

NUGGETS OF BOULDER COLOR

By Elton Garrett

WALKER YOUNG'S SNIPE

"Ole's in the hoosegow today. Did you know he got throwed in last night?"

"Got in a one-sided fight. Beat up another fellow. Howcome? Well, it's kind of a long story. . . ."

"Y'see Ole's a friendly sort of cuss. An' he don't belong muckin' in any spillway excavation on any Hoover dam. He always meets up with the big boys on the job, somehow, wherever he is.

"Well, one evening he takes a stroll from his room in the dorm just a little before dark, and goes walkin' up around on the hill towards the tank. And he strolls on around the government building.

"And there he sees all that pretty green lawn, just planted about a month or so before, but coming along real fast, being watered all over at once for about the fourth time that day. He walks up those wide concrete steps towards the front door of the building.

"He sees a man standing there on the sidewalk looking at the lawn. Like Ole usually does, he walks up to 'm and strikes up a conversation, (not knowin' it's Walker Young, the boss of the whole shebang here in Boulder City.)

"The man points to a queer bird, out there on the lawn movin' around on three legs, it seemed like there in the dusk—or maybe one of the 'legs' was his bill. Anyway the man—Ole didn't know yet who he was—remarks about this bein' unusual to see this kind of a bird here in Boulder City.

"They usually hang around moist parts of the country,' he says. 'It seems to me this speaks pretty well for our system of irrigation here in Boulder City, to have a snipe come up here to live. I've seen him around here several times now.'

"Well, pretty soon Ole learns it's Walker Young he's talkin' to. Well, sir, he didn't expect a man like Mr. Young to mess around talkin' with a guy like him about snipes, so that snipe sort of impressed Ole.

"In fact, Ole got so he'd walk by every evening or so, to see if that snipe was still there. He was there several times, all right. And Ole got so he'd stop and talk to

the snipe—got sort of friendly with 'm, in fact. But then, about a week ago, there was no snipe for several days. An' Ole began to get worried about him. Wondered if he'd up an' left the country. Ole got so he'd go by every single evening, just hopin' that bird would show up again.

"Well, last night Ole made his usual walk up around past the big lawn, where the sprinklers were rummin'. No snipe. He walks on down to the bunkhouse. He broods awhile about the thing an' then disappears and nobody ses him for about an hour.

"Well, he shows up at last an' he comes on two men talking. And one of 'em remarks how he took his kid brother snipe huntin' when he was a kid. Then he starts tellin' how him and another fellow took a certain cat skinner snipe huntin' several nights ago here at Boulder. . . ."

"Well, right there's where Ole up an' plumps him on the chin with the knotty end of his arm, without any warnin' or explainin'. Well, sir, d'you know why he knocked that fellow out? He told me confidential in the jailhouse this mornin'. He just figured automatic that here was one of the fellows that caused that snipe of his an' Walker Young's to turn up missin'. So he just whanged away. The reservation officers said he was drunk at the time. Dunno where he could've got any liquor on the reservation, but he's goin' off the reservation now anyhow, and derned if I don't blame that snipe for it all!"