



Chip of the Flying U

B.M. Bower , Mary Clearman Blew (Introduction)

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B. M. (Bertha Muzzy) Bower was the first woman to make a career of writing popular westerns. And what a career it was—more than sixty novels published from 1904 to 1940, the year of her death, and still more posthumously. In the western orbit, Bower was—and still is—a star. Her first, *Chip of the Flying U*, lays out a ranch in Montana and introduces the Happy Family, the bunkhouse gang that reappears in her later books. Chip is the typical woman-shy cowboy, but he is also a gifted artist (reputedly, Bower based the character on Charles M. Russell, who illustrated *Chip*). Della, a doctor, is the young woman who disrupts his solitary life. The result as a quality ranch romance.

Chip of the Flying U was a great success that led to several movie versions, one of them casting Hoot Gibson as Chip. Today's readers who grew up watching westerns on television will appreciate Bower's cinematic style. After living much of her life in Chouteau County, Montana, she moved to Los Angeles, close to the movie industry that increasingly fascinated her.

Chip of the Flying U Details

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From Reader Review Chip of the Flying U for online ebook

Cathy says

Free Kindle download.

Chip is a ranch hand in Montana at the turn of the 20th century. He's dismayed to learn that the sister of the crusty "Old Man" ranch owner is coming for an extended visit. There's much speculation in the bunkhouse about what she will be like especially when the boys learn she is a doctor. Schoolmarmish, four-eyed, old spinster, etc.

But the "Young Doctor" is just that - young - and beautiful to boot. Chip falls for her but is dismayed to learn she is writing letters back home to Dr. Cecil Grantham.

Chip, an accomplished sketcher, is injured and cared for by the doctor. He's falling for her to be sure but her seeming claim as the painter of his first oil painting, and the coming arrival of Dr. Cecil, have him considerably vexed.

All works out in the end, of course. A very enjoyable read if you overlook the one instance of calling black musicians "coons."

SilviaG says

3.5

Carolien says

I thoroughly enjoyed this Western romance set in early 20th century Montana.

I found a biography on the author by her granddaughter which added to my appreciation of the book and scenery. <https://libraries.ou.edu/locations/do...> hero of the book is named after the author's brother and her daughter would eventually be named after the heroine.

These books are classics in themselves. Often perceived by contemporary readers as historical romances, they are in fact set in the present day of the author's life and therefore provides an insight into the actual daily rituals of the era.

Lirit says

The character Chip is based off my Great Great Great Uncle. So this is definitely a family favorite.

Debbie Zapata says

Back to Montana with Ms. Bowers and the cowboys known as the Happy Family. This time we arrive at the Flying U Ranch just in time to hear the news that the 'Old Man's' sister Della, a lady doctor from Back East, is coming to stay for the whole summer. Of course being from the East, she will surely have all kinds of wild

ideas about cowboys so a Proper Welcome is planned, with the help of a scarecrow stuffed with straw, a long rope, lots of shooting, and a wicked little horse named Banjo. What could go wrong?

Our man Chip is sent to meet the train, and falls in love immediately, but he needs the whole book to figure that out. In between there is a dance, a missed round-up, one injured horse, one injured man, and those letters the Little Doctor keeps writing to someone called Dr. Cecil Grantham from Back East. Just who is that guy, anyway?!

Bowers knows her horses and her cowboys and better yet, she has the talent to portray them both accurately, whether they are being snorty or tame. Here is Banjo after he sees a bit of newspaper fluttering in the bushes during that infamous Cowboy Welcome. (His rider was the scarecrow, by the way.):

He squatted, ducked backward so suddenly that his reins slipped from Slim's fingers, and lowered his head between his white front feet. His rider seemed stupid beyond any that Banjo had ever known—and he had known many. Snorting and pitching, he was away before the valiant band realized what was happening in their midst.

And here is poor Chip when Della comes out to the barn to ask him a question:

Chip wished, quite savagely, that she wouldn't let those dimples dodge into her cheeks, and the laugh dodge into her eyes, like that. It made a fellow uncomfortable. He was thoroughly disgusted with her—or he would be, if she would only stop looking like that.

I also got a kick out of this illuminating (and oh, so true!) announcement by Chip later in the story, after he and the horse he was riding had a nasty fall that gave 'The Little Doctor' her first patient:

"I didn't get bucked off," broke in Chip, angrily. A "bronc fighter" is not more jealous of his sweetheart than of his reputation as a rider. "A fellow can't very well make a pretty ride while his horse is turning a somersault."

Besides reading about the cowboys and the horses, one of the most fun things about this little book was trying to figure out who that darned Eastern Dude Cecil was. I guessed a lot of different things, from former teacher to boyfriend to cousin to uncle to work partner. But I was as surprised as Chip was when we met Cecil at the train station later in the book. Was I right? Was I wrong? Who *was* that guy Cecil?! You'll have to go to Montana yourself to find out!

Bego says

"Estamos ante una de esas novelas "de mantita y taza de té", con un personaje, el de la doctora, muy cercano a la Ellinore Pruitt de Cartas de una pionera, y a tantas otras mujeres atrevidas y valientes que pueblan el western cinematográfico y televisivo. Della Whitmore es recibida por los vaqueros con suspicacias y envuelta en montones de etiquetas que la califican como cursi, sentimental o débil, en virtud de su sexo. Por contra, dados sus estudios de medicina, algunos de estos hombres sospechan que quizá se trate más de una mujer masculinizada, ruda y poco cercana. Sin embargo, la doctora rompe todos los estereotipos al presentarse como una joven entrañable pero firme, con mucho carácter, inteligente y valiente a partes iguales, además de tierna y sensible cuando es necesario."

Si quieres leer la reseña completa puedes hacerlo aquí: [http://rustisymustis.blogspot.com/es/...](http://rustisymustis.blogspot.com.es/)

Elisabeth says

Chip of the Flying U, published in 1906, was B.M. Bower's first and best-known novel. It was also my introduction to her work, and even after reading many more of her books it's still among my favorites.

As a sidenote, it surprised me somewhat when I began reading older Western fiction that many of the stories were set near the time they were written—well into the early 20th century, some of them—rather than back in the earlier days of the West. *Chip* is clearly set in what was then present-day. Young lady doctor Della Whitmore comes West to visit her brother's Montana ranch after graduating from medical school, and the first person she encounters is Flying U ranch hand Chip Bennett. The beginning of their acquaintance is eventful, thanks to a practical joke by the irrepressible Flying U cowpunchers that goes awry, and not exactly promising...and an equally eventful summer follows. When Chip is injured in an accident, Della, to whom falls the task of caring for him, discovers his hidden artistic talent and does her best to encourage it despite their frequent misunderstandings and clashes. It's a sweet, lively and often very funny story, an old-fashioned romance with a delightful cast of supporting characters, and a very realistic-feeling, down-to-earth picture of everyday ranch life. There's a twist near the end that took me properly by surprise on first reading (though a sharp reader might have an inkling if they paid close attention).

I thoroughly enjoyed Bower's writing; although it shares some of the style and sensibilities of the time period it's brisk and readable and doesn't get bogged down in wordiness or too much melodrama as did some of her contemporaries'. Another thing I found refreshing is the lack of a feminist streak in the book, given the time period, the female author and a female doctor as one of the protagonists. The rural folk regard the 'lady doctor' as somewhat of a curiosity, but that's the whole extent of it—Della is not one of those aggravating fictional heroines who feel the need to get a crack about women's rights into every argument.

Rose says

This is the kind of Western that should be popular rather than the nonsense like Zane Grey and the newer stuff that claims that cowboys spent most of their time in brothels, shooting up towns, chasing outlaws, or drinking.

This book shows us what it really was like in those days. Hard work, more hard work, and innocent fun. The saloon was mostly a good place to go play pool and a place where a man could go and not have to worry about being in mixed company.

The story is about a cattle ranch, run by a group of happy and hilarious young men, and owned by a crusty older man. Oh, and his sister, who has just become a doctor, is coming to visit. And guess who gets to pick her up? Woman hating Chip. But Della is completely foreign to Chip's experience, and keeps him so off balance that he forgets to hate her.

Thank you, B. M. Bower, for avoiding clichés, contributing worthwhile literature to the world, and taking us all on a wild ride on scrubby horses through the untamed country of Northern Montana.

Tasha says

Absolutely charming! I didn't want it to end.

Lora says

I'm enjoying this on librivox.org, even if the readers do change from time to time. Such a fun, heartfelt book. Definitely reading more by this author, especially about this crew. I am starting to love old westerns. Recommended to everyone who even bothers to read my updates!
Final word: light but full of heart.

R.L. says

Predictable and somewhat stereotyped, but still a fast and somehow comforting read.

Magrat Ajostiernos says

<http://cronicasdemagrat.com/2016/03/2...>

3,5/5

Entrañable y divertida.

De esos libros que te lees del tirón y que te dejan con la sonrisa en los labios :)

Hannah says

Chip is a colorful young man who works as a cow puncher in Montana.

Well, one day, his boss announces that his (the boss's) sister is done with her doctor training and coming out to the ranch. Thereafter the Little Doctor begins to make the ranch feel like a different place entirely, especially in Chip's own heart.

I loved the humor or some of the situations and how plucky the Little Doctor is. You'll be sure to love them, too...

Fiona says

It was fun to read something that I wouldn't normally read, I am not much for westerns normally. It is basically a romance though, but set in the west around the turn of the last century. It was interesting to read one written by a woman and featuring a woman.

Ruth Berent says

El libro no es para amantes de los animales porque tiene un par de momentos un poco controvertidos, pero claro, estamos en el Viejo Oeste, ¿Qué podemos esperar?

El libro es un pelín machista, pero estamos en el Viejo Oeste; ¿Qué podemos esperar?

Por lo demás es un western romántico, cortito, con replicas ingeniosas y bien escrito.

Agradable de leer sobre todo para amantes de los romances clásicos y dulces.

Sandy says

My first “western” novel, read for a Bookopoly challenge, has been an entirely enjoyable experience. The length of time that it has taken me to finish this book does not reflect my enjoyment of it! (Suffice it to say that my “eyeball-reading” was rudely interrupted by surgery on one of my eyes. Not generally recommended!)

This was the first novel published by B.M. Bower. I look forward to exploring more of her work. A special word of appreciation goes to my GR friend Debbie, whose knowledge of the genre and dedication to her Someday list I admire. Thanks, Debbie, for encouraging me to break new ground.

Ddree says

I would give this short little western 3.5 stars. I liked it due to the fact it is completely different than what I usually read. Overall the story is cute and entertaining.

Jeanie Delong says

Great western

I like this book because the author makes you feel like you right in the thick of things. Very realistic and lots of fun. down home western

Mariano Hortal says

Publicado en <http://lecturaylocura.com/el-rancho-d...>

El rancho de la U alada de B.M. Bower. Costumbrismo inglés en el oeste

Engaña bastante el título de esta novela de la escritora norteamericana B.M. Bower (1871-1940), y lo hace porque El rancho de la U alada no referencia solamente a una novela de vaqueros, un típico western; sino que esconde una trama de un calibre bastante distinto y se dirige a un público bastante diferente al que podría comprarla a priori.

La trama, que nos brinda la editorial Hoja de Lata, sirve para clarificar la situación:

“Montana, un verano a principios del siglo xx. En el rancho de La U Alada, James G. Whitmore, el Viejo, y sus muchachos viven plácidamente entre bromas y ganado. Sin embargo, la visita inesperada de Della, la hermana del patrón, va a revolucionar el día a día de estos entrañables vaqueros, en especial de uno de

ellos... Comienza así la accidentada y romántica historia de amor entre Chip, un vaquero aparentemente duro y reservado con increíbles dotes para la pintura, y Della, una joven doctora de armas tomar no muy encantada a priori de pasar unos meses entre caballos y reses. Una historia pícaro y divertidísima que describe las rudezas de la mítica vida en un Salvaje Oeste tan desenfadado, cercano y sencillo que resulta imposible no zambullirse en él."

Pocas diferencias hay entre esta novela del oeste y la típica novela costumbrista ambientada en la campiña británica y que podría firmar sin problemas D. E. Stevenson o Stella Gibbons; todo en un clima de humor desenfado y malentendidos de todo tipo, no en vano, Chip y la Doctorcita constituyen una de esas parejas impensables al comenzar la novela:

"-Por supuesto, para usted son una especie totalmente nueva. ¿Cómo se lleva con ellos? -preguntó Dunk. Y la Doctorcita le respondió clara y sinceramente:

-Oh, muy bien, teniendo en cuenta las circunstancias. Me proporcionan algo de diversión y yo les ofrezco algo nuevo de lo que hablar, así que estamos en paz. Son buena gente, ¡pero tan ignorantes! No creo... Las palabras continuaron convertidas en un murmullo indescifrable, enfatizado por las risotadas agudas y discordantes de Dunk."

Chip, sin embargo, va más allá del típico vaquero rudo e ignorante, es un aficionado a la literatura y sobre todo al arte:

"Supuso que en el Este se le consideraría un ignorante. Comparado con el doctor Cecil Grantham -¡maldito fuera! - debía parecer un tipo lamentable, sin duda. Nunca había visto una universidad por fuera, ya ni hablar de imbuirse de conocimientos dentro de una. Había aprendido algo de la sabiduría que la naturaleza transmite a aquellos que pueden interpretar su lenguaje y había leído mucho tumbado boca abajo bajo un cielo estival, mientras que el ganado pacía a su alrededor y su caballo comía las dulces hierbas al alcance de su mano. Podía repetir páginas enteras de Shakespeare y de Scott, y de Bobbie Burns. Le hubiese gustado poner a prueba al doctor Cecil con algunos de ellos y ver quién ganaba. Aun así, él era ignorante, y nadie era más intensa y amargamente consciente de ello que Chip."

Y, concretamente, un gran pintor, hay un relato de formación del artista que se muestra en su forma de pintar, momentos en los que la autora muestra toda la lírica de su propia pluma:

"Al principio, parecía que fuera a repetirse La última batalla. Se veían las mismas cimas irregulares y los mismos pinos achaparrados atenazados por el fiero abrazo del helado Chinook. ¿Los mismos? Pero había una diferencia. No podía explicarse, quizá, pero sí sentirse, sin duda. Las colinas de la Doctorcita eran colinas irregulares e inhóspitas; sus pinos eran pinos muy bonitos. Las colinas de Chip también eran irregulares e inhóspitas, pero se veían desoladas; sus pinos eran temblorosos pinos solitarios, porque había vagado solo entre ellos y había captado el Mensaje de la Naturaleza. Su cielo era el frío y siniestro cielo de La última batalla, pero aún más frío, más siniestro porque era de noche. Una joven luna brillaba baja al oeste, medio oculta tras un claro de apresuradas nubes de nieve. La diminuta cuenca se veía entre sombras y vagamente, el terraplén era un muro negro acariciado aquí y allá por un tembloroso rayo de luz."

Chip, su microuniverso, ese rancho, ese pequeño corral, son el encanto de una aventura romántica sin caer en las ñoñerías habituales:

"Se detuvo en el lugar donde el sendero se bifurcaba, agitó su crin rizada con aire triunfal y miró atrás. Para él, la libertad era un dulce placer, dulce y raro. Todo su mundo era un amplio compartimento de establo con un pequeño corral como acontecimiento muy especial. Le parecía que dos millas era alejarse mucho de casa. Contempló la colina a su espalda un momento, alzó la cabeza y salió trotando por el camino que llevaba a casa de los Denson."

Como podéis comprobar, estamos ante un libro encantador, donde la conjunción entre lo inglés costumbrista- la rudeza del oeste- el humor y la fina ironía se unen en una mezcla francamente entretenida y con una gran calidad por el estilo de la autora. Espero que haya suerte y veamos más aventuras de la serie por aquí.

Los textos provienen de la traducción de Raquel Duato García de El rancho de la U alada de B.M. Bower para la editorial Hoja de Lata.

Roxane says

Very sweet story....funny...fully intend to read more of Ms. Bower's books/stories.
