

from time to time. He would let first one then the other drive the spanking bays. He gave them practical instructions on how to drive, how to control a skittish horse in emergencies, such as meeting a huge, fire-eating thrashing machine. When horses met these monsters on the road, they stopped and stared for a moment, then attempted to back and finally urged on by voice and whip, stood on hind legs and waltzed around it. It took calm nerves and very careful management to prevent a bad spill and ensuing run-a-way.

Alma was an apt pupil. When Mr. Lane said that, if her grandmother had no objections, he would let her have a horse for the summer to ride and drive as she pleased, Alma was in a seventh heaven of delight.

For several summers after that, when Alma was home from boarding school, she had a horse of her very own to feed and water, to curry and comb, to bed down at night, and to wake up in the mornings. She spent hours every day riding or driving, frequently taking elderly people out with her, especially those who otherwise had little chance to see the beautiful country side.

Down at the end of the long village Main Street was a barn belonging to a man who kept a stable of racing horses, many of which had won prizes at the country fairs.

As Alma passed this stable, she often stopped to water her horse at the trough in front through which flowed fresh spring water.

The young stable attendant who courteously came out to loosen the check rein was a boy Alma had known in school.