

Eleven Gorge as Western Beauties Compete for Roundup Queen

"Her Majesty Who Will She Be?"

From the group of 11 girls shown at left will be selected the Queen of the Bozeman Roundup and her attendants. All are Gallatin county residents, all will ride in the Roundup parade Friday morning when one of their number will be selected by the judges to rule over the three-day western rodeo celebration at the fairgrounds. They will make their grand entry into the rodeo arena at 7 o'clock Friday evening and each will be introduced to the audience, after which the Queen of the Bozeman Roundup will be announced. The aspirants for the title are: Pat Burke, Virginia Hill, Pat Purdy, Kay Reif, Audrey Roth, Margaret Pope Stoddard, and Kay Sullivan, all of Bozeman; Luella Spring, Belgrade; Margaret Monforton, Gallatin Gateway; Lola Mae Chase, Manhattan, and Pat Bennett, Three Forks.



VIRGINIA HILL



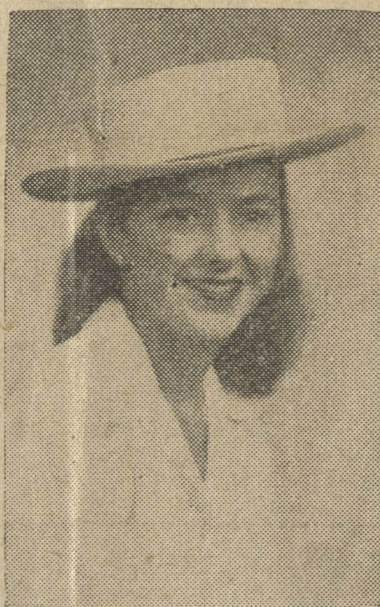
PAT BENNETT



LUELLA SPRING



LOLA MAE CHASE



MARGARET STODDARD



KAY REIF



MARGARET MONFORTON



ELAINE BURKE



PAT PURDY



AUDREY ROTH



KAY SULLIVAN



Ben Lilly, often called the greatest of the old Mountain Men, and some of his famous hounds. This superb photo is owned by the author.

BEN LILLY'S

LONGEST

GRIZZLY

CHASE

BY NORMAN G. WOOLSEY

IT was the sixth day of the hunt and Ben Lilly's hounds were getting sore-footed and trail weary. Ben's sack of rations was also getting low, yet they were no closer to the tireless grizzly than they had been on the first day. The bear seemed to possess uncanny intelligence. He traveled just fast enough to stay ahead of the dogs, yet not fast enough to wear himself out. He seemed to know every inch of the roughest country, and there on several occasions he had almost managed to shake off the persistent hunter and his four hounds.

Six days before, on March 10, 1911, Ben Lilly had started this bear in the Animas Mountains in extreme southwestern New Mexico. He had followed it south through the San Luis Mountains in Chihuahua and across into Sonora. And now the veteran hunters' keen sense of location told him the bear was circling back over the mass of rough rimrock that marked the borderline of Chihuahua.

As the trail dropped down 500 feet to the soft dirt of a tiny saddle, Lilly stopped and studied carefully the broad track in the dry dust. Two toes were missing from the right front foot—he was following the same bear he had started. For the fourth time that day he spanned the giant track of the back foot. It measured thirteen inches from claw to heel.

Ben shrugged his shoulders, as if unable to believe that this remarkable bear had led them over 150 miles of the roughest country in the Southwest without revealing a glimpse of himself.

It was weird. At times Lilly wondered just who was trailing who. The night before, for instance, the great grizzly stole within fifty yards of camp and seemingly inspected the hunter and his dogs as they slept. That morning Ben had found the tell-tale sign—and for the life of him he couldn't figure out whether it was simply curiosity on the bear's part or just contempt for all mankind and their canine servants.

The bewhiskered hunter turned his face from the trail to the west where a dull red sun was sinking behind a windy-looking mist. "Thirty minutes of daylight," he thought aloud. "Well, it's either tonight or never . . . Tomorrow is the Sabbath."

IN his many years as a hunter of predators, Ben Lilly had never broken the Sabbath by hunting or shedding blood on that holy day. A deeply religious man, he was a devout student of the Bible. On Sunday, his chapel was usually some wild, remote spot in the wilderness. His congregation was his hounds, and any other forest creatures that cared to listen, for on the Lord's Day the dogs were leashed and the gun put aside.

From the United States to Mexico ranged this epic bear hunt of a legendary hunter of the West

For this reason and the fact that he seemed to prefer the company of his dogs to that of his fellow men, Ben Lilly from the beginning was destined to be set apart from others. His name was known throughout the Southwest. By many conventional people he was considered a strange man, a lone, mysterious wanderer of the waste-lands and forests. Nobody denied his uncanny ability as a lion and bear hunter. In far-off Washington, D. C., the name of Ben Lilly was known intimately by officials of the Biological Survey for the incalculable help he had given them in identifying various species of animals native to the Southwest.

NOW, with dusk approaching, the old hunter tested with moistened finger the slight breeze that stirred. The wind came from the Northeast, the direction of the grizzly's trail. That helped—but time now was the vital factor. Suddenly, Ben heard the excited baying of his two younger dogs. The sound came from high up in a rocky canyon ahead. The big, brindled, slow-trailing hound tied at the hunter's belt began to whine and jump in eager anticipation.

Kate, a big spotted female hound, in her excitement forgot how old and played out she was and scrambled barking across a drift of jagged boulders and out of sight in the direction of her mates. Ben followed, tugged along by the straining brindle.

Dusk dropped fast as Lilly straddled his way up the narrow ravine and on to the top. At the top he found a little hollow nestled between higher peaks, covered with a thick stand of oak and pinon trees. Somewhere about in the center of the largest thicket, Ben figured, the dogs were holding the cunning old grizzly at bay. The hounds were making the woods ring in their excitement—obviously they had at last caught up with their elusive prey.

Rounding a dense growth of scrub pine, Lilly was startled at the sight that met his eye. The great dun-colored bear was reared on his hind feet with the two younger dogs swinging from each ear. As the bear swung his huge head, he whirled the dogs clear of the ground. Still they hung on.

Gallant old Kate had a throat hold on the monster, and the grizzly was using his free forepaws, trying to push her upward where he could get at her with his deadly jaws.

"It sure was a heck of a looking ruckus," admitted Ben later on.

Lilly threw his .33 caliber rifle to his shoulder but couldn't fire for fear of hitting the dogs. In that moment, Old Kate lost her hold. She jumped again for the grizzly's throat and the bear slammed her in mid-air with a sweeping blow of his mighty forearm. The dog

was batted backward through space to smash sickeningly against the trunk of a pine. She slid to the ground, a bloody, broken mass of bone and muscle.

Ben fired. The bear bawled and tumbled backward into a dense thicket, taking the dogs with him. The hunter saw that the bullet had not inflicted a fatal wound. Now the maddened grizzly would surely kill his dogs unless he could call them off. He yelled at them—but in the fiendish uproar they couldn't hear his voice.

He threw another cartridge into the chamber of his rifle and plunged into the thicket after them. They had rolled into thick brush, and he could see nothing but a dim, whirling mass of fur and blurred movement. Seconds dragged like minutes as Lilly stood helplessly by while the big slow-trailing hound tied at his belt jumped hard against the rope. Suddenly he heard a crash in the underbrush and a terrific roar as the bear leaped free and lunged away into the darkness.

Fearfully, the hunter called to his dogs. They came obediently from the brush. One of them was unharmed, except for a few cuts and bruises. The other was staggering, and Ben could see that he was disemboweled. The old hunter sat down wearily. For the first time during the long chase he felt the exertion of the hunt.

HE called the wounded dog to him and cupped the battle-scarred head tenderly between his hands. The dying hound licked the gnarled fingers of his master. Even through the agony of his mortal wound he was conscious of Lilly's intimate voice, the gentle touch of his hand.

Ben knew there was but one thing to do. The rifle cracked. The hound fell without a cry.

Lilly carried his body to the remains of Old Kate. There, side by side, he buried them. A cross bore this carefully written inscription:

"Pup and Old Kate, killed by a grizzly, March 15, 1911."

The legend was signed with B. V. Lilly's unique carving: a honey bee for the letter B, a rattlesnake coiled to represent the V, and a lily pad for the last name.

Ben called to his two remaining hounds, and they went to a nearby spring. He drank, and filled his canteen; then the dogs took over the pool.

As the sun rose over the San Luis Mountains that Sunday morning, it found Ben Lilly reading from his miniature Bible, his back propped against the butt of a pine tree. The two dogs were resting, sore and stiff from yesterday's battle.

The hounds raised their heads in grave attention as Lilly closed the Book and quoted his favorite passage aloud:

"Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary," he quoted. "I am the Lord. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid; and I will rid evil beasts out of the land."

The Sunday service was over. Ben leaned his shaggy head back against the pine and closed his eyes. He wondered if he could ever catch up with the bear. How badly was the grizzly wounded? If not seriously hit, its trail would be cold by Monday. The hunter asked himself a question that bothered him greatly: "Should I, this one time, forget the holiness of Sunday and pursue this evil beast? He turned again to Scriptures, but could find no satisfactory answer.

AT last, having wrestled with his conscience and come to a conclusion, Lilly divided his last remaining rations with the hounds, loosed the leashes, and headed into the gloomy forest. The grizzly's wound had left a line of dried blood. The weary hounds, eager as their sore feet and wounds would permit, barked "trail."

Ben said later that he had many misgivings as to the outcome. First, he was willfully breaking God's Law. Secondly, he was forced to turn his slow-trailing dog loose to help the younger, inexperienced dog work the trail.

The dogs ranged out 200 yards ahead, entering a brush-choked ravine and following it downhill. Their baying became irregular, indicating that they were having trouble working out the scent.

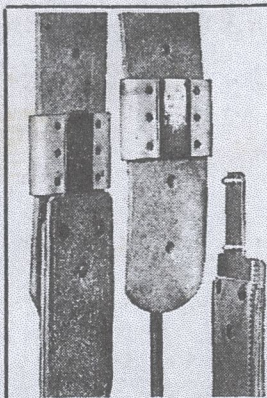
A mile further on, the ravine boxed in sharply. The brush was so thick that in many places Lilly was forced on his hands and knees.

(Continued on page 39)

Illustrated by R. L. McCollister

The great dun-colored bear was reared on his hind feet with the dogs barking furiously at his feet.





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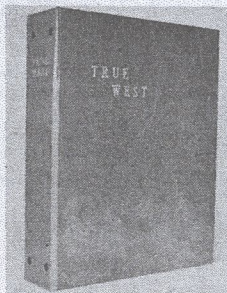
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sleep side by side and always walk together if you were driving 'em. Sometimes, we have penned 'em and maybe one was in the pen and his running mate may not have been in the bunch. Of all the bawling you ever heard; he would bawl till he called that running mate to him. They might be just two steers that were raised together, or maybe on the same range and took up with one another. Horses are the same way; you often find two saddle horses that are friends like that and won't run with anything else but each other when they are turned out.

Ben Lilly's Longest Grizzly Chase

(Continued from page 19)

"An ideal spot for an ambush," he thought grimly—then shrugged off the fear. Still, the uneasy feeling persisted in spite of his efforts to disregard it. Relating the incident to a group of ranchers at Cliff, New Mexico, several years later, Ben admitted that he felt more like the hunted than the hunter and was expecting the wounded grizzly to attack him at any moment.

Working his way through the thick brush, he stopped suddenly and listened attentively as the baying of the dogs started up anew. Lilly glanced at the canyon wall above him, made sure that he was in the clear, then moved quickly to the bend in the canyon. Ahead and slightly to the left of the canyon floor, he spotted the dogs milling around a tangled thicket. They were circling it warily, barking and growling. Again the devil-bear was backed into a corner.

Ben checked his gun hurriedly and moved on. As he approached the thicket, something caused him to look up again to the canyon wall. The huge bear stood just above him, on his haunches, watching him like a playful cat waiting to spring. He had sneaked out of the thicket and come back to hunt the hunter!

To Lilly, the grizzly looked anything but playful. The great bear's small, red-rimmed eyes glared wickedly; its wounded, fevered body gave off a foul and stifling odor. The wound had reopened and blood dripped down in dark crimson clots almost at the hunter's feet as the grizzly lunged down and forward.

Ben half-raised his rifle and fired. The bear came crashing over the canyon wall and a glancing blow from one massive paw knocked the hunter sprawling. Twenty feet beyond him, the heart-shot bear lurched to his feet, whirled snarling, then fell again and lay still.

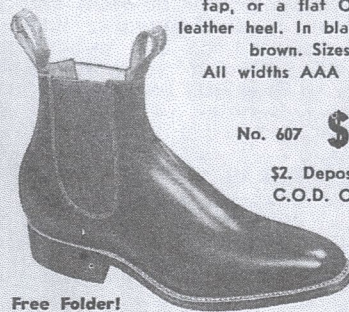
Dizzily, Ben pulled himself to one elbow as the dogs came racing up to maul the dead grizzly. For a long moment the hunter stared at the great bear as if he could not believe that he was dead.

BEN LILLY'S only comment on the hunt when he returned to civilization was that, although he'd killed the bear in Mexico, it had been run out of New Mexico and "the skull I carried back served to identify the New Mexico species." Not a word did he have to say about his own close call or the loss of his beloved hounds, lying back there in the Chihuahua wilderness. Oddly, in listening to Ben's brief recital of the hunt, one got the feeling that the old hunter genuinely regretted killing the mighty grizzly that had led him on the longest chase of his career.

But then, as natives of the Southwest will still tell you, Ben Lilly was a strange man.

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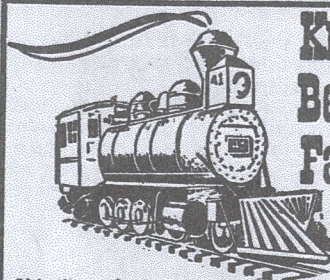
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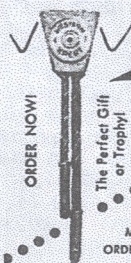
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