed and a satisfactory result is invariably obtained.

Do we realize how good-tempered and handy this plant is, giving us the dwarf or bush varieties with both green and red leaves for borders, edgings or beds; and the pole types, also with the two-color leaves quickly covering porches, arbors, and, last but not least, the unsightly garage?

### USEFUL CLIMBER

Of the climber not much has even been written, but what a great aid it is to us in covering up bare places! It will grow well if planted with other kinds of climbers in almost any situation and is especially adapted to plant with climbing plants which have an open or bare stem near the ground. It fills these blanks in and avoids bareness such as is exhibited by the climbing rose.

One of the great uses "on the other side" is to plant dwarf and climbers together along the bank of a river, especially if the bank is of stone or concrete. A most beautiful effect is obtained by a big elongated bed of the dwarf ones with the climbers nearer the water and trailing down and touching the stream or river. One of the most lovely sights seen by the writer was at Canterbury, England, the Cathedral City, where there is a stretch of all colors of nasturtiums every year. Window boxes overhanging the river are planted with them, also. Mirrored in the river, a most pleasing effect is obtained.

When this flower becomes again more popular here we will use it more and more for our window boxes and hanging baskets.

On the Pacific Coast, garden and community clubs have been working for years to beautify the highways, using all kinds of flowers in profusion for this purpose, but they seem to have forgotten this nasturtium. Its one great advantage is that it self-seeds most productively and would volunteer in great quantity every year and keep down most of the weeds.

### AS A RELISH

In Europe the nasturtium often is used as a vegetable. Seeds are picked, full size, while yet green and pickled in vinegar. It is a most tasty relish, being known there as Indian Cress.

The leaves, while young, are delicately pungent and are a very fine addition to the mixed salad, usually served chopped with other greens, and they also make a tasty dish boiled.

The cultivation of the nasturtium is so very simple, to use the words of an old country gardener, "Just poke 'em in anywhere."

In colors, the nasturtium can produce flowers from pure white through all the shades of cream, pink or orange to scarlet and crimson and also shows some decided lavender and mauve shades, but no blues.

Another of the great assets of this plant is its practically total immunity from insect pests and diseases, only being troubled by a few aphid and leaf eaters. As a ground cover crop it has few equals. Imagine, for instance, a bed of the dwarf variety in a bright cerise color with many spikes of a lovely bright lavender gladiolus like Charles Dickens spaced in it.

Seeds planted early in the year in the tulp or hyacinth bed will fill in the brown spaces quickly and leave a ground cover under which unsightly dying bulbs may be tucked in May or June.

Idea that constant motion in the water frightens away the sharks—that they will not attack a moving object. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't—sharks do not always observe the rules, and tragedies occur when least expected.

### IF YOU HAVE

questions to ask about far-away places, drop a line . . . or if you want to see one of your own experiences in this column, write to The Captain, Five Star Weekly, 450 Mills Tower, San Francisco, California.

**RAISE GIANT FROGS**  
FREE BOOK  
START BACKYARD  
Big profit possibilities! Breeder lays 10,000 eggs yearly. Frogs sell for \$5 dozen. Any climate suitable. Costs little to begin. Market waiting for all you raise. Write for 1937 frog book today. AMERICAN FROG CANNING CO. (Dept. 104-D) New Orleans, La.