

THE SPURS
 First Publication From The Original Manuscript
 by **W. J. ELLIOT**
 An Authentic History Of The Old West *** Published Serially By Your Texas Spur

THE NEW BOSS
 CHAPTER XII

Mr. Lomax resigned in May 1889. Had the ranch been more successful and had the hopes of the stockholders, when they bought the Ranch, been fulfilled, Mr. Lomax might long have been the manager. On his resignation Mr. Horsbrugh was immediately made manager. This was the intention of several of the Directors, when they made him assistant to Mr. Lomax.

In June 1889 Mr. Horsbrugh, Mr. Flook, and I drove to Floydada, and declared our intention of becoming citizens of the United States and got our first papers then.

The bed of the New Manager of the Spurs, from first to last, had no roses in it; his every effort for the good of The Company, was more or less frustrated, by gross ignorance, and the weight of money. Mr. Horsbrugh was just a little ahead of his time. We did not see it at the time he was doing things, but now, looking back one can very plainly see that "Hind sight is always plainer than foresight" as Mr. Winfield Scott once told me. Mr. Horsbrugh's intention was to lay a shorthorn hereford foundation for the Spur herd; to give size and bone, as well as color and marking, to the herd of Texas bred longhorn cattle, which had been bought by the Old Company. Ever with this in mind, he worked, and in this year of Our Lord 1938 it is the shorthorn crossed with the Hereford, that the Northern feeders prefer; a policy which the present owners of The Old Spur Ranch carry out.

Remembering the losses of the winter of 1887-88, losses which had been heavier in proportion to the bulls than to the cows, Mr. Horsbrugh had requested that arrangements be made by The Board of Directors to fill the evident shortage in the bull herd; but this request had been deferred and put off, as was so many of his needs for the ranch, only to be granted later.

The spring of 1889 came in pretty. We started work early and found the cattle had wintered well. It soon became evident that there would be a short calf crop. This condition became more evident after the second work had started, about the beginning of July. We had just got in to headquarters, after working the West Pasture, and were loading up with a fresh supply of chuck, to work the East pasture, when Mr. John McNab, one of the Directors, arrived at the ranch.

I was introduced to him. I had never met any of the McNabs until then, but knew of them fairly well. Bud Campbell was still foreman of the ranch, so I was not surprised when he said "Bill, have you many like him over the water." I made out that I had no idea what was wrong. I soon saw that Bud was "kind of hacked." Finally he told me that McNab wanted to see part of the ranch, and he had saddled his pet horse, Dun Babe, one of the gentlest, easiest riding horses on the ranch, for him to ride. When they were ready to start the saddled horse was brought up to him to ride. When he understood the horse was for him, all he said was "no thanks I'll walk," and walk he did, everywhere he went, unless Mr. Horsbrugh got him into the buggy with him. Cowmen will understand what a commotion he made whenever he went near a bunch of these more than half wild Texas cattle. He always carried an umbrella, rain or shine, and what the cattle thought when they saw this curious object walking in their midst, made them only more curious.

Joe Stokes, the branding boss, had been telling Mr. Horsbrugh of the great number of dry cows in every roundup; so Mr. Horsbrugh

thought that now was a good time to impress on one of The Directors, the importance of having plenty bulls. The first roundup in the East Pasture was usually at Dockum, so orders were given to cut out every dry cow in the herd, and hold them by themselves (they were more than half the roundup). Before we were done cutting them, Mr. Horsbrugh arrived with McNab in the buggy. It was great sport for McNab to watch those frisky, longhorn, dry cows being cut out. After the boys got through cutting, Mr. Horsbrugh turned Johnnie over to Bud Campbell, and he drove the buggy as near the dry bunch as possible, explaining to him that none of these cows would have calves. McNab's only remark was "Aye man, and they're bonny." Bud realized McNab had not understood what he was trying to impress upon him; so he tried again. Repeating and explaining that there would be no income from them this year. At that he woke up, and asked "why was that?" It embarrassed Bud, but he called "a spade a spade," and finally Johnnie understood. I will just add in explanation that Mr. John McNab was a bachelor. The lesson given to McNab was not lost; for in future years, so long as he lived, he always backed Mr. Horsbrugh's requests for additional bulls. While he was on the ranch, someone always kept an eye on him, at long distance, and when he got lost which was not unfrequent, someone accidentally happened up on him, and he always returned to the ranch in safety. But no matter how hot the weather, Johnnie always used "Shanks Mare," and never got on a horse while with us.

SOME OF OUR HOUSEKEEPERS
 CHAPTER XIII

The most important man on a cattle ranch next to the manager and bosses is the cook. When a cranky or incompetent cook is employed, he can and invariably does keep the whole outfit in a mess. As a rule The Spur cooks were exceptional, not only as to their ability to cook appetizing food but as men who were genial and well liked by the cowboys.

Such a cook at headquarters was John Flemming, more affectionately known as "Peggy John." When John first blew in to the ranch in 1887, the loss of his right leg at the knee, was no handicap to him as a cowboy. His riding of bucking horses and of some that were loosed, was the equal of any man unhandicapped. He had a stirrup made to fit his peg leg. John could mount as quickly as any man, and once mounted was quite at home on "The Hurricane Deck." Before he was cook at headquarters he was cook with the branding wagon. While with the branding wagon many a prank was pulled off on him. He was the best of all good natured cooks, always in good humor, rain or shine, and that in itself will make a favorite of any cook. Both he and the boy who took his place as cook with the branding wagon, Ed P. Tayloe, when Peggy moved to headquarters, were prime favorites with every cowboy including the stray men who attended the roundup, from neighboring ranches.

The summer of 1888 was pretty dry, when fall work started the creeks were dry and the water holes low, more especially in the East Pasture where the available water was very unpalatable, and we were all anxious to get a drink of fresh water. At the mouth of the Jordan roundup ground, John "had camped" the wagon on the first bank of Duck Creek. The bed rolls were spread out, and John was preparing supper, when suddenly the creek came down, overflow-

ing its bank and our camp site. We immediately reloaded on the wagon all the bedding, and waited patiently for the creek to run down.

After a while John "was capped" into getting a bucket full of fairly clear water, by stepping with his peg leg into the water. When he stooped over to get the bucket full, Jess Poillard jumped on his back, plunging the peg leg deeply into the mud and bogging John. He had to unbuckle the belt from his waist, which secured the peg leg, and hop out leaving peggy in the water. Tuck Pendley was waiting on his horse (he was then horse wrangler) and he roped the leg and ran off with it. John managed to hop to the wagon, but no supper was in the making till the leg came home. John swore he couldn't mix biscuits without his leg.

The following year while cook at headquarters, one morning about eleven o'clock, John entered "the Dive" to see how many had shown up for dinner. After a few minutes he said "boys I'm going to give you a treat for dinner." We all cried out "what is it John?" "Saratogy Chips," said John as he returned to the kitchen.

When the dinner bell rang we all hurried to the mess room. The table was set pretty much as usual; fried steak, beans, potatoes, vinegar roll, and biscuits "better than mother used to make." The spuds were thinly sliced and fried a golden brown. I had a suspicion that they might be John's Saratogy Chips, however, I said nothing. After dinner was eaten, we all remained seated at the table, directly Frank Walker said "John bring on your Saratogy Chips." John thought we were giving him a game, and said "how did you like 'em?" "But we ain't had any of them yet" Frank replied. "Yes you did, and you've eaten 'em all up" John replied. "How did you like the potatoes done that way that's what the cook book calls Saratogy Chips." "Ah John, quit fooling us that way, them was just fried potatoes" said some disappointed boy.

NERVE
 CHAPTER XIV

Early in September of 1889 W. R. (Bill) Stafford was sent with a wagon and outfit to hold strays in the Matador Pasture. While camped at the Red Lakes in the Matador Pasture, his cook, J. C. (Marie) Roberts, and he had a fuss. Marie was fixing to get supper and had just finished sharpening his butcher knife with which to slice the steak, when the trouble arose.

Stafford got hold of the spade, but Marie got in first, and with one swipe cut Stafford's "tummy" open. Stafford was taken from the Red Lakes to Bud Browning's ranch house on the head of Duck Creek. Dr. Hunt at Estacado, the nearest and only physician between Colorado City and Amarillo, was sent for. When Dr. Hunt arrived he had no chloroform. There was no local anesthetic in those days in West Texas, so he had to operate on Bill without anything of the kind.

The Dr. laid Stafford on Browning's dining table, and as he had bled internally, he took out all the intestines, and laid them on the table while he swabbed out the cavity. While Dr. Hunt was doing this, Stafford raised up his head, reached down with two fingers and picked up part of his intestines, asking "is them my guts?" On being assured that they were, and being told to lie down and keep quiet, he did so.

Dr. Hunt put back the entrails as well as he could, and sewed him up. On Stafford's recovery, he went to work for Bud Browning, who was then running the Triangle D O G brand, and worked for him until Bud died.

At this date, June 1938, my friend Bill Stafford is like myself, in that at times we "are hard of hearing," we both however answer promptly when chuck is ready.

Another old friend, Shorty Reynolds, now on the Lone Trail, used to ride for several years, each spring, to Montana and back here in the fall. Returning late in December one year, he was overtaken by a blizzard and heavy fall of snow, while making his way to The Spur headquarters. While daylight lasted he was all right, but darkness came on him, and soon afterwards he could not follow the road, the snow had obliterated all marks.

His horse stumbled once or twice, and he decided he had better fix to camp as best he could. He came to a creek with many cottonwoods on it, and thinking he had got lost decided to camp there. By luck he found a big old cottonwood trunk with considerable drift, lodged between two trees and he was able to start a fire. This

I Give You Texas



Boyce House

He sharpened razor blades for years in the lobby of a down-at-the-heels office building in Fort Worth. One day, an acquaintance happened to mention the Spanish-American War and the frail, stooped man's face brightened as he remarked that he was in that war as a sailor. And he told of an experience:

"One day, our battleship caught sight of an enemy cruiser in the distance. We gave chase but she widened the space between us so that soon the curvature of the earth (or, in this case the ocean) hid her from sight. I was ordered aloft and could still see her. From my position, I signaled to the officer below as to whether the shot had been to the right or left so that the aim could be changed.

"I believe I was the first man in the history of the world to direct the fire of a battleship at an enemy out of sight of the officers and gun crew."

And he resumed sharpening a razor blade.

"They had their hour," the poet wrote—and, in even the most prosaic lives, there has been at least one adventure that has become a golden memory.

Paul Holcomb, picturesque El Campo editor, is responsible for this information: El Campo gins more cotton and handles more rice than any other town in the United States. There are some towns that gin more cotton and others that handle more rice but no other town deals in as much of both cotton and rice as El Campo does.

Visiting the Hood County Tablet recently at Granbury, this columnist was greeted—in the absence of Publisher A. B. Crawford—by Ashley W. Crockett, who was busy setting type by hand. He is 81 years old and is a grandson of David Crockett, hero of the Alamo.

Oscar Lyerla of Flatwood (which, as readers of this column ought to know by now, is in Eastland County) has a droll sense of humor. Heavy-set, twinkling-eyed, the county Democratic chairman draws this story on himself:

Quite a few years ago, the prosecuting attorney was inexperienced. Lyerla, it seems, had neglected to get a new automobile license until he came to town and, before he returned to the car with the plate, an officer put a tag on the windshield.

So Lyerla went to see his friend, the county attorney, to protest that he hadn't violated the law.

"Well, you'd better just go ahead and pay a fine," the prosecutor said. "The fine won't amount to as much as it would cost you to hire a lawyer."

Lyerla replied, "I wasn't intending to hire a lawyer unless you did. I wouldn't want to take unfair advantage of the State." The whole thing was dropped.

fire he kept up all night. As he was well clad and had a heavy overcoat, he suffered no harm.

Next morning when it got light enough so that he could see, he found he had camped less than a mile from the ranch and about fifty feet from the Old Triangle Dugout. He made it to the breakfast table, and did full justice to Mrs. Gilmore's cooking.

(Continued Next Week)

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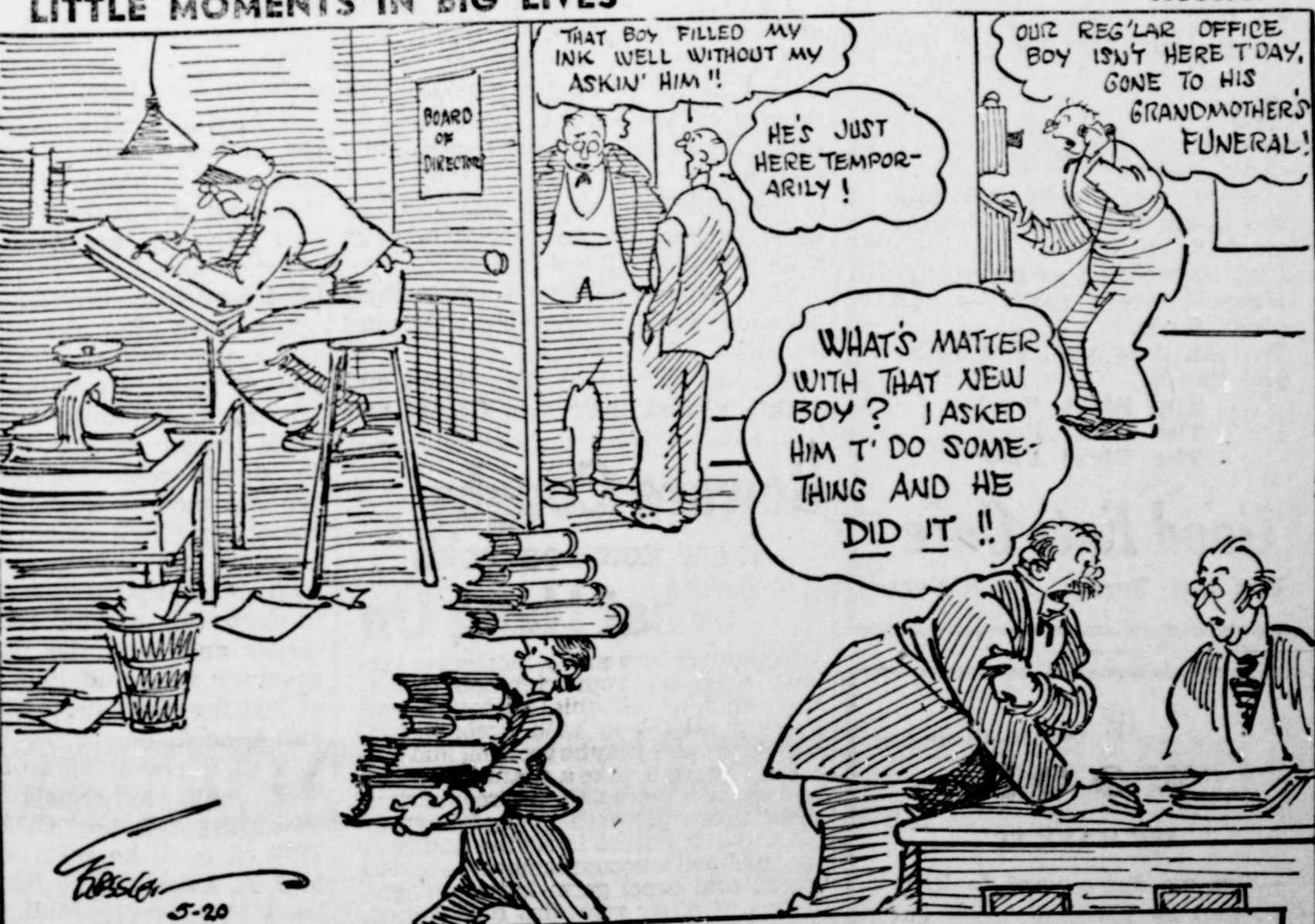
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LITTLE MOMENTS IN BIG LIVES



Kessier

THAT BOY FILLED MY INK WELL WITHOUT MY ASKIN' HIM!!

HE'S JUST HERE TEMPORARILY!

OUR REG'LAR OFFICE BOY ISN'T HERE TODAY, GONE TO HIS GRANDMOTHER'S FUNERAL!

WHAT'S MATTER WITH THAT NEW BOY? I ASKED HIM T' DO SOMETHING AND HE DID IT!!

ALBERT L. SALT, PRESIDENT OF THE GRAYBAR ELECTRIC COMPANY, LARGEST DISTRIBUTORS OF ELECTRIC SUPPLIES IN THE WORLD, BEGAN AS A TEMPORARY OFFICE BOY FOR THE WESTERN ELECTRIC IN NEW YORK.



Geo. T. Holsell, recently appointed Assistant Livestock Superintendent, Southwestern Exposition and Fat Stock Show.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. O. Leach had as guests Thanksgiving day, his mother, Mrs. S. N. Leach, and Mrs. B. C. Nebitt, who returned Thursday afternoon to their homes in Sweetwater. Mrs. William Leach accompanied them to Sweetwater and entrained for Coleman where she visited Mesdames W. A. Wilhite and R. R. Shipman; the trio forming a party to Dallas Friday to attend the T. C. U. and S. M. U. football game Saturday at Dallas. After the game they returned to Coleman where they were joined by Mr. Leach who spent the week end there with friends and returned Sunday night with Mrs. Leach to their home in Spur.

Miss Jane Godfrey who was a week end visitor with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Godfrey and son Fike, returned Sunday afternoon to Lubbock where she is a student in Texas Tech.

Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Milam had as a guest the past week end her mother Mrs. M. T. Harrell. Mrs. Milam accompanied her mother to her home in Ralls Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Irvin Loe and daughter, Sue, had a guest for Thanksgiving and over the week end, her parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Murphy and T. J. Murphy of Rochester, Preson and Chester Murphy of Tokio; Mr. and Mrs. Paul Loe and children, Bob, Nina and Nep of Spur.

Miss Lula Ames was a guest of Mr. and Mrs. V. V. Parr at their home at the Pitchfork Ranch Tuesday and Wednesday of last week. Miss Ames is associated with the Agricultural association with headquarters in Waco.

Monday, Mr. and Mrs. V. V. Parr established residence in their newly acquired home on West Harris Street where Mrs. Parr and son, Bob, will make their home through the school year.

Miss Margaret Elliot member of the Borger High School faculty, who spent the Thanksgiving holidays with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Elliot at their Spring Creek farm and ranch home returned Sunday, her sisters, Miss Virginia and Mrs. Lasater Hensley and two daughters, and Mr. Thorn Smith accompanied her as far as Plainview.

Dr. Brown, resident surgeon at the Alexander Hospital spent the week end a guest of friends in Borger.

OLDTIME PRINTING OFFICE TO BE PART OF MUSEUM

An oldtime printing office, complete even to the dirty apron, coal oil lamp, and spittoon, will be placed soon in the museum of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society on the West Texas State Teachers College campus.

Gathering of materials has been begun by Frank Hill, Tahoka newspaper man who is pushing the project, and Clyde W. Warwick of Canyon, secretary of the Panhandle Press Association.

An old G-Wash hand press formerly used by the Canyon News is one piece of equipment already available. The sponsors are assembling eye-shades, type-sticks, old type, nail kegs, and other objects of pioneer journalism.

Pictures of oldtime and present-day publishers and editors are being sought in connection with the same exhibit.

DO YOU KNOW—



That the champion tennis ball holder of the country is William Fred White, a professional of the Merion Cricket Club of Hartford, Pa. He can hold 14 regular sized tennis balls in one hand. If you don't believe this is a stunt, try it.

Remember! First Monday

December 5th

\$50.00 Cash

11:00 a.m.

4:00 p.m.

Big Cattle Auction

1:00 p.m.

