

ROBBERS' ROOST

by Zane Grey

Copyright.—WNU Service.

THE STORY

CHAPTER I—Jim Wall, young cowboy-puncher 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 their employer's cattle and money. Hays wants Wall to throw in with the rustlers.

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 Hays' life by bluffing the gambler out of shooting. 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

Next morning they got a late start. Nevertheless Hays assured Jim that they would reach Star ranch towards evening.

The trail led up a wide, shallow, gravelly canyon full of green growths. They rode on side by side. The trail led into a wider one, coming around from the northeast. Jim did not miss fresh hoof tracks, and Hays was not far behind in discovering them.

"Woods full of riders," he muttered.

"How long have you been gone, Hays?" inquired Jim.

"From Star ranch? Let's see. Must be a couple of weeks. Too long, by gosh! Herrick sent me to Grand Junction. An' on the way back I circled. That's how I happened to make Green River."

"Did you expect to meet Eppy Jack and Lincoln there?"

"Shore. An' some more of my outfit. But I guess you'll more'n make up for the other fellers."

"Hope I don't disappoint you," said Jim, dryly.

"Well, you haven't so far. Only I'd feel better, Jim, if you'd come clean with who you air up what you air."

"Hays, I didn't ask you to take me on."

"Shore, you're right. Reckon I figured everybody knew Hank Hays. Why, there's a town down here named after me, Hankville."

"A town? No one would think it." "Wal, it ain't much to brag on. A few cabins, the first of which I threw up with my father years ago. In his later years he was a prospector. We lived there for years. I trapped fur up here in the mountains. In fact I got to know the whole country except that Black Dragon canyon, an' that hellhole of the Dirty Devil. . . . My old man was shot by rustlers."

"I gathered you'd no use for rustlers. . . . Well, then, Hays, how'd you fall into your present line of business?"

"Haw! Haw! Present line. That's a good one. Now, Jim, what do you reckon that line is?"

"You seem to be versatile, Hays. But if I was to judge I'd say you relieved people of surplus cash."

"Very nice put, Jim. I'd hate to be a low-down thief. . . . Jim, I was an honest man once, not so long ago. It was a woman who made me what I am today. That's why I'm cold on women."

"Were you ever married?" went on Jim, stirred a little by the other's crude pathos.

"That was the n—1 of it," replied Hays, and he seemed to lose desire to confide further.

They rode into the zone of the foothills, with ever-increasing evidence of fertility. But Jim's view had been restricted for several hours, permitting only occasional glimpses up the gray-black slopes of the Henrys and none at all of the low country.

Therefore Jim was scarcely prepared to come round a corner and out into the open. Stunned by the magnificence of the scene he would have halted Bay on the spot, but he espied Hays waiting for him ahead.

"Wal, pard, this here is Utah," said Hays, as Jim came up, and his voice held a note of pride. "Round the corner here you can see Herrick's valley an' ranch. It's a bit of rich land thirty miles long an' half as wide, narrow'n like a wedge. Now let's ride on, Jim, an' have a look at it."

Across the mouth of Herrick's gray-green valley, which opened under the escarpment from which Jim gazed, extended vast level green and black lines of range, one above the other, each projecting farther out into that blue abyss.

"Down in there somewhere this Hank Hays will find his robbers' roost," soliloquized Jim, and turned his horse again into the trail.

Before late afternoon of that day

Jim Wall had seen as many cattle dotting a verdant grass, watered valley as ever he had viewed in the great herds driven up from Texas to Abilene and Dodge, or on the Wind River Range of Wyoming. A rough estimate exceeded ten thousand head. He had taken Hays with a grain of salt. But here was an incomparable range and here were the cattle. No doubt, beyond the timbered bluff across the valley lay another depression like this one, and perhaps there were many extending like spokes of a wheel down from the great hub of the Henry mountains. But where was the market for this unparalleled range?

Herrick had selected a site for his home what was undoubtedly the most picturesque point in the valley, if not one that had the most utility for the conducting of a ranch business. Ten miles down from the head of the valley a pine-wooded bench, almost reaching the dignity of a promontory, projected from the great slope of the mountain. Here where the pines straggled down stood the long, low cabin of peeled logs, yellow in the sunlight. Below, on the flat, extended the numerous barns, sheds, corrals. A stream poured off the mountain, white in exposed places, and ran along under the bench and out to join the main brook of the valley.

Somewhat apart from both the corrals and outbuildings on the flat stood a new log cabin, hurriedly built, with chinks still unfiled. The roof extended out on three sides over wide porches, where Wall observed three or four beds, a number of saddles and other riders' paraphernalia. The rear of the cabin backed against the rocks. Jim understood that Hays had thrown up this abode, rather than dwell too close to the other employees of Herrick. From the front porch one could drop a stone into the brook, or fish for trout. The pines trooped down to the edge of the brook.

Naturally no single place in all that valley could have been utterly devoid of the charm and beauty nature had lavished there, but this situation was ideal for riders. Hays even had a private corral. As Jim rode up to this habitation his quick eye caught sight of curious, still-eyed men on the porch. Also he observed that there was a store of cut wood stowed away under the porch.

"Wal, here we air," announced Hays. "An' if you don't like it you're shore hard to please. Finest of water, beef, lamb, venison, bear meat. Butter for our biscuits. An' milk! An' best of all—not very much work. Haw! Haw!"

"Where do we bunk?" asked Jim, presently.

"On the porch. I took to the attic myself."

"If you don't mind I'll keep my pack inside, but sleep out under the pines," responded Wall.

When at length Jim carried his effects up on the porch Hays spoke up: "Jim, here's the rest of my outfit. . . . Fellers, scrape acquaintance with Jim Wall, late of Wyoming."

That was all the introduction Hays volunteered. Jim replied: "Howdy," and left a return of their hand-scrutiny until some other time.

Hays went at once into low-voiced conference with those four men. Happy Jack heeled in the supplies. Dead Lincoln occupied himself with his pack. Jim brought his own outfit to a far corner of the porch. Then he strolled among the pines seeking a satisfactory nook to unroll his bed.

Jim, from long habit, generated by a decided need of vigilance, preferred to sleep in coverts like a rabbit, or any other animal that required protection.

At length he found a niche between two rocks, one of which was shelving, where pine needles furnished a soft mat underneath and the murmur of the brook just faintly reached him. Jim would not throw his bed where the noise of rushing water, or anything else, might preclude the service of his keen ears. There was no step on his trail now, but he instinctively distrusted Lincoln, and would undoubtedly distrust one or more of these other men.

Hays exemplified the fact of honor among thieves. Jim had come to that conviction. This robber might turn out big in some ways. But could even he be trusted? Jim resolved to take no chances.

Not until the following morning did Jim Wall get a satisfactory scrutiny of the four members of Hays' outfit.

The eldest, who answered to the name of Mac, was a cadaverous-faced man, with eyes like a ghoul.

"What you from?" he asked Wall.

"Wyoming, last," replied Jim, agreeably.

Jeff Bridges, a sturdy, tow-headed man of forty or thereabouts, had a bluff, hearty manner and seemed not to pry under the surface.

"Glad Hank took you on," he said.

"We need one cattleman in this outfit, an' that's no joke."

Sparrowhawk Latimer, the third of the four, greatly resembled a horse thief Wall had once seen hanged.

Hays had said to Slocum, the fourth member of this quartet: "Smoky, you an' Wall shore ought to make a pair to draw to."

"You mean a pair to draw on," retorted the other. He was slight, wiry, freckled of face and hands, with a cast in one of his light, cold-blue eyes.

"No!" snorted the robber. "Not on! . . . Smoky, do you recollect that gambler Stud Smith, who works the stage towns, an' is somethin' of a gunslinger?"

"I ain't forgot him."

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK)

Renew Your Subscription

Brevard College News

IDEAL MAN MUST HAVE NO. 9 FEET, SAY COLLEGE GIRLS

Must Be At Least 6 Feet Tall, Weigh 165 Pounds, Have An Aquiline Nose

(By JAZZY MOORE)

Girl students of Brevard College demand that their "ideal man" have No. 9 feet and the male students have come right back with a demand that the girl of their dreams eschews petting and smoking and that she learn to cook.

A representative group of Brevard girls described the sort of man they like best when interviewed by the writer. The ideal man as pictured by Brevard students who were questioned must wear No. 9 shoes, must weigh about 165 pounds, must be at least 6 feet tall and must have wavy black hair with such heavy brows that they partly obscure the light in his big brown eyes.

Our hero also must have an aquiline nose, a slanting poetic forehead, long eyelashes; he must be well dressed, athletic, and a good sport. And—all of the girls were unanimous on this point—he must have a job.

A few other qualifications were demanded such as truthfulness, courtesy and neatness.

The boys interviewed were almost unanimously agreed that the ideal girl must be a blonde; about 18; 5 feet, 3 inches tall; and weigh 115 pounds. She may dance. She may paint and powder in moderation. But under no circumstances can she indulge in petting and smoking.

Her foot must fit comfortably in a size 5 shoe and possibly be a fraction smaller. No girl with a No. 9 foot need seek the love of a Brevard man.

A wide diversity of opinion was expressed concerning the age of the ideal girl. Some of the students thought she should be as young as 15. Some said she ought to be 21. No one over 21, however, could hope to fill the role.

One demanded a girl 6 feet tall. The bob was preferred to long hair. Athletic, literary, religiously inclined girls were most popular.

Practically all boy students interviewed demanded a girl who can cook.

Harry Whisenhunt To Head Literary Group

Election of officers for the second quarter featured the recent meeting of the Delphian Literary society.

Harry Whisenhunt of Hazelwood was chosen president and will direct activities of the society for the quarter. Warren Harvelson of Gastonia takes office as vice president and Woodrow Patton of Swannanoa will serve in the capacity of secretary-treasurer.

Other officers elected were: James Troutman, Mooresville, critic; A. G. Sutherland, Charlotte, chaplain and James Proffitt, Bald Creek, monitor.

Personal Mention

Jess Oates spent the week-end in Greenville. He went especially to see the Furman-Carolina football game.

Miss Earlene Poindexter, head of the commercial department, spent Saturday afternoon in Asheville.

Mr. and Mrs. E. T. Goldston of Kannapolis were guests Tuesday of their daughter Christine.

John Vollmer spent Monday afternoon with relatives in Tryon.

Mrs. C. H. Trowbridge and Miss Eleanor Trowbridge were Asheville visitors on Saturday.

Mrs. J. L. Moore and Miss Nell Sturkey went to Asheville for the day Saturday.

Favorite Teacher Is Elected By Students

Miss Eleanor Trowbridge daughter of Dean C. H. Trowbridge, was chosen as the favorite teacher of the preparatory school department of Brevard College in an election held last week. C. O. Cathey was runner-up for the honor.

The prep school is composed of the tenth and eleventh grades. Nell Sturkey is president of the department.

John Vollmer Forms A Class In German

John Vollmer, a first-year student at Brevard College and a native of Germany, has organized a class in German and is giving lessons twice a week.

Christmas Holidays Begin December 22nd

Exactly one month from today, which will be Saturday, December 22nd, the Christmas vacation will be started for Brevard College students.

Announcement has been made through the college catalog that the holidays will begin December 22nd and last until Monday, January 6th, allowing the students and faculty a mid-term rest of two weeks.

The catalog also provides for Thursday, November 29th as a Thanksgiving holiday but the student body through a petition has asked that the holiday be changed to Saturday, December 1st. No action had been taken by the faculty on the petition as The Times went to press.

Gridsters Will Close Season Next Thursday

The Brevard College gridsters will sing their swan song next Thursday afternoon when they clash with the strong Mars Hill college team on the latter's field.

The locals realize that they will be faced by the toughest assignment of the season but they have been working hard and are determined to hand the Baptists a shelling.

A victory over Mars Hill would give the Jamesmen—provided they beat Lees-McRae here Saturday—the 1934 state junior college football championship.

Both teams have made fine records this season and the game will be a toss-up.

Expression Department To Sponsor Party Saturday

The expression department of Brevard College is sponsoring a

kid party Saturday evening at 8:00 o'clock in the living room of the girls' dormitory. Town and dormitory students and a few invited town guests will attend.

Prizes for the occasion have been donated by Macfie's Drug store, United Variety store, Farmer's Hardware store, Trantham's Department store, Bradley's Clothing store, Smith's Barber shop, Clemson thea-

tre, Long's Drug store, Ruth's Beauty shop, Jeanne's Beauty shop, The Fashion shop and the A & P store. Several other prizes will be given by town stores.

At the close of the evening, refreshments will be served.

A small admission will be charged and the receipts will be used for future entertainments given by the expression department.

HUSKY THROATS

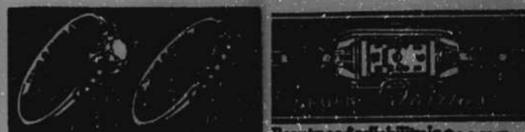
Overtaxed by speaking, singing, smoking



"L A Y - A W A Y"

That Christmas Gift Now!

Join the ranks of lay-away shoppers this Christmas . . . get the cream of the gift assortments while you have time to shop leisurely and make it a quality gift.



Diamond rings of quality \$15 up Beauty and reliability in a fine buy at a low price \$20

A Small Deposit Will Receive Any Article Until Christmas CARPENTER-MATTHEW, INC. The Quality Jewellers Haywood and Patton Ave. Asheville, N. C. Mail Orders Are Prompt Attention

CHRISTMAS PIANO CLUB

Where You Can Secure A High Grade Piano At A Low Price



Good Reconditioned Piano As Low as \$95.00 High Grade New Piano As Low as \$225.00

Features of the Club: Fifty members in this club will buy a good high grade piano at a low price, on convenient terms. Fully guaranteed. Fifty Pianos will be sold at a lower price than ever offered in Western North Carolina. Small down payment. Come and see these Pianos. Free delivery. Traveling expense paid on each purchase.

Dunhams Music House

The Home of High Grade Pianos 14 North Park Square ASHEVILLE, N. C.



Give OLD EYES The Happiness of Comfortable Seeing



Middle aged and elderly people require more light for COMFORTABLE seeing and for the avoidance of eye strain and nervous and physical fatigue than younger generations. It is just as important to avoid glare, sharp shadows and contrasts as it is to have adequate light.

The I. E. S. specification semi-indirect lamp, in both floor model and table model, was designed by illuminating engineers to provide proper and comfortable light for reading, sewing, studying, and other close visual tasks, and the floor model is ideal, also, for card playing and for general purposes.

In the floor model you may have 100 watts, 200 watts or 300 watts of electricity, according to your needs, at any given time. This is made possible through the new three-light lamp bulb. In the table model study and reading lamp you can use either a 100-watt or a 150-watt lamp.

Electricity IS cheap. After the use of 30 kilowatts of electricity you can burn a 100-watt lamp for 10 hours for three cents—a 300-watt lamp three and one-third hours for three cents. In other words a 300-watt lamp used three and one-third hours each night for 30 days will cost 90 cents.

For the sake of the eyes of members of your family investigate these lamps and equip your home with them at once.

Tune in . . . WSOC 7:45 P. M. Tues. . . . WBT 9:45 A. M., Mon.-Wed.-Fri.

Southern Public Utilities Co.

