

stock. Myrtle named her Dolly, and when the mare was 6, she was bred to St. Louis, a Thoroughbred stallion belonging to her grandfather. Eleven months later, Cricket, a chestnut filly with a rump of white snowflakes, was born.

About 1914, when returning from a two-day trail ride and leading a pack horse, Myrtle sighted an Indian pony mare standing in a corral. At the mare's side, a colt with beautiful large spotting played and nursed. Both horses belonged to the Liberty Team, then comprising 16 spotted horses, shown by the nomadic circus of Al G. Barns.

Myrtle found out the horses were for sale, and she also discovered that the mare was completely blind in both eyes. A circus worker had employed wood alcohol to rub off tar the mare had somehow contacted all over her face. The mare was destined to be killed for lion meat. Myrtle, having her hands full, said she would be back in one week for the visionless mare and her offspring, whose sire had been a leopard Appaloosa named Skylock.

"But when I returned, they told me the mare had been shot, because she was bumping into everything," Myrtle said with a tone of alarm, making it seem as if the unfortunate incident had happened just yesterday. "So I took the stud, named him El Capitan, and broke and showed him myself."

She competed on the stallion in stock horse events at the Oakland National Horse Show, showed him in Western pleasure and trail classes, raced him in quarter-mile sprints, and used him as her all-around horse. She also rode bucking broncos in various local shows.

The Panama Canal was completed in 1914, and the following year, Myrtle took fourth place in the stock horse division of the Pan-American Exhibition celebrating its opening.

In 1921 she competed in the San Francisco National Horse Show. The event was held inside a tent on what used to be the old circus grounds at Eighth and Market Streets.

In 1936, on an Appaloosa heavyweight stock horse called Blanco, Myrtle was a competitor at the World's Fair on Treasure Island, and in 1937, she took part in the Golden Gate dedication ceremonies. Riding Appaloosa stallions, she and her husband, Ed, were among the first equestrians to ride across the 4,200-foot long suspension bridge.

Myrtle was the first person to show an Appaloosa in the Grand National's stock horse division at the Cow Palace. She recalled, "Rock and I were among the top 10 finalists, and during the slide stop, that gelding threw tan bark higher than this house. But the judge wasn't even watching our performance; in fact, some of the audience

tried to get his attention by yelling at him. A lot of controversy followed."

Horse shows at that time consisted of all open classes; there were no separate class designations according to breed. Myrtle exhibited mainly in the stock horse division, riding bridled horses in the old Spanish style tradition.



*This photograph of Myrtle aboard El Capitan dates back many years. Myrtle showed the stallion at the Oakland National Horse Show in 1921 in the heavyweight stock horse class. She also entered him in open stock horse, Western pleasure and trail classes.*