INSTALLMENT 7

THE STORY SO FAR:

Dusty King and Lew Gordon had built up a vast string of ranches which stretched from Texas to Montana. King was killed by his powerful and unscrupulous competitor, Ben Thorpe. Bill Roper, King's adopted son, undertook to break Thorpe's power. His first step was to start a cattle war in Texas. He made this decision against the opposition of Lew Gordon and the tearful pleading of his sweetheart, Jody Gordon. With the aid of Dry Camp Pierce and other outlaw gunmen, Roper conducted raid after raid upon Thorpe's herds. Cleve Tanner, manager of Thorpe's Texas holdings, seemed helpless to stop him. In spite of his daring plans, Roper's resources had dwindled dangerously low by the time winter came. And Thorpe seemed not to feel the losses inflicted upon him.

* * *

CHAPTER X

The winter dragged out slowly. Roper's plans, bold as they were, had been well laid. He had perceived from the first that success or failure depended upon whether or not he could make his war with Tanner self sustaining. To gnaw away at the Tanner herds was one thing; to turn their captures into cash was altogether another.

Roper had hoped that he could initiate his own drives to the north, but he had found this out of the question. On the other hand, the trail drivers had found themselves so vulnerable that none of them wanted to buy cattle of questionable ownership.

The Thorpe-Tanner organization did not have this problem; they took what they wanted and drove what they wanted, by means of their own trail outfits. But Roper could now only dispose of cattle for the trail through ranchers known to be scrupulous and established men.

This was the strategic purpose behind Roper's rehabilitation of the eleven outfits which Tanner had originally seized, and which Roper had now put back into the hands of their proper owners. These re-established ranchers had not only the sympathy but the respect of everyone who knew anything about Texas cattle. Through these men Roper now had a safe and sure outlet for the cattle recovered by Dry Camp's experts, while the gunfighters under such men as Nate Liggett, Tex Daniels, and Hat Crick Tommy supplied a much needed protection until they could get on their feet.

But this method, promising as it was, was slow. Of necessity the men whom Roper backed were cowmen without assets other than their disputed claim to their ground.

Sometimes by mortgage loans, but principally by silent partnerships, Roper had now obtained interests in nearly a dozen outfits. They should have been thriving outfits. But Roper found his money draining away with unforeseen swiftness, without hope of any financial return until the trail should open in the spring. Only the Mexican border operations, which depended upon Lee Harnish, continued to show a thin trickle of income through the winter months. As spring approached, Roper found himself near the end of his string.

Early in February, Shoshone Wilce came south seeking Bill Roper, and found him at the Pot Hook ranch.

"Find out anything?" Roper asked.

Shoshone Wilce rubbed his badly shaved chin with horny fingers. "I don't know as you're going to like this so very good, Bill."

"Let's have the bad news first—I eat it up."

"God knows there's enough of it; there ain't any other kind to be had. What do you want to know first?"

"How's Thorpe making out up above?"

"I saw him in Dodge City; he was throwing money around with a shovel in each hand. You know what I think? I think he can go away and forget Tanner, and write everything he has in Texas right off the books, and never know the difference!"

Roper locked his hands behind his head and stared at the ceiling. Sometimes it seemed to him that trying to break Tanner was like trying to empty the Rio Grande with a hand dipper. The apparently unbounded resources of Ben Thorpe in the middle country and in the north, out of reach of the south Texas war, made up a vast reservoir which Tanner could draw on without limit.

"How is Tanner himself making out?"

"Bill, I've been all up and down the north and east part of Texas; and I can't see where we've accomplished a damned thing."

"You don't know what you're talking about!"

"You know what I think?" Wilce persisted. "I think there's more cattle in this country than the world has any use for. I don't think you can bother any man any more, just by fooling with his cattle."

"Never mind what you think. Let's have what you know."

"I nosed around and tried to find out what promises Tanner's been making for cattle on spring deliveries. I didn't learn everything. Nobody learns everything. But I got enough to total up."

Shoshone Wilce hesitated, and didn't say any more until he had got a cigarette rolled. In the middle of rolling his cigarette he went into a coughing fit, and spilled the tobacco, so that he had to start over again.

"Bill," he said at last, "Cleve Tanner's going to drive more cattle this year than he's ever drove before. In just one bunch alone he aims to deliver fifteen thousand head on the banks of the Red!"

"He's crazy!" Roper shouted. "He can't do it—it's impossible!"

"Well—he thinks he can. He knows his cattle counts better than me. But—I've been all up and down this country, and I don't see but what he can."

"Well, anyway," Roper said, "the border gangs are going good. We'll go on with it, and keep going on . . ."

"Bill," Shoshone said, "how long can you go on, the way it's costing you now?"

"Not much farther, I guess."

"You going to have to quit?"

Roper shook his head. "I'll never quit now, Shoshone; I can't quit. While I've got one rider left with me, or no riders, I'll still be working on Cleve Tanner. But I think we're going to beat him, Wilce. After all, the border gangs—we can count on them."

Roper continued to count on his border gangs for two weeks more. Then, in the middle of February, he learned that Lee Harnish was through.

The first word of difficulty came when Dave Shannon pushed a little bunch of seven hundred head through the river at Mudcat Turn, and found no vaqueros waiting on the other side. Shannon waited three days before he was forced to turn the cattle free and ride.

The complete news of what had happened never really came. What Roper learned came in bit by bit, by way of random riders who had talked with a vaquero here, another there.

Lee Harnish had been pressing south with a herd of twelve hundred head. He was two days into Mexico, and supposed that he was clear; he had never had much trouble, once he was well below the line.

Harnish took to the brush and the hills.

But now, one moonless night, a band reported as of at least sixty men struck from no place, scattering the herd, and blazing down on Harnish's riders almost before they could take to the saddle. There had been a sharp running fight as Harnish and his half-dozen boys took to the brush and the hills. Unsatisfied with seizure of the herd, the unknown band had spent three days trying to hunt down Harnish's riders.

Lee Harnish himself, wounded in the first skirmish, had had a hard time getting clear; it was not known whether or not all of his riders were elsewhere accounted for.

After an elapse of several weeks, an Indian-faced vaquero came hunting Bill Roper; he carried a written message from Lee Harnish:

"This thing is finished up. Don't let anybody tell you it was Cleve Tanners men busted into us. What hes done, this Tanner has put some bunches of Mex renegades up to landing on us, they work with the Yakis, and his Indian scouts have spotted where we make our crossings. Seems like theres anyway a dozen bands of them havent got anything else to do but lay watching those crossings, and wait us out.

"About half of them is carrying new American guns and plenty ammunition. They got our hide nailed to the fence all right and we are through."

It was a long time before Roper saw Lee Harnish again. He did not accept Harnish's statements offhand; but when he had conferred with Dave Shannon, and others of the border men in whom he believed, he was forced to accede that the border-running phase of the attack on Tanner was done.

As February drew to a close, the big herds were once more being thrown together for the trail. From the eleven rehabilitated outfits in which Roper was now silent partner, a little trickle of trail cattle began to move toward the gathering grounds on the Red. The income from these sales helped a little; but the proceeds were principally absorbed by debts incurred in behalf of the individual ranches. The improvement in his situation which Roper had hoped for did not come.

It was deep into March when Tex Long quit.

"Look," Tex Long said, "look." He did not talk easily; whatever he said was matter-of-fact, even now. "I got to pull out of this game."

Bill Roper looked at him, without expression. "All right. How much you figure I owe you?"

Tex smiled. "Nothing."

A very rare flush of anger came into Bill Roper's face. "Tex, what's the matter with you?"

Tex Long made a quick, futile gesture with his hands. "We used to be able to jump down on them. We can't do that now. The Bert Johnson place is studded with rifles until a man can't take a step. Every place you'll find out it's the same. There isn't going to be anything more we can do. We went good for a while. But they got organized, now. We're through."

Tex Long was only one of Bill Roper's picked gunfighters, but he was one of the best. As March drew on, Roper lost four more.

Into the Big Bend, into the valley of the Nueces, Cleve Tanner had flooded such a power of gunfighters as Bill Roper would not have believed. He had supposed that he could outplace and outsmart Tanner's warrior outfits. But now his raiding forces met everywhere a stubborn resistance.

Roper had discounted the quit of Tex Long; but now other news was coming in. The Graham outfit—the first of all those that the Roper men had taken—was again in the hands of Cleve Tanner; and Nate Liggett, assigned to protect Graham, had headed for the tall without even a report. Hat Crick Tommy was three weeks missing. The Davis outfit, left under his protection, had gone the way of all loose outfits, and Tanner's cowboys rode the range.

Dry Camp Pierce was almost the last to come in—of those who came in at all.

Pierce rode into the Pot Hook Camp early in April. He was the same, small wiry man he always had been—his eyes watery, his jaws poorly shaven.

"Bill, I can't carry these camps no more. God knows we strung with you while we could. We've et beef, beef, beef without salt or flour, we've et bobcat meat. But Bill, there's no lead in our guns, and there's no patches in our pants, and it's time I got to let the boys go, to make out any way they can."

Bill Roper looked older than Dusty King had ever looked; his face was like granite, with hard lines cut into it by the weather.

"Okay," he said. "I understand how you feel, Dry Camp."

Dry Camp's anger was gone as quickly as it had come. "Bill," he said pleadingly, "it's only—it's only—"

"It's only that you've had a lot of men out working for us," Bill Roper said more reasonably.

"Near fifty men," Dry Camp said.

"How many you got working now?"

Dry Camp Pierce hesitated.

"Not a damned man," Bill Roper said bitterly. "And now you quit Dusty King."

"Look you here," Dry Camp said. "I've strung with you when I wouldn't have strung with any other man, let alone an upstart kid. I'll say this for you—you've made a game fight. But kid, take my word for it—they're too big, and they're too strong."

"You think so?" Bill Roper said.

"I know so. I don't know what you had, made men like Lee Harnish and Dave Shannon and Nate Liggett throw in with you, but they did—the damnedest wild bunch Texas ever seen. Half the renegades of the Long Trail, and your part of King-Gordon, has gone into beating Cleve Tanner. And where are we now?"

"Well?"

"We aren't any place! Kid, I tell you we're beat, and we're long beat!"

April melted into May, and Roper had nothing to fight with any more. Those units of his wild bunch that had not quit had not been heard from at all; he knew already that the ones who had completely failed. Cleve Tanner prospered, seemingly; and all was well with Ben Thorpe.

Bill Roper waited at the Pot Hook now, trying to think of some way that he had missed. King-Gordon denied him, and Lew Gordon expressedly would advance nothing more against Dusty King's share of the partnership which had been broken by death . . .

(TO BE CONTINUED)

For Summer Style Silhouettes Visit Your Corsetry Expert

By CHERIE NICHOLAS

THIS is a day and age that demands style-perfection throughout every detail of general makeup and apparel. One may be ever so glamorously groomed in matter of complexion, hair-do and fingertips, one's costume may be of fine fabric in colors delectable, stylized "to the queen's taste," but if one's figure is not expertly and scientifically brought under subjection into lines of smooth contour and grace via faultless foundation-garment technique, all is lost in matter of style-right and charming appearance.

Note how slim, svelte and graciously satisfying the fashions pictured are to the eye. They demonstrate the efficacy of corset wizardry in giving the much-to-be-coveted smooth silhouette that modern fashion demands. In the foreground the "portrait of a lady" demonstrates how distinctive a smartly conservative graceful sheer print redingote costume looks when the wearer is nicely fitted in the correct foundation garment. In this instance the simple styling of the redingote with its accent of tiny white buttons down the front calls for a well-constructed corset in order to show to advantage the slender-waisted figure. Diminutive quill pens darting from tiny inkwells make the attractive white-print patterning on fine dark sheer for the redingote with matching crepe for the under slip. Shirred heart-shaped pockets add interest to the flaring skirt.

Slim through the waist and hips, smartly bulky through the blouse and shoulder, the lumberjacket slacks costume shown is beautifully tailored in cool spun rayon for active summer way. For a slim, chic line and comfortable action freedom, the fashion-wise vacationist will wear this trim costume over a sleek panty girdle correctly fitted to her special needs.

Fresh and cool for summer the patrician jacket suit pictured to the left uses fine printed sheer and crepe in a clear white scroll and a leaf patterning. A self-fabric softly styled jabot at the bodice front gives subtle accent to this sheer-with-crepe frock, with its all-around pleated skirt. The season's important lingerie touch appears on the collar of the nipped-in jacket.

The influence of the new long-torso line is seen in the attractive spectator costume shown to the right in the group. Here a smartly striped one-piece frock is teamed with a trim short-sleeved jacket in solid white. The broad collar of the frock is worn over the jacket collar to heighten the ensemble effect. Worn over a well-fitting foundation garment, this figure-revealing costume has a slender trim line of grace and beauty.

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

Hat to Match

It is a treasurable little hat and dress of cunning pique, patterned with pink rosebuds that this darling little girl is wearing. The gay posy pique is just the thing for the making of this little sun suit. A matching bonnet completes the vision.

Middy Blouse Types

One of the reactions to the vogue for long-torso lines is the revival of the middy blouse. The latest types accent the lowered V-line neck. Middy sweaters are very smart worn with pleated skirts. White wash-fabric middies are also good style.

City Cottons Go 'Tops' In Summer Fashions

Ladies who "know their fashions" dress in gingham, seersucker, chambray, tissue-crinkle organdy, dark boucles and other smart "city cottons." It is a picture that fashion paints for summer, most refreshing and one that goes keen on chic and charm. For downright practicality the jacket suit tailored to a nicety of dark check crinkle seersucker, of plaid gingham or striped chambray takes first prize this summer. Women of discriminating tastes have yielded wholeheartedly to the new cotton vogue, a fact impressed on one throughout the summer style parade all along the highways and byways of fashion.

Sweaters for Evening Wear Are Very Popular

Evening sweaters continue to be a smart fashion. The latest arrival in formal sweaters reflects the bra influence in a most attractive way. It is knitted of pastel wool, comes just below the bust neckline where it ties with velvet ribbon drawn through a deep scalloped V-neckline. Sleeves are short and for an evening fantasy this is one of the prettiest sweaters imaginable.

Dye White Venise Lace To Match Your Fabrics

The use of stark white stiffened Venise lace is outstanding in the summer mode. So successful has this adventure in lace proved, designers are planning to trim monotone frocks this fall in handsome Venise lace dyed to match the fabric that teams with it.

Gay Handkerchiefs

Carry out a summer note for your costume by flirtatiously flaunting a gaily flowered handkerchief. You can get perfectly fascinating "hankies" with realistically colorful life-size roses printed to look as if they were artfully hand-painted. Others are patterned with huge poppies, and the ones with big clusters of natural looking violets are lovely with the new and now-so-fashionable costumes in purple tones.

Operations for Knee Injuries Now Quite Safe

By DR. JAMES W. BARTON
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

TODAY'S HEALTH COLUMN

ONE of the injuries football, basketball, baseball players and other athletes sustain is a loose cartilage in the knee. This cartilage serves as a cushion between the two bones forming the knee joint and as the knee joint supports the whole weight of the body, anything that disturbs that cushion means not only a painful knee but a knee that will not support the weight of the body.

My own treatment in "fresh" injuries was to strap the knee up with adhesive tape, replacing the tape every few days for two or three weeks. In more severe cases, the knee was placed in a plaster cast for three to five weeks.

The question naturally asked is why did these loose cartilage cases undergo operation? To be quite frank, it was not until recent years that the physician or surgeon has felt free to recommend operation because so many operations resulted in a "stiff" knee; in fact, very little motion remained after operation.

Dr. Barton

These knee injuries are just as common today as ever, but if adhesive or plaster cast treatment fails to give results, most physicians feel free to recommend operation owing to the satisfactory results which are now obtained. These satisfactory results have been obtained because the patient now receives a thorough examination and any infection—teeth, tonsils, sinuses—is removed before operation.

Reports Results.

In recording his results in operation of 50 of these cases, Dr. Harold R. Bohlman, Johns Hopkins university, in the Journal of the American Medical Association, outlines his method of preparation, recommends the use of a local instead of a general anesthetic, the complete removal of blood from the joint, and injection of air, with gentle movement of the joint within a few days after operation.

The hospital stay is from three to seven days instead of the two or three weeks of former years.

* * *

Hernia Treatment For Elderly Folks

ALL physicians have patients consult them regarding a hernia or rupture. In nearly all cases, the patient being well and strong, operation has usually been advised. Operation means getting rid of a truss.

Fortunately, with the discovery of injecting hernias, this method makes operation unnecessary in about one-third of all cases.

Some older patients with hernia who have perhaps worn a truss for 30 or 40 years and have never liked the idea of operation may be wondering whether the injection method is suitable in old cases or in old individuals.

Dr. L. Manoil, New York, in Archives of Surgery, Chicago, presents some figures regarding the injection method. During the period between February, 1936, and February, 1939, 158 hernias in 123 patients (some with hernia on both sides) were treated by the injection method in Dr. Manoil's clinic. Ninety-two per cent of these cases were between 41 and 90 years of age. The hernia returned in 26 patients or about 16 per cent of this group and five patients were operated on after injection, making total failures about 20 per cent. In the 15 patients between 11 and 40 years of age, no hernias returned. There were no infections and no deaths.

From the above figures showing that four of every five older patients were cured by the injection method, Dr. Manoil believes the injection method should be used in older patients who are considered poor surgical risks, and because of their state of nutrition, or other condition present. It should also be used in younger patients who refuse operation but are willing to undergo the injection method even though it takes weeks and months to bring about a cure.

* * *

QUESTION BOX

Q.—Acid fruits cause me to break out with hives. Should I avoid these foods, thereby depriving myself of necessary vitamins?

A.—You are sensitive or allergic to certain foods. If you want to be free of hives, you'll have to avoid the foods you "know" cause them. Treatment is to start with a very small amount of the food or foods causing the hives, gradually increasing the amount until system can take them without disturbance.

FARM TOPICS

'TIMING' CROP EFFECTS YIELD

Harvesting Immature Grain Decreases Quality.

By W. W. BROOKINS
(Extension Agronomist, University Farm, St. Paul.)

As key producers in the national defense program, farmers of the nation have a special responsibility this year to get the new grain crop threshed and stored in as good condition as possible. Both the yield and quality of grains may be materially affected by farm practice during the harvest-threshing period.

One of the most important steps toward high grade grain in the bin is cutting at the proper stage of maturity. Too early harvesting is a common mistake. Grain should be at least in the firm dough stage. If hail and insect damage can be avoided, the crop should stand until it is well matured.

Grain harvested with the binder should be placed in well-built shocks as soon as possible after cutting.

Grain should be threshed only when dry enough for safe storage. A moisture content of 10 to 12 per cent is considered safe for storage of wheat, oats, barley, or rye, while flax is safe if moisture is down to 8 or 10 per cent. In temperate, dry regions, higher moisture content can be permitted, but in areas where the weather is normally humid, the grain must be dry or it will spoil in the bin. When in doubt, it is safest to get a moisture test from a local elevator. Insect damage in the bin usually accompanies moist grain and heating.

Now that combine harvesting is more common even on smaller farms, a great deal of attention needs to be given to this form of threshing. It is wise to avoid combining grain that is immature or moisture laden. When there is dew, combining should be delayed in the morning until grain is dry. Cutting should stop in the late afternoon as soon as the grain begins to take up moisture from the air.

Molasses, Paper Used To Seal Trench Silo

Two recent methods of sealing trench silos which farmers have found to be practical are the use of molasses and finely ground straw, and strips of tar paper covered with dirt, according to Ivan Watson, assistant professor of animal husbandry at Colorado State college.

Growers who have tried the tar paper and dirt method report little or no spoilage of silage. Strips of the paper are laid crosswise of the trench silo and are lapped two or three inches for proper sealing. Then the paper is covered with a layer of six to ten inches of dirt. When the silage is to be fed to livestock the soil is scooped off the paper at one end where the silo is to be opened.

In using the molasses seal the trench silo is filled and rounded over the top and the silage is covered with four to six inches of finely ground oat, wheat or barley straw. Rounding the top of the trench silo enables it to shed water.

Then molasses is poured over this straw at the rate of 50 gallons to 100 square feet or one-half gallon to the square foot.

After this has been done the molasses is covered with about two inches of finely ground straw. Ranchmen and farmers who have tried this method report it to be very satisfactory. It makes a tight seal which should prevent spoilage, and the molasses is fed along with the silage.

Old Method Teaches Calves How to Drink

One of the jobs requiring an oversupply of patience on the dairy farm is that of teaching young calves to drink from the pail.

In teaching the calf to drink, a tried and true method is to straddle the calf's neck, insert two fingers in his mouth and lower the head into the milk pail after he is sucking on the fingers. The fingers may be gently removed after the calf starts taking milk. Repeat the process as many times as is necessary for the calf to continue drinking from the pail. It may require many or a few such treatments before the calf will drink freely from a pail.

If nipple pails are used great care must be exercised to see that they are thoroughly cleaned and sterilized.

Purebred Boars

A few extra dollars invested in a good, purebred boar of the right type will prove a profitable investment, according to H. D. Elijah of the University of Missouri college of agriculture.

The type of boar selected should depend somewhat on the type of sows owned. If the sows are tall and leggy, the boar should be low-set, short-legged, and thick. However, the intermediate type of hog will usually make more money.