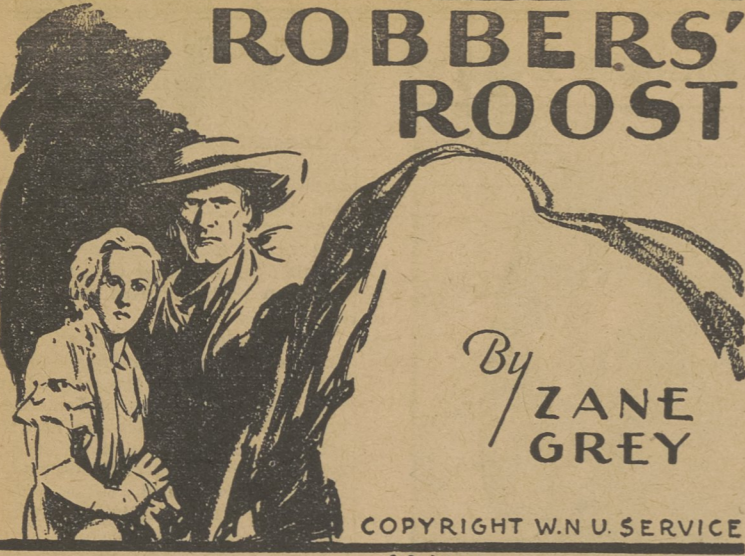


ROBBERS' ROOST



By ZANE GREY

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THE STORY

CHAPTER I—Jim Wall, young cow-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

From the very first deal Hays was lucky. Morley stayed about even. Brad Lincoln lost more than he won. The giant Montana was a close, wary gambler, playing only when he had good cards. Stud was undoubtedly a player who required the stimulation and zest of opposition. But he could not wait for luck to change. He had to be in every hand. Moreover, he was not adept enough with the cards to deal himself a good hand when his turn came. He grew so sullen that Wall left off watching and returned to the freddie.

But presently he had cause to attend more keenly than ever to this card game. The drift of conversation wore toward an inevitable fight. These men were vicious characters. Wall knew that life out here was raw. There was no law except that of the six-shooter.

While he bent a more penetrating gaze upon Stud, to whom his attention gravitated, Wall saw him perform a trick with the cards that was pretty clever, and could not have been discerned except from Wall's position.

Nevertheless, fickle fortune most certainly had picked on Stud. He bet this hand to the limit of his cash, and then, such was his confidence, he borrowed from Morley. Still he could not force Hays to call. He fell from elation to consternation, then to doubt, from doubt to dismay, and from this to a gathering impotent rage, all of which proved how poor a gambler he was. When at last he rasped out:

"Wal, I call! Here's mine."

He slammed down an ace full. Hays had drawn three cards.

"Stud, I hate to show you this hand," drawled Hays.

"Yes, you do! Lay it down, I called you."

Whereupon Hays gently spread out four ten spots, and then with greedy hands raked in the stakes.

Stud stared with burning eyes. "Three-card draw! . . . You come in with a pair of tens?"

"Nope. I held up one ten an' the ace," replied Hays, nonchalantly. "I had a hunch, Stud."

"You'd steal coppers off a dead man's eyes."

"Haw! Haw!" bawled the victorious gambler. But he was the only one of the six players who seemed to see anything funny in the situation. That dawned upon him. "Stud, I was takin' that crack of yours humorous."

"Was you?" snapped Stud.

"Shore I was," returned Hays, with congealing voice.

"Wal, I didn't mean it humorous," Stud retorted.

"Ahuh. Come to look at you I see you ain't feelin' gay. Suppose you say just what you did mean."

"I meant what I said."

"Shore. I'm not so awful thick. But apply that crack to this here card game an' my playin'."

"Hays, you palmed them three ten-spots," declared Stud hotly.

Then there was quick action and the rasp of scraping chairs, and the tumbling over of a box seat. Stud and Hays were left alone at the table.

"You're a liar!" hissed Hays, suddenly black in the face.

Here Jim Wall thought it was time to intervene. He read the glint in Stud's eyes. Hays was at a disadvantage, so far as drawing a gun was concerned. And Wall saw that Stud could and would kill him.

"Hold on there," called Wall, in a voice that made both men freeze.

Hays did not turn to Wall, but he spoke: "Pard, lay off. I can handle this feller."

"Take care, stranger," warned Stud, who appeared to be able to watch both Hays and Wall at once. They were, however, almost in line. "This ain't any of your mix."

"I just wanted to tell Hays I saw you slip an ace from the bottom of the deck," said Wall. He might as well have told of Hays' irregularities.

"Wot! He filled his ace full that way?" roared Hays.

"He most certainly did."

"All right let it go at that," replied Stud, deadly cold. "If you can say honest that you haven't pulled any tricks—go for your gun. Otherwise keep your shirt on."

That unexpected sally exemplified the peculiar conception of honor among thieves. It silenced Hays. The little gambler knew his man and shifted his deadly intent to a more doubt-

ful issue. "Jim Wall, eh?" he queried, insouciantly.

"At your service," retorted Wall. He divined the workings of the little gambler's mind. Stud needed to have more time, for the thing that made decision hard to reach was the quality of this stranger. His motive was more deadly than his will, or his power to execute. All this Jim Wall knew. It was the difference between the two men.

"I'm admittin' I cheated," said Stud, harshly. "But I ain't standin' to be tipped off by a stranger."

"Well, what're you going to do about it?" asked Wall, while the spectators of the drama almost held their breath.

Stud's lean, dark, little hands lifted quivering from the table.

"Don't draw!" yelled Wall. "The man doesn't live who can sit at a table and beat me to a gun."

"H—!—you say," panted Stud. But that ringing taunt had cut the force of his purpose.

"You've got a gun in each inside vest pocket," said Wall, contemptuously.

The gambler let his hands relax and slide off the table.

Stud shuffled to his feet, malignant and beaten for the moment.

"Hays, you an' me are even," he said, gruffly. "But I'll meet your new pard some other time and then there'll be a show-down."

"Shore, Stud. No hard feelin's on my side," drawled Hays.

The little gambler stalked to the bar, drank and left the saloon.

Hank Hays turned round.

"Jim, that feller did have two guns inside his vest. I never saw them, till you gave it away. He—would have killed me."

"I think he would, Hays," returned Wall. "You were sitting bad for action."

"Right you are, Jim, and I'm much obliged to you. I'd like to know some-thing."

"What's that?"

"Did you bluff him?"

"Hardly. I had him figured. It was a pretty good bet he wouldn't try to draw. But if he had made a move—"

"Ahuh. It'd been all day with him. . . . This gambler Stud has a name out here for bein' swift on the draw. He's killed—"

"Bah!" cut in Wall, good-humoredly. "Men who can handle guns don't pack them that way."

Presently they bade Red good night and went outside.

"Where you sleepin'?" asked Hays.

"Left my sack in the stall out back with my horse. What do we do to-morrow?"

"I was thinkin' of that. We'll shake the dust of Green River. I reckon to-morrow we'd better stock up on every-thing an' hit the trail for the Henrys."

"Suits me," replied Wall.

"Wal, then, good night. Breakfast here early," concluded Hays.

A red sunrise greeted Wall upon his awakening. When, a little later, he presented himself at the back of Red's house for breakfast he was to find Hays, Happy Jack and Brad Lincoln ahead of him.

They had breakfast. "Brad, you fetch your pack horses round back," ordered the leader, when they got outside. "Happy, you get yourself a boss. Then meet us at the store quick as you can get there. . . . Jim, you come with me."

"Hays, I'm in need of some things," said Wall.

Hays drew out a handful of bills and pressed them upon Wall.

"Shore. Buy what outfit you need an' don't forget a lot of shells," replied Hays. "If I don't miss my guess we'll have a smoky summer. Haw! Haw! . . . Here's the store."

A bright young fellow, who looked to be the son of the proprietor, took charge of Wall. A new saddle blanket was Wall's first choice, after which he bought horseshoes and nails, a hammer and file, articles he had long needed, and the lack of which had made Bay lame. After that he selected a complete new outfit of wearing apparel, a new tarpaulin, a blanket, rope, and wound up with a goodly supply of shells for his .45 revolver. Likewise he got some boxes of .44 rifle shells.

Half an hour later the four men, driving five packed horses and two un-packed, rode off behind the town across the flat toward the west. Coming to a road, Hays led on that for a mile or so, and then branched off on a seldom-used trail.

Towards sunset they drew down to the center of a vast swale, where the green intensified, and the eye of the range rider could see the influence of water.

Hays halted for camp at a swampy sedge plot where water oozed out and grass was thick enough to hold the horses.

"Aha! Good to be out again, boys," said Hays, heartily. "Throw saddles an' packs. Turn the hosses loose. Happy, you're elected cook. Rest of you rustle somethin' to burn."

Jim rambled far afield to collect an armload of dead stalks of cactus, grease-wood, sunflower; and dusk was mantling the desert when he got back to camp. Happy Jack was whistling about a little fire; Hays knelt before a pan of dough, which he was kneading; Lincoln was busy at some camp chore.

"Wall, I don't like store bread," Hays was saying. "Give me sour-dough biscuits. . . . How about you, Jim?"

"Me, too. And I'd like some cake," replied Jim, dropping his load.

"Cake! Wal, listen to our new hand. Jack, can you bake cake?"

"Sure. We got flour an' sugar an' milk. Did you fetch some eggs?"

"Haw! Haw! . . . That reminds me, though. We'll get eggs over at Star ranch. None of you ever seen such a ranch. Why, fellers, Herrick's bought every durn' hoss, burro, sow, steer, chicken in the whole country."

"So you said before," returned Lincoln. "I'm sure curious to see this Englisher. Must have more money than brains."

"He hasn't got any sense. But Lordy, the money he's spent!"

Jim sat down to rest and listen.

"Queer deal—a rich Englishman hirin' men like us to run his outfit," pondered Lincoln, in a puzzled tone. "I don't understand it."

"Wal, who does? I can't, thet's shore. But it's a fact, an' we're goin' to be so rich pronto that we'll jest about kill each other."

"More truth than fun in that, Hank. Old boy, an' don't you forget it," rejoined Lincoln. "How do you aim to get rich?"

"Shore, I've no idee. Thet'll all come. I've got the step on Heeseeman an' his pard."

"He'll be almin' at precisely the same deal as you."

"Shore. We'll have to kill Heeseeman an' Progar, sooner or later. I'd like it sooner."

"I don't like the deal," concluded Lincoln, forcibly.

Presently they sat to their meal, and ate almost in silence. Darkness settled down. One by one they sought their beds, and Wall was the last.

Dawn found them up and doing. Wall fetched in some of the horses; Lincoln the others. By sunrise they were on the trail, which about mid-afternoon led down through high gravel banks to a wide stream bed, dry except in the middle of the sandy waste.

"This here's the Muddy," announced Hays for Jim's benefit. "Bad enough when the water's up. But nothin' to the Dirty Devil. Nothin' at all."

"What's the Dirty Devil?" asked Jim.

"It's a river an' it's well named, you can gamble on that. We'll cross it to-morrow some time."

Next camp was on higher ground above the Muddy. Here Hays and Lincoln renewed their argument about the Herrick ranch deal. It proved what Wall had divined—this Brad Lincoln was shrewd, cold, doubtful and aggressive. Hays was not distinguished for any cleverness. He was merely an unscrupulous robber. These men were going to clash. That was inevitable, Jim calculated.

Early the next day Jim Wall had reason to be curious about the Dirty Devil river, for the descent into the defiles of desert to reach it was a most remarkable one. The trail, now only a few dim old hoof tracks, wound tortuously down and down into deep canyons.

The tracks Hays was following faded and he got lost in a labyrinthine maze of deep washes impossible to climb, and seemingly impossible to escape from.

Lincoln got off his horse and went down the canyon, evidently searching for a place to climb up to the rim above. He returned in an assertive manner and, mounting, called for the others to follow.

"I hear the river an' I'm makin' for it," said Lincoln.

Jim had heard a faint, low murmur, which had puzzled him, and which he had not recognized. They all followed Lincoln. Eventually he led them into a narrow, high-walled canyon where ran the Dirty Devil. The water was muddy, but as it was shallow the riders forded it without more mishap than a wetting.

Still they were lost. There was nothing to do, however, but work up a side canyon. Hays led them to a camp-site that never could have been expected there.

"Fellers, I'll bet you somethin'," he said, before dismounting. "There's a roost down in that country where never in Gawd's world could anybody find us."

"Ha! An' when they did it'd be only our bleached bones," scoffed Lincoln.

There never had been any love lost between these two men, Jim conjectured.

After supper Jim strolled away from camp, down to where the canyon opened upon a nothingness of space and blackness and depth. The hour hung suspended between dusk and night. He felt an overpowering sense of the immensity of this region of mountain, gorge, plain and butte.

While Jim Wall meditated there in the gathering darkness he was visited by an inexplicable reluctance to go on with this adventure.

(Continued Next Week)

There are 80 known species of pine tree and half of these grow in North America.

Busy New Jersey



Making Shaving Cream Tubes in a Bloomfield Factory.

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

ANY cities of northern New Jersey owe their growth largely to the fact that they block the southern and western gates of New York City and receive its overflow.

Newark is the most important air door to the metropolis. Opened to air traffic in September, 1931, the Newark airport has grown rapidly. When airplane traffic was at a peak in 1932 several transport companies and local airlines scheduled 89 planes daily in and out of Newark, and in addition a constant stream of unscheduled private planes used this municipal field.

Newark today is in a state of flux, but the changes that are taking place point to a vast metropolitan center.

Newark, since the World war, has changed amazingly. New high buildings have cut through its skyline; in them one finds the clerical forces of many firms whose office address is New York.

And again Newark has become a seaport. Whalers once sailed up to the city docks on Passaic river, but when ships of deeper draft began to carry world trade Newark had to be content with lighters and small coastwise vessels. Now Port Newark, a municipal development on the upper part of Newark bay, has again brought ocean-going vessels to the gates of the city.

Only Newark itself can list all the thousands of different products which pour out of its factories. The most important in order of production value are: electrical machinery and supplies, paints and varnishes, leather, meats, foundry and machine-shop products, chemicals, and jewelry.

Here are some odd trades, as well as highly specialized industries. Electrical instruments are made with counterbalancing pointers that are miracles of craftsmanship. One of these has an arm of aluminum tubing with walls one ten-thousandth of an inch thick, and balance threads (for tiny brass nuts) are cut 500 to the inch. This work must be done under a magnifying glass. In Newark, too, many of the world's largest air-conditioning plants are designed and constructed.

Newark's Library and Trolley.

Newark library today is the largest in the state, and one of the nation's finest. Libraries throughout the United States and in many foreign countries have adopted methods originating in this Newark institution.

Only London has a larger co-ordinated bus and trolley system than one Newark company, which serves 421 New Jersey municipalities, reaching all but one county in the state. In 1931 it transported a total of nearly 400,000,000 passengers, the equivalent of more than three times the population of the United States.

Strangers are confused by the interlocking huddle of municipalities around Newark. Essex county is really one city with nearly a million people. Once isolated villages have expanded so rapidly that outsiders cannot tell where one ends and another begins.

Bloomfield offers an example of an intensely diversified community in a state noted for variety. With a population of only 38,000, many of them commuters, it embraces some forty industries, large and small, which run the gamut from safety pins and horse radish to books, electric lights, and woollens.

In a Bloomfield lamp works were made the bulbs that shine from the Statue of Liberty, and those that illuminate the Washington monument, Holland tunnels, Natural Bridge, Virginia, and the Bermuda caves. Here is made every type of lamp, from the "grain of wheat" used by dentists and physicians, to the giant bulb for movie and outdoor illumination.

Although we may not realize it when we pay a small coin for an electric light bulb, we are purchasing a commodity that requires more delicate craftsmanship than anything else sold in bulk. The tungsten filament is one of the finest-drawn commercial wires, pulled through a diamond die to a thickness of 0.0004 of an inch. Compared to a lamp filament, a human

hair resembles a piece of heavy rope. It is all part of the day's work in this Bloomfield factory to deal with argon, helium, and neon, an atmospheric pressure of 0.00001 per cent, and pressures up to 25 tons per square inch! With pardonable pride this plant adopts the slogan used by the United States Engineers in France. "It can't be done—but here it is!"

In an unpretentious red-brick building that faces on one of the principal streets of West Orange, an empty chair sits before an old-fashioned roll-top desk. Here Thomas A. Edison spent the last years of his life. His library and study have been maintained just as he left them.

Traffic of Jersey City.

Jersey City, largest of the Hudson river cities opposite New York, has industries ranging from soap to printing and type-making. Oddly enough, it is one of Jersey's "least-known" cities to outsiders. Railroads skirt its business district or pass through it underground, while the main motor highway to the Holland tunnels runs in a subsurface roadway through the residential districts.

Many doughboys recall Jersey City's water front, a major embarking and disembarking point during the World war. "Where do we go from here, boys, where do we go from here? Anywhere from Harlem to a Jersey City pier," ran the words of a popular war song.

Today Jersey City handles most of the freight-car traffic that comes into the port of New York from the south and west. One of its printing plants turns out tons of telephone directories annually for New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and other large eastern cities. In the same plant lithographing for several widely circulated magazines is also prepared.

A museum attached to a Jersey City type-manufacturing concern contains a copy of the rare Canon Missal, dating from 1458, one of the first books printed entirely on a press, and many tiny "thumb-nail" books, exquisite examples of craftsmanship. Modern type faces are measured for accuracy to one-thousandth of an inch, the thickness of a cigarette paper.

From Jersey City northward along the Hudson to Weehawken is one of the highest concentrations of railroad traffic in the world. New Jersey leads the nation in railroad trackage per square mile, and the focus of its busiest lines is this short bit of territory along the Hudson opposite Manhattan island.

Freight-car contents are transferred here into the holds of liners, and recently a terminal was established which places loaded cars themselves within huge vessels called "seatrains." More interesting than the manner in which commodities are transhipped from rails to boats, however, are the split-second schedules devised for the waves of commuters that sweep twice daily through the half-dozen terminals in the New Jersey side of the Hudson. It is estimated that 2,000,000 people pour into and out of Manhattan on a typical business day, and that more than 15 per cent of them arrive from New Jersey.

Timing the Commuters.

Stand in the Hoboken terminal tower of the Lackawanna and watch the "big push" of commuters homeward bound. No major offensive of the World war was timed to a greater nicety than this daily event which has become as much a part of the commuter's life as his meals and sleep. Crowded ferry boats and tube trains from Manhattan have brought armies of men and women to the train shed, where long expresses are waiting to hurry them to scores of suburban stations.

"Zero Hour" comes from 5:25 to 5:35 p. m., when every commuter wants an express that will get him home about six o'clock. Commuting railroads perform the seemingly impossible by sending several trains to the same destination at almost the same time, one making stops that another skips. Newark, a metropolis of 442,000, may not be even a flag-stop on an express hurrying through-passengers on to Millburn or Morristown.

Origin of Camembert Cheese

Camembert cheese owes its name to the place of its manufacture in France.

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