

ROBBERS' ROOST

by ZANE GREY

THE STORY

CHAPTER I—Jim Wall, young cowpuncher from Wyoming, in the early days of the cattle industry, seeks a new field in Utah. He meets Hank Hays, who admits to being a robber, and tells Wall he is working for an Englishman named Herrick, who has located a big ranch in the mountains. Herrick has employed a small army of rustlers and gun-fighters, and Hays and others are plotting to steal the employer's cattle and money. Hays wants Wall to throw in with the rustlers.



"Keep Quiet an' Sell Out Your Money," Hank Ordered.

CHAPTER II—At the little settlement of Green River, Hays gets into an argument with a gambler called Stud, over a poker game. Wall saves Hank's life by hitting the gambler over the head. With Hays and two other rustlers, Happy Jack and Lincoln, Jim Wall starts out for Herrick's ranch. In camp, the first night out, Jim regrets the step he has taken, but it is too late to turn back.

CHAPTER III—The four men arrive at the ranch. Herrick announces that his sister, Helen, is coming to the ranch. Hays unfolds his plan for getting possession of the \$2,000 head of live stock on the Herrick ranch. He and his lieutenants ride away to drive off the first bunch of cattle. Jim remains behind to shoot it out, if necessary, with Heeseeman, Hays's rival among the cattle rustlers. Jim and the certain, which he is certain denotes the arrival of Heeseeman and his gang. He stands with side ready.

CHAPTER IV—Heeseeman tells Wall that Hays was once his (Heeseeman's) partner and double-crossed him. Herrick orders Jim to go to Grand Junction to meet with Herrick. Jim gets Barnes, a young cowboy, with him, to tell her that he is a desperado of the worst type. Barnes does so, and later Jim tells her he is what is known as a "bad man," but the girl treats the information lightly.

CHAPTER V—On his arrival at the ranch, with Helen, Jim is confronted by Hays, who betrays an unusual interest in the coming of Miss Herrick. Jim tells her of the money package, probably of money. Jim is riding with the rustlers and greatly impresses Helen with his revolver shooting.

CHAPTER VI—The cattle drive to Grand Junction is started. Jim Wall finds himself falling in love with Helen. He and his men, in riding western style, and finally kisses her. She is angry and dismisses him, but relents and asks him not to leave the ranch. Hays men return from the drive with the stolen cattle. The leader has sold the cattle and brought back a big sum of money. Hays tells his men to go on ahead, that he will join them in the canyon. The riders arrive at the canyon and to their amazement and Jim's dismay, Hays and a lieutenant are sighted with Helen Herrick—a captive.

CHAPTER VII—The gang is about to break with Hays over the abduction, but he explains that he robbed Herrick and stole Helen for ransom. Realizing that Helen will be worse off if she falls into Heeseeman's clutches, Jim Wall rides on with Hank and his men. Heeseeman's riders are discovered in pursuit. After a running battle in which Latimer, one of Hays' men, is wounded, Hays leads the gang into a canyon retreat, difficult of access and easy to defend—The Robbers' Roost.

"Shore I have," rejoined Latimer, lowering his voice to a whisper. "Hays beat an' robbed Herrick! . . . That's part I wanted to tell you, if I was goin' to croak. But I gotta tell it anyhow. An' I ask you both, as pals, to keep what I tell you secret till I'm dead."

"I swear, Sparrow," said Smoky, huskily. "You can trust me, too," added Jim.

"Wal, that's why I feel Hank must have done for the girl, too." "Robbed Herrick!" exclaimed Slocum incredulously. "Was there a fight?"

"Yes. But Hank might have avoided it. He drove the man crazy. Fellers, Hays'd steal coppers off a dead man's eyes—shore. But what he said he wanted was the girl for ransom. Yet he picked a fight with Herrick an' beat him with a gun."

"Sparrow, how come you didn't tell us before?" asked Smoky sternly. "I'm beholden to Hank. But I will say that if I'd known his game I'd never have gone with him. After it was too late—wal, I stuck. An' I've kept it secret. But I feel in my bones I'm done fer. So I'm squealin' an' I'm doin' it because Hays double-crossed you all."

"Reckon I'd have done the same if Hank had a hold on me," conceded Smoky generously. "Suppose you take a nip of whisky and tell us what happened."

"I'm not enough without liquor. But I'll tell you. . . . Gimme some more water."

After a moment Latimer drew a long breath and resumed: "Hank picked me because he had a hold on me. . . . After you fellers left that night Hank went out an' got another hoss. He had a saddle hid somewhere. We took them hosses up the bench back of the house an' tied them. Then we went down toward the house."

"Ahuh. He'd had this deal in mind all the time," said Smoky, nodding his head. "Yes. Before we got to the house he told me he meant to hold Herrick up fer what money he had on hand—then steal the girl for ransom. I opened my trap to kick again' the girl part of it, anyway, but he cussed me somethin' fierce. I seen then he was blood set on it, so I shet up. . . . Herrick was in the livin' room. We walked round the house. An' Hank showed me the

gurl's winder, which was open. . . . Wal, we went back, an' up on the porch, an' into the livin' room. "When Herrick looked up Hank threw a gun on him. 'Keep quiet

"Wal, Sparrow wanted us to have it, not, I reckon, because we took care of him when you forgot, but just because he cottoned to us." "Smoky, tell Hays the other reason," spoke up Jim. "The'll wait, Jim. No hurry. An' I'm not so shore Sparrow wanted us to tell."

Hank Hays turned livid. "Ahuh. Mebbe you'd both be wise to stay shet up," he said and left. "Fellers," said Brad Lincoln, turning to the others, "I've had a hunch all along there was a hitch in this deal. Air you with me in demandin' a showdown from Smoky an' Jim?"

"We shore air," rejoined Bridges, and Mac and Happy Jack expressed like loyalty. "Smoky, you're square. If there's anythin', we want to know." "Mebbe we can slick it over," replied Smoky, smoothly. "If we win all the boss' money—an' he'll shore be easy now with that gurl on his mind—I reckon there won't be any sense in tellin' at all. Eh, Jim?"

"I don't make any rash promises, Smoky," returned Jim. "I admire you a lot, Slocum, but I'm thinking you run this into the ground. In all justice these men ought to be told something." "I say cards, you fellers can't keep it forever," rejoined Lincoln, darily.

From that hour dated the grim and passionate gambling in which they all participated. With one man on lookout duty the others spent most of the daylight hours sitting at Happy Jack's table of cottonwood poles.

Jim had separated his money into two parts—one consisting of the bills of large denomination, and the other of small. The latter he kept out for gambling, intended to quit when it was lost.

But fortune was fickle. He did not lose it. Instead, he won steady. There was no hope of his getting out of the game so long as he was ahead. He wanted to watch, think, plan. Luck changed eventually, and he lost all he had won. Then he seceded for a day, before he struck another streak of losing, and lost everything.

"I'm cleaned," he said, rising. "But, by gosh, I gave you a run." "I'm wa ahead, I'll lend you some," offered Hays. "No, thanks. I'm glad to get off this well. I'll go up to the rock and send Mac down. From now on I'll do most of the lookout work, I like it."

Jim was glad this phase of his connection with the outfit was past. He had played for days, won and lost, all in the interest of the scheme fermenting in his mind. He wanted to be alone. If nothing else intervened, this gambling would lead to the inevitable quarrel. Whether Hays won all the money or lost what he had, there would be a fight.

At once a restless, baffled, harassed condition of mind seemed to leave Jim. To face those men hour after hour, day after day, hiding his thoughts, had engendered irritation. When the split came and the shooting began Jim wanted to be around. He would help it along considerably.

One day, when he was returning to camp, somewhat before sunset, he heard a shot. He listened for others. None came. The moment he entered the oval, to see Hays striding for the cabin, his hair standing up, and his men grouped outside of the camp shelter. Jim knew that there had been trouble.

"What now, Smoky?" "Hank did fer Brad." "How? Why? . . . You don't mean Hays beat Lincoln to a gun?" "He did, Jim," ejaculated Slocum. "He bored Brad. I was the only feller who seen it. The rest was duckin'."

"What was it about, Smoky?" "Wal, Brad has been gittin' sorer every day, an' today we cleaned him. Brad opened up on Hank, no doubt meannin' to call him fer fair. But Brad didn't git him' good before Hank went for his gun."

"Smoky, he had his mind made up," declared Jim, tensely. "Shore. That's the queer part of it. Hank was not goin' to let Brad spit out much. . . . An' friend Jim, that's a hunch fer us." "Hays can't beat me to a gun," rejoined Jim, with a cold ring in his voice. "Nor me either. That's a safe bet." They reached the camp. Lincoln lay face down over the table, his right arm hanging low, his gun lying near his hand. "Lend a hand, some of you," ordered Slocum, peremptorily. They carried Lincoln, face down, across the oval to the lower side of the cottonwood grove, and in half an hour he had been consigned to earth, and his possessions divided among the men who had buried him. "Grave number two!" speculated Smoky. "Fellers, it runs in my mind that Robbers' Roost in these next twenty years will be sprinkled all over with graves."

True Detective Story by Vance Wynn

The Blood-Splashed Ring

IN THE course of time thousands of persons have disappeared as completely as though they had dropped through the earth, but few of these mysteries have been quite as weird as that of Marie Anna Holzmann, of Augsburg, Bavaria. She had lodged for years with a shoemaker in that town, but he did not report the case for a month after she had left the house.

He explained the delay by saying that she was in the habit of leaving for a few days at a time, and he did not want to cause unnecessary excitement. The police felt that it was incumbent upon them to do something, so they placed the shoemaker under arrest.

He was held as "a material witness." "We shore air," rejoined Bridges, and Mac and Happy Jack expressed like loyalty. "Smoky, you're square. If there's anythin', we want to know."

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Let Our Motto Be GOOD HEALTH

SKIN POWER OF SELF DISINFECTION

HAVE you ever stopped to wonder what a marvelous structure this skin of ours is? It is only one twenty-fifth of an inch thick. Yet it's all the protection we have for the inside of our bodies against the outside world.

Unless we're nudists or fan dancers, we cover it with clothes, parts of it. But we all of us occasionally set our bare faces against a 75 mile an hour wind; we go out into cold that is 30 to 50 degrees below zero; on a hot day we move about under a sun that is broiling at 120 degrees, when we can't stand a fever temperature of much over 105 degrees. And we do all sorts of work with our bare hands.

But we still don't know much about this skin of ours. Science has been concerning itself with our bones, our hearts, lungs and other vital organs; it hasn't been giving so very much attention to this thin layer of tissue that keeps our body from drying out.

One thing, however, we have been finding out in the medical research laboratories of the University of Illinois, and that is that our skin is just about the most remarkable disinfecting agent there is. You can put all sorts of germs, millions of them, on clean healthy skin, and in a few minutes they have disappeared.

We discovered, though, that the skin has certain minute never-sterile areas, where the germs don't disappear. The first of these is the area under the finger nails. The second is the thin line that marks the junction of the outside skin of the lip with the membrane lining of the mouth. The third is the line where the outside skin joins the membrane lining of the nostrils. The fourth is the rim of the eyelid where the outside skin meets the inside lining.

The first experiments were made on the outside skin. The university laboratory assistants, all normal, healthy persons, were the subjects. This is how the experiments were conducted. When the chest, abdomen, back, legs or arms were moistened with bacterial culture and placed upon the skin area for one to three minutes. Then the gauze was removed and immediately after the skin was rubbed gently with a sterile cotton swab. This swab was then smeared over the surface of an agar plate, and the number of bacteria were counted.

In five minutes another sample was taken, and then again in ten, fifteen, twenty, and thirty minutes. When the specimens were taken of the hands, the whole hand was submerged in the bacteria solution, and then specimens taken of the various sections to learn if one section was more resistant than another.

This is what we found: That 98 per cent of the thousands of bacteria that had been placed in contact with the skin disappeared from the skin within ten minutes. That there is one exception to the self-disinfection of the outside skin. This, as has already been stated, is the skin under the nails. Even after the thorough scrubbing and cleaning that the surgeon gives his hands before performing an operation, germs called staphylococci are always present in large numbers in these spaces.

Altogether eleven various kinds of bacteria were used in the tests, from the harmless B.colli to the germs that produce wound infections, lockjaw, botis, blood poisoning, typhoid and dypentery. The skin got rid of the dangerous germs just as quickly as it got rid of those that were harmless.

These tests were on clean skin. Then we experimented with skin coated with fat. Vaseline rubbed into the hands was used in one test. That retarded considerably the self-disinfecting power of the skin. Then naturally oily skin was next swabbed. That also did not work so well.

Finally some plumbers and electricians were called in just as they were finishing their day's work and before they had washed. Their hands were of course grimy. The tests were applied before and after washing, with these results: After 10 minutes the dirty hands showed no reduction of bacteria; the clean hands had lost 85 per cent. After 20 minutes, the dirty hands had lost only 5 per cent of bacteria; the clean hands were entirely free. After 30 minutes the dirty hands still retained 85 per cent of their bacteria.

Next we removed a patch of outside skin to see whether the next layer of skin had the same resistance power. But it hasn't. The second layer of skin tissue has no more germ resisting power than the other tissues of the body. So our only hope of keeping germs out of the body is by keeping our outer layer of skin whole. We lower our resistance to disease when we have a case of sunburn or an open blister, or we get our hands chapped, prick ourselves with a pin, or any other happening that punctures the outermost layer of our epidermis.

A clean, healthy skin needs no other assistance to protect itself against infection.

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NOBILITY SHROUDS NEW YORK VALLEY

Once Home of Refugee Who Feared Napoleon.

Syracuse, N. Y.—More than a century and a quarter ago in a valley in central New York, known till this day as Bronder's Hollow, a refugee member of France's nobility, who stood in line as a future king of that country, is said to have sought escape from Napoleon, who was making quick work of his opponents by way of the guillotine.

Here in the forest recesses of hills in a fortress-like mansion hewn from sturdy cherry trees, this Frenchman founded a settlement which after a brief, colorful existence crumbled back into forest wilds to become one of the forgotten villages of this section of New York, according to the Syracuse Post-Standard.

Built Imposing Chateau.

The story had its beginnings in 1808, when a Frenchman who called himself plain Louis Anathe Muller, and who never ventured forth without an armed bodyguard, purchased 2,700 acres of land in this isolated region near Slab City, now Georgetown, and employed 150 men, whom he paid in gold and silver, to construct a palatial, bullet-proof chateau on the summit of the highest hill on his estate.

Beside a stream a mile southeast of his homestead, in the valley of Bronder's Hollow, named after John Passon Bronder, one of the men who had accompanied him to this country the Frenchman who called himself Muller established a village which contained two stores, a mill and a storehouse, as well as numerous dwellings.

During the half dozen years that he lived in this forest mansion, Muller's reticence and eccentric conduct greatly stirred the curiosity of his neighbors and gave rise to many a wild rumor as to his identity. But never by an idle word did he betray his real story, and when after hearing of the collapse of Napoleon's fortunes he departed jubilantly for France, he left in his wake a mystery which never has been explained to the full satisfaction of his central New York acquaintances or their descendants.

Home Destroyed by Fire.

The modern visitor to the site of the old Muller house, which was leveled by fire in 1907, must stretch his imagination to believe that this once was the estate of a French nobleman, says the writer. If he drives

along the narrow country road that winds across the hills toward Bronder's Hollow he will pass densely wooded stretches that look as if they never had known the pioneer's ax.

A few bleak, gray farmhouses with desolation staring through their paneless windows, decrepit barns with doors that creak on rusty hinges and the shapeless frames of occasional abandoned automobiles along the way are the only evidence that man ever conquered or cultivated this isolated territory.

When Muller departed for France after the downfall of Napoleon he left his central New York property in the hands of an agent who proved untrustworthy, and two years later, in 1816, he returned to find his house stripped of its rich furniture, his garden covered with weeds and his village forsaken.

After viewing the wreck, he sold the land to Abijah Western, a New York city merchant, for the sum of \$10,500, and then went back to France, where no doubt he reclaimed a prouder name than plain Louis Anathe Muller, and calmly wiped the American chapter off the slate of his life with never a qualm for the throes of curiosity which were bound to torture posterity when it encountered the mystery of Muller Hill.

Lake Superior Deepest Lake

Lake Superior is the deepest of the Great Lakes, having a maximum depth of 1,290 feet, and a mean depth of 800 feet. The bottom is very irregular and shows many steep slopes.

Green Light and Rancidity

Light, as well as oxygen, affects the development of rancidity, and United States government chemists have found that green light is the safest protection against this.

Street Under Tree Canopy

The main street in the mountain town of Jefferson, N. C., lies under a canopy of huge cherry trees on each side with limbs interlocked in the center.

Old Stuff in U. S.

Japanese courts permit persons on trial to hide the face until found guilty. This is considered a safeguard to the defendant's reputation.

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