

# LOVE ON THE RANGE

BY NELSON C. NEE

## The Story So Far

Under the name of Streeter, "Blur" Ankrum takes a job on the Rafter T to help lovely Lee Trane. A plot is on foot to grab the ranch, and Ankrum wants to discover who is behind it. He flees a sheepman, jumps the water tank, Ankrum dashes to the line camp and challenges Heffie. Lee follows him.

## Chapter 24 Powdersmoke

A COLD chill fell on Lee as she looked from Heffie to Ankrum. Ankrum's lips were compressed, his face rigid.

Heffie laughed. "I don't scare worth a dam," he said, and his tobacco-stained fangs showed between the curl of his lips. "Unleash your wolf an' let him bark."

None of the other men within Lee's vision smiled with him. What they saw in the eyes of the Rafter T foreman put a cramp in their facial muscles. One or two shifted their feet uneasily, cast longing glances toward their horses. Suddenly slipping, Heffie's smile revealed the scowl that lay behind it.

From a distance the pound of hoofs beat across the quiet. Lee, hearing them, thought it must be Ring-Legs.

Heffie heard them, too, and a deeper flame burned through his dusky glance. He settled his raw-boned length more easily against the door frame. "Wop," he sneered, "what you waitin' for?"

"I'm waitin' for the rest of that three minutes to slide past," Ankrum said, and Lee saw that a grin crossed his lips as he added: "But that needn't hold the rest of you gents back—any time you feel the need for action just jerk a pistol loose."

"You brass fool!" Heffie's cheeks blazed red. "Nothin' but my personal hatred of violence holds me back from lettin' these boys give you what you're needin'!"

Lee saw a horseman top the crest of Eagle Point, pause an instant to take in the scene below, then cautiously urge his pony down the trail. As he drew nearer she caught her breath. This man was not Ring-Legs—he was a total stranger!

While Ankrum drew a watch from his pocket Lee's eyes stayed on the coming horseman. He was much closer now; near enough for her to make out his features plainly. He was clad in a tight-fitting jacket of bright velvet and a pair of bat-wing chaps over trousers of green corduroy. The chaps looked scarred and old from long use, but their studdings of turquoise and silver told of original worth. Upon his head was a huge, bell-crowned sombrero.

But it was not at his trappings that Lee was gazing; her glance was fastened upon his face. It was dark, swarthy and handsome despite the tight, thin-lipped mouth and the dark, little eyes that flashed with cunning.

She watched him approach and slide down from the saddle not twenty paces back of Ankrum. A Mexican obviously, Lee decided, and saw him glance at Heffie, whose mouth spread wide in a vicious grin.

"Why didn't Ankrum look around? The man in the big sombrero was cañoning closer each second, his face wreathed in a leer of anticipation. Lee opened her mouth to call, but no words came. Cold fear transfused her; in her throat as the advancing Mexican drew the heavy pistol sagging his holster.

Terror-stricken she watched the Mexican creep up behind Ankrum; creep up to a point so near that by merely reaching out his hand the man could have touched him. She saw the gun—weighted hand go slowly up and back and there, as the breath caught in her throat, it stopped.

"Look Behind You!"

IT SEEMED to Lee that something must have frozen the Mexican's muscles. From the tail of her eyes she noted the scowl that warped Heffie's features as the Mexican's hand began to tremble, slowly began to sag. And with the sight she suddenly found her voice.

"Abe! Abe!" she cried. "Behind you—quick!"

Ankrum did not whirl or even turn. Swift as light two smooth, long, sideward paces took him out of the Mexican's reach; placed the man within his vision and held the other likewise.

"Why, howdy, Chato Bandera. I'm quite some pleased to see you. Were you figurin' to wave that gun at me?"

"Blur Ankrum!"

They were like a wall, those words that fell from the Mexican's twisted mouth. The eyes in his livid face were like two fat burnt holes in a linen sheet. A tremor

snook the slinger torn iron, his polished ood to his belt, sombrero head as beneath the impact of Ankrum's mocking glance, he went backward a few uncertain steps. "I swear," he cried, "I need not know eet was you, Senior!"

Blur Ankrum! Bandera's words seared into Lee's consciousness with the scorch of a branding iron. They left her weak and feeling very feminine and helpless; they drove the color from her cheeks and snapped conflicting fingers of ice about her heart. Her mind was a chaos of emotion. Blur Ankrum—those words explained a lot of things about the man she had known as Streeter!

In a sudden silence she sat. Bandera lower his shaking hand—saw the loosened grip release the pistol to let it slither back in leather. Heffie's men were like a row of hand-carved figures; not even their eyes moved as they stared with glassy fascination at Rafter T's foreman. Such was the shocking power of Ankrum's name. Lee shuddered. She wished she had not come.

Still keeping the group covered Ankrum said, "Who bought your gun, Bandera?"

"But no one, senior," Bandera shrugged and spread his hands. "My gun is no for sale, amigo. I have quee' that business—seguro si."

He wiped cold beads of moisture from his face, backed a few more steps away, awkwardly, fearfully, as though each step might be his last.

"Senior—eet ees true!" he cried with breaking voice.

"The guise of reformed and repentant bad man fits you well, Bandera. I could almost find it in my heart to believe you—if I didn't know what a black-bellied snake you really are. Throw that gun in the water!"

Longed-For Chance

LIKE one in a trance Bandera mechanically lifted the heavy pistol from his holster, drew back his arm for the toss. Lee recognized the danger even as Heffie realized that here was his longed-for chance. As the Mexican's weapon struck the water with a splash, Heffie's rifle leaped to his shoulder—his finger curled against the trigger.

Yet fast as the sheepman was, Ankrum's move was swifter. His eye must have caught the last-end of Heffie's upward sweep with the rifle. Even as the shot cracked out the Rafter T foreman dropped and whirled. Red flame licked from his hip. Heffie clutched at his chest and wailed out of sight with the cabin.

"Come on, you back-shootin' polecats! If it's fight you're honin' for I'll give you a fracas to remember!"

Several of the men had gotten their guns. A rifle cracked and hurled a whistling streak above him. Ankrum fired from the hip and grinned maliciously as the rifleman staggered backward. With a side leap another of Heffie's gun-slicks got himself a weapon and whipped it up. It spat and so did Ankrum's feet, spill down across his boots. She saw Ankrum's lead smash the luckless pistol-bender back and down—saw him drop to hands and knees and sway there.

Lee was terrified, shaken, yet pride and elation had a part of glowing spots of color to her cheeks and the blood was pounding through her arteries at a heady gait. The thought came to her that she should fear this man. But she didn't—she was glad and proud this man was Rafter T's foreman!

Smoke hung thick about his crouching figure. Abruptly the fight was over—killed as swift as was its birth. Heffie's men dropped weapons as though they burnt their palms, thrust shaking hands in hurry above their heads. As he straightened, Lee saw that there was blood on Ankrum's neck where a close-placed slug had torn his ear; it seemed unconscious of the wound.

When the men were ready to go, one man looking down from the saddle said, "We won't be forgettin' thee, senior!" Lee recognized the Mexican, Bandera.

Ankrum laughed. "Save your breath to blow your beans," he advised, and tipped his hat derisively.

Lee and Ankrum clash, tomorrow.

# STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

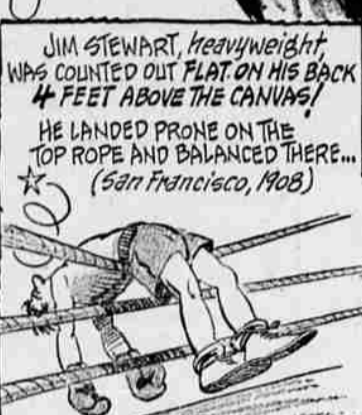
For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



**THE REAL LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY... WAS NO SISSY!**

VIVIAN BURNETT, prototype of the famous character created by his mother, WAS AN ATHLETE AT HARVARD, A DENVER, COLO., NEWSPAPERMAN, AND A YACHTSMAN...

ON THE DAY OF HIS DEATH HE RESCUED 4 PERSONS FROM DROWNING! — July 25, 1937 —



**OPTICAL ILLUSION -- THE BAR IS STRAIGHT**

**ELEPHANT MONUMENT... Somers, N. Y.**

ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF OLD BET, A CIRCUS ELEPHANT THAT TURNED THE TOWN INTO THE CIRCUS CAPITAL OF THE U. S.

**Little Lord Fauntleroy.**

Used by dotting mothers as a shining example of what a little gentleman should be like, Little Lord Fauntleroy, famous character created by Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett, epitomized instead everything "stuffed" to the average small boy.

The story first appeared in the Saint Nicholas Magazine in 1885, and Mrs. Burnett claimed that her son, Vivian, had given her inspiration for the character. In an article which was published years later.

Vivian was at one time an under-

graduate at Harvard, so he went off for all the strenuous athletics to prove he was "no slazy." He made the track team at Harvard.

After graduating, he went to Denver, Colo., and became a newspaperman; in Denver's earlier days a newspaperman was "no slazy." Later, Burnett came to realize the fine sentiments in his mother's great novel.

Retiring to the magazine field, Burnett chose as a hobby yachting, a sport strenuous and exciting in itself. At 61, he owned a yawl, Delight, and last summer received four persons from an overturned sailboat in the Atlantic ocean.

While heading for shore, Burnett died of a heart attack, in July, 1937, carrying to his grave the true spirit of Little Lord Fauntleroy, his mother's idealistic picture of himself.

**Elephant Monument.**

One of the first elephants ever brought to the United States was Old Bet, commemorated today by a monument in Somers, N. Y. Because of the interest Old Bet created, Somers became the "circus capital" of North America.

**Develop Oregon Plea of Sprague**

TILLAMOOK, Aug. 20.—(AP)—Oregon forests, agriculture and power should be developed to their utmost, Charles A. Sprague, Salem, Republican gubernatorial candidate, told a Tillamook fair crowd yesterday.

He advocated development of additional industries to fabricate Oregon forest products, pledged himself to a program of sustained forest yields, urged wide diversification of agriculture, complete utilization of Oregon power resources, a balanced economy and adequate old-age pensions.

**EXPERT ADVICE AND TREATMENT** for all scalp and hair diseases. **ETHELWYN'S BEAUTY SALON**

**TAILSPIN TOMMY—Aerial Clown!**

JUST AS OUR FRIENDS WERE BEGINNING TO WORRY ABOUT SKEET'S UNEXPECTED DELAY IN REACHING THE GREAT AIR MEET, THE RADIO ANNOUNCED THAT THE THREE-POINT PILOT HAD JUST LANDED AT THE LOWER END OF THE FIELD AND WAS PREPARING TO GO INTO HIS ACT.

IT'S SKEET'S BETTY-LOU! IN THE OLD PUSHER!

AND NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, SKEETS WILL DEMONSTRATE HOW HIS GRAN PAPPY USED TO GO DUCK HUNTING!

DAD BURN IT! WHY DON'T THAT 'ERE DUCK FLY STRAIGHT?

AND SKEETER, WITH HIS DECAY DUCK, RUBBER SHOT-GUN AND LOUD SPEAKER, IS STEALING THE SHOW!

**BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Business Session!**

BEN, JUST HOW'RE WE GOIN' AFTER THE JIPPENS?

WELL, RUSTY, I'LL TELL YOU—

—WE'RE RAISING TURKEYS THAT ARE SO BIG THEY'LL ONLY FIT INTO THE OVENS OF HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS—BUT WITH DR. KEYLEY'S SUNSHINE PELLETS WE CAN CONTROL THEIR WEIGHT AND—

I GETCHA, PAL! RAISE 'EM UP PLUMP ENOUGH 'TILL THE AVERAGE HOME OWEN, EH?

RIGHT! BUT THAT ISN'T ALL!

TURKEY BUSINESS IS KIND OF SEASONAL, BUT—

STOP! GETCHA! BUT CHICKENS AN' EGGS AINT, EH?

**THE NEBBS—Breaking the News**

CHILDREN, HOW DO YOU LIKE MR. STEPHEN NEBB?

I NEVER GAVE THE MATTER ANY CONSIDERATION.

WHAT'S TO LIKE ABOUT HIM?

YOU KNOW, MR. NEBB IS A VERY RICH MAN—HE OWNS A DIAMOND MINE AND HE WANTS TO MARRY ME... HE'D BE A FINE INFLUENCE TO YOU CHILDREN.

MARRY THAT GUY!

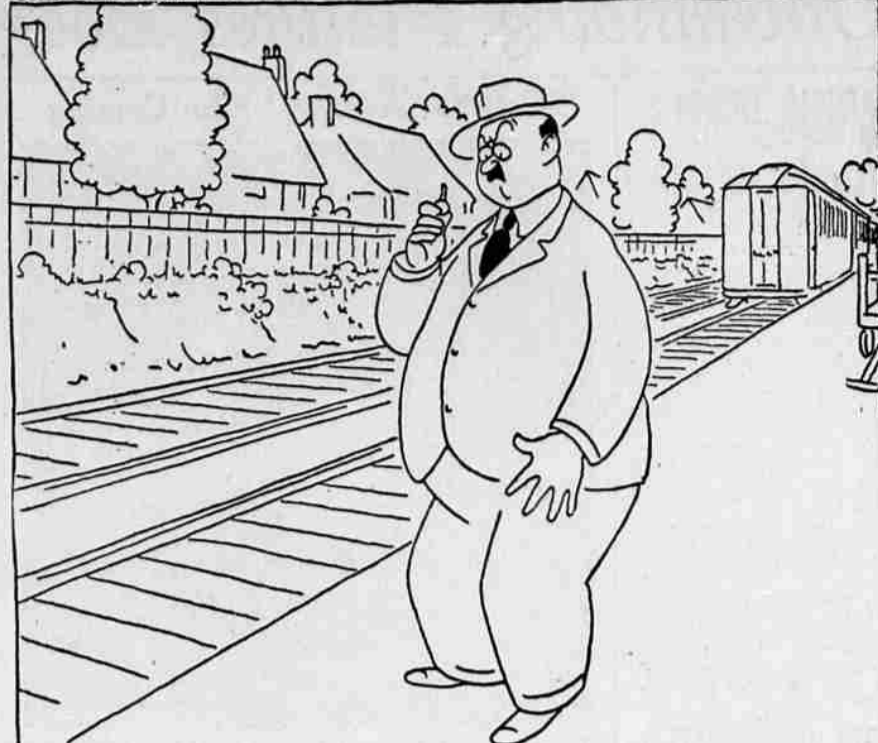
MOTHAH!

DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH, MOTHER—HE LOOKS LIKE A RAM GOAT... I WAS WAITING FOR HIM TO TAKE OFF HIS HAT TO SEE IF IT WAS SITTING ON A PAIR OF HORNS!!

MOTHAH, IF YOU MUST GET MARRIED, WHY DON'T YOU GO TO EUROPE AND GET YOURSELF A DUKE OR SOMETHING?

# THE WORLD AT ITS WORST

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



YOU DISCOVER THAT IN THE CONFUSION OF GETTING THE FAMILY OFF ON THE TRAIN FOR THE COUNTRY YOU HAVE GIVEN THEM THE KEY TO YOUR GOLF CLUB LOCKER AND HAVE KEPT THE KEY TO THE TRUNK

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# S MATTER POF

By C M PAYNE



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By HAL FORREST

# Stennett Finds Gambling Main Occupation In Reno

RENO, Nev., Aug. 18.—(Special Correspondence)—Last night we made the rounds of the most popular night clubs in the city and watched the surging mass of humanity move from game to game, placing bets where odds were high, hoping for a streak of luck.

I would estimate there are about 100 gambling houses in Reno, some very extensive, and many small ones, mostly in casinos. The Palace, at the Bank Club and the Palace are the leading gambling houses, and especially at the Bank Club every form of gambling with cards, wheels, dice, keno, horse races and slot machines is awaiting the fortune seekers.

The Bank Club is a very large establishment, with \$45,000 worth of fixtures and equipment, and is packed with a throng of speculating humanity day and night and seven days a week. Among the gambling element are many old men and women—some of whom are 70 to 75 years old and ought to know better. The Bank Club has 52 slot machines ranging from the \$5 variety to \$1 and you couldn't hear a live word for the constant rattle of the machines.

The Palace ranks next for crowd attendance. The Fortune, where diners and bar service is very high, is attended only by the elite of the city. They have every form of gambling, including tango. There is also music dancing and diners at this club, but at the Bank Club and the Palace there is no music, dancing nor extra.

The city has no music clubs, establishments without bar or music. In fact I observed no music or dancing at any of the clubs except the Fortune and the Dog House.

There were many patrons at the gambling tables last night out the wagers were mostly in the dollar class and it was hard to tell whether there were any real lucky ones among the betters.

I would estimate there are considerably more than 1000 slot machines in Reno. They are in the grocery stores, fruit stands, saloons, drug stores, hotels, restaurants, cigar stores, gas stations, book stores, sporting goods stores, etc. In fact there were only three public places in Nevada where I did not observe a slot machine—the state capitol