

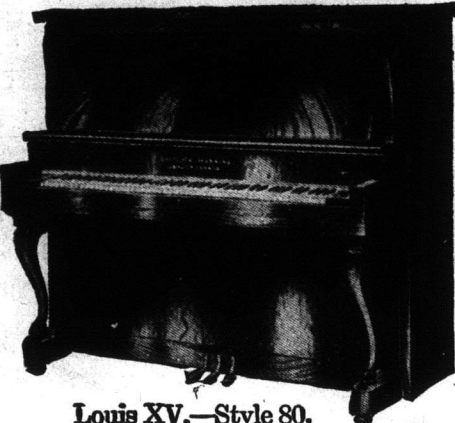
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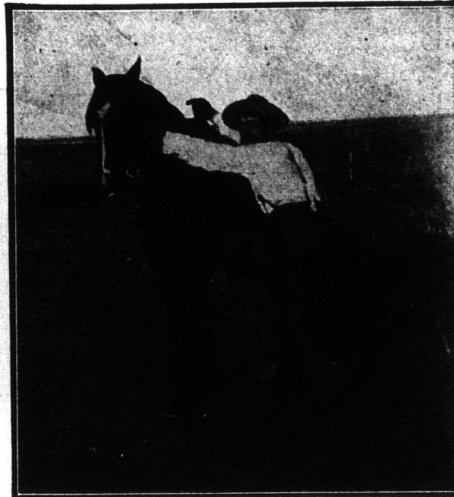
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scarce he eats barbwire-fences. He doesn't relish them as he used to because Eastern fence-makers don't use as many barbs as formerly. In short he is the toughest piece of horseflesh that infests this globe."

When the Western broncho is broken he often becomes the gentlest of horses. It has been remarked time and again among horsemen that the horse that proves hardest to break often is the gentlest horse on the ranch when the process is complete.



The Ranch, the Boss and his Buster are all passing away

A regrettable thing about the westward trend of civilization is the shutting out of the range, the broncho and his "Buster." All are passing away. The range horse of today is no more like the broncho of ten years ago than the nerved strained thoroughbred is like the Indian cayuse. Eastern methods of breaking are now used. The colt is raised within the confines of a farm pasture, and is handled from a foal. Perhaps a collar and harness are put on him before he is broke and he becomes accustomed to it before he is ever hitched. The result is gentler horses and the passing of the picturesque wrangler.

My First Thanksgiving Dinner

By May Elliott Hutson

We had just gone to housekeeping, Will and I, and in equipping our dining room, after the purchase of a few chairs and bright rugs, there remained the choice between a sideboard and a dining table; our slender purse did not admit of both. I did not hesitate. The lovely silver received as wedding gifts must by all means be made to show to advantage; the table could wait. Any kind would do for people just over their honeymoon—the smaller the better.

The night before Thanksgiving, Will announced that he had invited a lady and gentleman from his native village, strangers to me, to take Thanksgiving dinner with us.

"Will," I exclaimed, aghast, "have you forgotten the table?"

He stood petrified. "Nelly," he gasped, "what shall we do?" But he was a man of resources. Turning suddenly with a brightening face, "I have it," he exclaimed. "Just the idea. Two boxes of equal and proper height—we can find them in the attic—and planks laid nicely together; I will saw them off myself, and fix them tomorrow. I could not help asking them, Nelly," in an apologetic tone. "Besides," he added, "I wanted to show off my little wife."

That was sufficient; I would have died rather than make a failure. All that morning while Will hunted the boxes and sawed the plank, I flew around in high spirits, arranging my little dinner. I prepared the plump turkey for roasting, saw that the potatoes were scraped white for boiling, arranged the cranberry sauce, and grated the cheese over an inviting dish of macaroni.

But we needed another meat dish. I looked at the ragged old ham bone, the only thing in the flesh line that I possessed. It presented an unpromising appearance.

"I have it," I said, snapping my fingers. "A dish garnished with parsley; the fragments of ham minced fine and laid upon it, with a parsley leaf here and there, by way of decoration. It will be ornamental as well as serviceable."

For dessert a pair of pumpkin pies, only to be browned over, some lovely amber jelly turned on a glass dish artistically garnished with autumn leaves, and a cake iced by my own hand. How proud Will would feel, to be sure! The final preparation was the taking down of a lone bottle of wine we possessed, one left over from our reception, dust it off—we owned no decanters—and place it on the shelf, to be handed at the proper moment.

A little later the "table" was a thing of beauty, covered with two new tablecloths—oh, that it could have proved "a joy forever."

Just before the arrival of the guests, I gave Mary, the colored maid of all work, full and positive instructions on every point. "Bring in the turkey first, Mary, and set it before Mr. Will; the ham next, and set that before me; then the side dishes. Do you understand?"

"Yes'm."

"Well, while we are eating the other dinner, the pies can be browning."

"I'll 'member 'em sho'."

"Now, listen closely, Mary. When you go to clear off the first course—that is, the meat and things, you know—brush away the crumbs, and carefully, very carefully, take off the top cloth. There will be another underneath, which you must leave—for the dessert, you know—on no account move that. Are you sure you understand?"

"Sho'."

An hour later, and we were smilingly ushering our guests in to dinner. The table was really artistic, and no one would ever have guessed what a whited sepulchre it was; but my first shock came when Will, forgetting to be on his guard, hit the box a thundering kick by accident. The guests looked startled, we more so, but Will talked fast and furiously, and the fateful moment was tided over. This while we waited for the dinner to come on; for though the bell had rung, nothing had yet made its appearance, save the turkey and macaroni.

I tapped the bell. Mary appeared. "Mary, the rest of the dinner," I ordered with dignity.

"Sho'."

She vanished, and an instant later appeared with—the cake. I saw her coming in the door, fortunately, and by frantic gestures, induced her to retire.

Our guests evidently thought I had been seized by a sudden attack of insanity, for they looked at me, alarmed, their backs being toward the door and Mary.

I rang again. The head appeared. "The side dishes!" I commanded with emphasis.

"You mean de tater en ting?"

I colored angrily, but nodded. All this time Will talked and talked, to cover the awkward delay. While "de tater en ting" were being deposited on the table, I managed to whisper:

"The ham, bring the ham, Mary!"

She hastened out, and a moment later—oh, horror of horrors!—loomed into sight, bearing a great platter on which reposed the forlorn, frazzled, disreputable old ham bone, which I had utterly denuded. Again frantic signs and gestures on my part, and the startled look on my guests' faces. This time they looked round quickly to see what had caused my second attack.

There stood Mary, irresolutely balancing, first on one foot, then on the other, uncertain what course to pursue.

"Enty you tell me fur bring de ham?"

With a sudden conviction as to where the path of duty lay, she made a swoop toward the table, planked down that hideous ham bone before my mortified face, and instantly disappeared.

I dared not look at Will. Oh, why couldn't I have laughed? Why couldn't we all have laughed, and saved the situation? But for the life of me I could not have raised a smile. Neither, I am sure, could Will. Our guests alone seemed to see the fun of the thing, and were politely struggling with their mirth. I could have killed them for it.

Ringin' once more, I had the bone removed, and managed in an undertone to clear her befuddled brain sufficiently to get the minced ham brought on. As it made its appearance, parsley-bedecked, I detected a suppressed titter from our lady guest. Her eyes were demurely