

THE SMOKY YEARS

By ALAN LE MAY W.N.U. Release

INSTALLMENT 14 THE STORY SO FAR:

Dusty King and Lew Gordon had built up a vast string of ranches. King was killed by his powerful and unscrupulous competitor, Ben Thorpe. Bill Roper, King's adopted son, was determined to avenge his death in spite of the opposi-

CHAPTER XIX—Continued

To Roper's right, surprisingly close, a rifle spoke, once only, Roper could neither see the man who had fired nor guess his target. He waited five minutes, gun ready, then stood up and moved his pony down-slope into a shallow draw in which it was hidden by the brush. Moving cautiously, he proceeded north along the cut, seeking the position of the man who had fired.

Through the hillside brush a figure moved, crouching so low that his dark shape resembled a bear. After a moment Bill Roper was able to make out that the approaching man carried a light carbine.

The man with the carbine moved swiftly down the hillside, sliding on the hard crust of the snow, but surprisingly silent in the brush.

The watched man dropped into the ravine, angling toward the bend where Roper stood. Bill Roper pulled himself out of the gully. He was crouched in dense brush, gun in hand, as the scout appeared below him.

Roper stood up. "Steady," he said.

The man in the draw jumped as if he had been struck; but as he raised his hands he straightened so that Roper saw his face.

His captive was Shoshone Wilce. "By God," said Shoshone, "I was never so glad to see anybody in my life!"

Roper's voice bit like frosty ice. "You know where she is?"

"Yeah," said Shoshone. "Yeah, I know where she is."

Roper dropped into the gully to snarl close into Shoshone's face. "Is she alive? Is she all right?"

"Oh, yeah, sure," Wilce assured him. "She's alive, all right. Don't seem like she's hurt any, I—"

"Don't seem like?" Roper repeated. "Damn your hide, where is she?"

"Bill, seems like them buzzards have her down there at that cabin, and won't leave her loose."

"Who won't?"

"Bill, I don't know who."

"Well, how the devil did she get there?"

"Me," Shoshone said. He met Roper's eye bleakly. Obviously, he knew that he was in trouble here. "I brought her."

"Why in all—"

"She would have come anyway, Bill. She was dead set on locating you. She didn't have nobody else to ride with her. I figured you'd sooner I'd try to bring her direct to you, so somebody would be with her, than have her wandering loose around the country by herself. A bartender in Miles told me you were here, and we rode here. And then—and then—"

"Well, then—what?"

"As I come into the valley," Shoshone said, "seemed to me like something was wrong. But I couldn't make out what. We come up to the cabin careful and slow, in the dark. But they seen us coming and they laid for us, I guess. Before we knew what had busted, they gunned her pony down, and they drilled mine twice so bad that I had to turn him loose. Most likely he's dead by now. I—"

"And you run out and left her," Bill filled in for him.

"Bill, I swear, I wouldn't have done nothing like that, not for no amount. Thing was, they was all around me; I couldn't see where to shoot or who they was. I figured first it was your own boys, making a mistake, and after I seen it wasn't, I just figured to keep in a fighting position, you might say, and close in first chance. Only—"

"Only you never saw any chance," Roper said with contempt.

"Well, no; there's seven of 'em down there, Bill, and they keep an awful steady watch. And I been scouting 'em steady ever since. Sometimes I get in a long shot at one or another of 'em. This carbine don't carry so very good, but I plugged two of 'em; don't know how bad."

"How do you know she wasn't shot or hurt when her horse went down?" Roper demanded. "By God, Shoshone, if you let anything happen to that girl—"

"They let her walk outside sometimes during the day," Shoshone said. "That's how I seen 'em all right."

"Can you make out who the bunch down there is?"

"I figure they're some Thorpe gun squad, out after your scalp. I figure they was laying to gun you. And now that they got the girl, I figure that they aim to hold her for bait, kind of."

Shoshone fell silent, and Roper, deep in thought, let him rest.

"You're most likely right," Roper said morosely at last. "There's four or five of these Thorpe war parties out after me; and this could easy be one. But of all the infernal luck I ever saw—What did Jody want with me? Did she tell you?"

"Thorpe has made up his mind to kill her old man," Shoshone said. "I went and told her, because I thought you'd want her to know, so she could maybe look out for him some. But the old man wouldn't

listen to her and they had a row. So then the only thing she could think of was to come to you. She's got some notion of trying to get you and her old man together again."

"A fine chance!"

"That's what I told her. But she—"

"Why in God's name," Roper flared at him again, "didn't you go after help?"

"I figured I'd get strung up for sure," Shoshone said flatly, "if I went and told Gordon what I'd done. I wanted to come for you, but naturally I didn't know where you'd go. The only thing I could figure out, I better try to ghost around these hills and maybe whittle 'em down to my size."

"You say there are seven men in the cabin," Roper asked at last; "two wounded?"

Shoshone nodded. "They ain't all in the cabin all of the time. Seems like they must have had the girl tell 'em that she come here to meet you. Naturally they'd think you knew she was coming. Most likely they figure that if I ain't dead I'm carrying you word that will bring you here a-kiting. So they're holding her there now until they see if they can't get you. I ain't watched

them fellers for fifteen years without knowing how they work."

"They're taking an awful chance," Roper said, iron death in his eye. "If I rode in here, warned, with my wild bunch—"

"It ain't such a bad chance they're taking," Shoshone contradicted. "Night and day their outposts are out. Two men can check the whole country daytimes, so they can see you coming twenty miles. You only go here because you come up through the timber to the south, on the trail from Miles—the last way they'd figure you'd come. Nights there are more men on lookout than that, near as I can make out, and their lookout is strongest just before dawn—I suppose Iron Dog taught 'em that trick in the old days, always striking just before daylight, and now they can't get it out of their heads. Night and day they got ponies saddled. If ever they spotted your wild bunch riding in, they'd be almighty hard to catch."

"If only," Roper said, "the wild bunch was going to ride in! But it isn't."

"Maybe there's some way we could fake it, so they'd give up and clear out. I figure they'd leave the girl behind if ever they set out to run."

"I'm going down and smoke 'em out," Roper said through his teeth. "I'm going to smoke 'em out before the sun ever comes up again, and you're going to help me."

Shoshone nodded. "If we tackled 'em just before daylight, when the outpost is strong and the cabin is weak—"

They talked it over for a long time. In the hidden gulch where Shoshone had been holding up they made coffee and cooked meat, and completed their plans.

"We can get in," was Shoshone's verdict at last. "We can get in, and we can take the cabin. But God knows how we're ever going to get out."

"I've got a plan for that," Roper said.

He wouldn't tell Shoshone what it was.

CHAPTER XX

There were no stars when Roper roused himself in his blankets, and he had no mechanical means of tell-

ing the time. Yet he knew very definitely that dawn was just two hours away.

He shook Shoshone Wilce. The little man groaned once, then came full awake with the sudden response of an animal.

Without the snow the rock-like impenetrability of the overcast would have made the night utterly black, but the ghostly pallor of the snow had the effect of faintly modifying the darkness. The eye might possibly have made out a moving dark shape at ten yards; beyond that there was nothing but a muffling blackness.

"You lead out," Roper said. His voice was instinctively hushed, even at this distance from the enemy. "You've had more chance to study the lay than me."

Shoshone Wilce delayed. "Bill," he said, "I lay thinking about this time for a long time, after you was asleep." A dogged stubbornness came into his tone. "I figure we can probably take the cabin. And if we take the cabin without fighting we've got a chance to get away. But if so much as one shot is fired—Bill, the outposts will close like a bar trap. I don't see no way we can ever get clear."

By the sudden frozen silence, Shoshone Wilce was able to sense Bill Roper's anger.

"I wish to God," Bill Roper said at last, "I had Hat Crick Tommy here, or Tex Long; or even the very greenest kid cowboy that's riding the range with them, somewhere to-night. I need one other man for this job. It wouldn't take an especially brave man, or smart man, nor a real good gunfighter. I just need one fairly good man. But I haven't even got that!"

"Bill, I only claim—look, Bill: I ain't afraid of 'em. I only—"

"You ain't afraid," Bill Roper repeated; "no—not much. But when the guns spoke, you left a girl down under her horse in the snow—maybe hurt, maybe dead—and you ran for your life."

When Bill Roper had said that, both were utterly still, while a man might have counted a hundred.

Shoshone's voice was flat and dead. "Is that the way it looks to you?"

"Look at it yourself."

"Then," Shoshone said, "I guess there ain't anything more to say." He stood up.

"There's this to say," Bill Roper said. "You're going to work with me tonight because I haven't got anybody else. You're going to do exactly what I say, and when I say, without any back talk or question. You make one slip tonight and the West won't hold you, nor the world won't hold you, and you'll answer to me in the end. You hear me?"

"Okay," Shoshone said in the same flat, dead voice.

"One thing more," Roper said. "If we make a quiet job, we'll try to go out slow and quiet, the three of us together. Otherwise, you take Jody's lead rope and ride like hell. Six miles below here, near the creek, there's a kind of a brush corral. You and the girl will wait for me there. Wait for me until daylight begins to come; then go on."

They moved down into the valley of the Fork, walking fast. When they had dropped into the bed of Fork Creek itself they moved northward, following its windings, for what seemed a long way; but no sign of approaching dawn yet showed, and Roper felt that they had plenty of time. As they at last passed the point where the cabin stood, invisible in the dark, Shoshone indicated its location with raised arm; but they moved on fifty yards farther, so that they might approach the cabin from the north.

Cautiously now, Shoshone climbed the bank, silent as the Indians with whom he had spent his youth. Turning, he gripped Bill Roper's arm. His words were whispered close to Roper's ear.

"One of the night guards is out that-a-way, about five hundred yards," he whispered; "about in line with where you see that big dead pine."

Roper could see no dead pine. It annoyed him that Shoshone's eyes were better than his own—as good as the eyes of an Indian, or a lydx.

"I'll leave my carbine standing just outside the door," Shoshone said. "I only want it for later, after we've took to the horses."

"That's all right," Roper said. "But you remember this: If there's any trouble in the cabin, you stand and fight! Because if you don't, I'll turn and plug you myself, if it takes my last shot to do it."

"Okay."

Roper went ahead now, walking boldly across the snow. Better, he thought, to simulate the casual approach of friends than to depend upon a hope of complete surprise.

As he raised his hand to the door a strange thrill of dread momentarily stirred him at the thought that Jody Gordon was inside—with whom?

(TO BE CONTINUED)

THIS IS A SUPERIOR SERIAL MARK OF FINE FICTION

American Fashion Designers Stress Chic Simplicity Lines

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



YOU'LL find this a very exciting season, the most exciting we've had for years. The new fall fashions are really "new" and the new look can be distilled into the one word, simplicity. Simplicity is indeed America's fashion for fall, 1941.

Our American designers, standing squarely on their own feet and independent of Paris, have produced an entirely new silhouette inspired by our lithe, slim-hipped American figures. Highspots in the new styling are smoothly wide shoulders and deep armholes tapering down into an elongated midriff, softly rounded hips and slim skirt. The easiness of the blouse above the waistline trends to almost a topheavy effect that is somewhat suggestive of an inverted triangle. Accent is often on hips, especially in tunic effects done in various ways. Deep necklines either "V," oval or square, are often used to bring the eye down to the diminishing midriff and feminine hips.

In coats and suits this new simplicity is seen in smooth shoulders and longer midriffs. Exaggerated padding is passe. You have a wide choice of raglans, shoulder yokes cut in one with the sleeves, deep dolmans and akin types. Most of us, however, will find the smoothly padded set-in shoulder easiest to wear. Suits, more important than ever this fall, are marked by longer jackets with easyfitting or inset belts to bring out this year's smaller waist. Coat and suit sleeves are kept very simple and the straight generously large sleeve looks fresh. Dresses express the smooth shoulder in a still wider variety. Dolman sleeves cut in one, with the dress, cap sleeves, wide smooth shoulder yokes, shirred shoulders leading

into a plain smooth sleeve, these are some of the ingenious ways our designers have found to interpret the smooth-shoulder, deeper armhole theme.

Displayed in the foreground of the illustrated group is a dress that expresses unmistakably the simplicity that is America's fashion for fall. Taupe wool lends itself admirably to this princess coat dress. Here you see a dolman sleeve shirred for batwing fullness, with smooth shoulder panel cut in one and emphasizing the top of the tapering figure. Dramatically "new"—this frock!

Skirt fullness is used a great deal this year, but a slim look is invariably the rule. The silhouette is always kept fluid as shown in the dress to the right. The long-torso smooth-fitting top is notably new and smart. This dress is especially good style made of brown (a favorite color for fall) crepe, the deep armhole seaming accented with bands of crocheted done in contrast colors, gold, white and green. With black crepe the banding would be effective in bright cerise, blue and beige.

It's going to be a season of tunics. Note the dress to the left with a tunic Russian blouse. Note the subtle fullness introduced via an action pleat at the front of the skirt. The sleeves achieve the deep armhole and smooth-shoulder effect with fullness introduced at the wrist.

The row of thumb sketches below indicate new trends in coats, dresses and suits that will stand out in the new autumn fashion picture. Various interpreted in plaids, jerseys, velvets, corduroys, woolknit fabrics, gabardines and an endless variety of rayon weaves. (Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

Frilly Accents



If one has to keep within an economy budget a sensible "buy" is a black crepe dinner dress that is styled along lines of simplicity. For week-end trips you will find a dress of this type easy to pack. Be sure to acquire a goodly collection of flattering accessories. Then with various changes, your simple black frock can be transformed in appearance to tune into the picture of any more or less formal social occasion.

The vogue for exquisitely feminizing snowy frilly accents will continue through the fall. As you see here, there is eye-appeal in every detail.

Millinery Stresses Feathers and Veils

Feathers galore are adorning the new fall hats. The restrictions that have been lifted this season on the use of wild bird plumage is reacting in a tremendous revival of the use of feathers. It will not only be a case of a "feather in your cap" but entire hats made of feathers is fashion's latest decree. The use of veils and veiling is assured for fall.

Back-view interest in hats leads to a new emphasis being placed on snoods, wimples, and curtain effects that conceal long bobs and hair-dos at the back. Very fanciful treatments are being given to these wimples and snoods, and also to bringing back the brims-down style, so as to fit snugly and securely.

Corduroy Is Topmost Fabric for Fall Wear

A big revival is on for corduroy. It is being styled to perfection in sports clothes, in campus outfits, in mother and daughter fashions. In fact, recent showings displayed the entire family, mother, father, little sister and junior smartly outfitted in corduroy. You'll love the new corduroy suits, the slack costumes and the one-piece dresses of corduroy that are the last word for office and school wear.

Velvet Trim

One of the smartest fashion trends for fall is the use of velvet as trimming on contrasting materials. Afternoon gowns of black faille are given new distinction in way of wide borderings of black velvet that finish off peplums and tunics and hemlines in general. This tendency to trim with velvet is well worth watching for the movement gives promise of developing into an important vogue.

FARM TOPICS

ELIMINATE HENS THAT DON'T LAY

Don't Keep Poor Layers When Easy to Cull.

By H. H. ALP

(Poultry Extension Specialist, University of Illinois College of Agriculture.)

Can the birds in the home poultry flock pass the "physical" test?

If they can't, they shouldn't be "drafted" for another year of service in the "army" of egg layers, because chickens, like soldiers, are playing an important part in the present emergency. They have been "drafted" to furnish millions of healthful eggs under the nationwide food-for-defense program.

If flock owners haven't kept accurate records of their layers' abilities, it is especially important that the birds' physical characteristics be studied carefully before they are put in their quarters for the winter. Fortunately, it is comparatively easy to distinguish layers from non-layers by the culling method, after a little practice.

Bald-headed as they often are, good layers are usually tight-feathered over the rest of their bodies. The feathers generally are dry, frayed and "washed-out," and good layers are active, good feeders, and have good dispositions.

The head of a good layer is usually clean-cut, well-balanced, of medium length and depth, and the eyes are quite large and prominent. Be suspicious of the laying ability of the bird with a thick or coarse head or the bird with a crow-head.

And the back of a good layer should be wide over its entire length and free from hard fat. A narrow spring of ribs or a back that tapers decidedly or slopes sharply to the rear indicates small feeding capacity.

The body should be deep, but flock owners shouldn't be fooled into thinking that birds have body depth just because the feathers are long and loose. Depth of the body can be measured by placing the thumbs on the front end of the keel bone and the middle fingers on the rear of the keel bone. Depth of the front and rear can be measured by spanning the body from back to breast with the thumb and middle finger and sliding them along the keel and back.

If the bird is a good layer, her comb, wattles and earlobes will be large, plump, smooth and waxy. If the comb is limp, the bird may be laying, but when the comb is dried, especially at molting time, the bird is not laying.

AGRICULTURE IN INDUSTRY

By Florence C. Weed

(This is one of a series of articles showing how farm products are finding an important market in industry.)

Peaches for Fuel

Ingenious is the fuel business developed by a California man who makes a round of canning plants, collects discarded peach stones, dries them in the sun, then resells them for fireplace fuel. Scientists believe that some day important industrial products will be found in peach stones.

In colonial days, peaches were used for cider and brandy and were preserved by drying. Forsythe's famous fruit book of 1803 reports that peaches ripened from July to November and the great surplus was "applied as food to hogs."

When canning methods were perfected, the fruit grew in favor and now ranks next to the apple. From 30 to 50 million bushels are grown annually. In the Pacific states, 90 per cent of the 20-million-bushel crop is canned. Some commercial pectin is derived from the peach skins.

California, Georgia, Arkansas, North Carolina and Virginia produce peaches by the million bushels. Important areas are along the eastern and southern shores of the Great Lakes in Michigan and Ohio and around the Finger Lakes in New York. There in the spring, the heat absorbed by the lakes retards blooming and lessens the danger of frost. In the winter, the heat released from the water moderates the temperature and prevents wood and bud injury from freezing.

Nowhere, except in America, are peaches grown commercially. In England and on the continent, the fruit is a delicacy, grown under glass or trained on trellises. The results are excellent, but costly, and peaches there are a luxury only for the rich.

Rural Briefs

Water piped to the poultry range by a temporary system of old pipe or hose laid on the surface of the ground will save many hours in doing poultry chores.

Carelessness in handling eggs for market lost 5 per cent of the United States egg production in 1939. This loss represented 175,000,000 dozen eggs with a cash value of \$30,000,000.

Independent Opinion

It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.—Emerson.

FAMOUS ALL-BRAN MUFFINS, EASY TO MAKE, DELICIOUS!

They really are the most delicious muffins that ever melted a pat of butter! Made with crisp, toasted shreds of KELLOGG'S ALL-BRAN, they have a texture and flavor that have made them famous all over America.

KELLOGG'S ALL-BRAN MUFFINS
 2 tablespoons shortening
 1/4 cup sugar
 1 egg
 1 cup All-Bran
 Cream shortening and sugar; add egg and beat well. Stir in All-Bran and milk; let soak until most of moisture is taken up. Sift flour with salt and baking powder; add to first mixture and stir only until flour disappears. Fill greased muffin pans two-thirds full and bake in moderately hot oven (400° F.) about 30 minutes. Yield: 6 large muffins, 3 inches in diameter, or 12 small muffins, 2 1/4 inches in diameter.

Try these delicious muffins for dinner tonight or for tomorrow morning's breakfast. They're not only good to eat; they're mighty good for you, too. For several of these muffins will add materially to your daily supply of what physicians call "bulk" in the diet, and thus help combat the common kind of constipation that is due to lack of this dietary essential. Eat ALL-BRAN every day (either as a cereal or in muffins), drink plenty of water, and see if you don't forget all about constipation due to lack of "bulk." ALL-BRAN is made by Kellogg's in Battle Creek.

Happiness to Others

Happiness is watching others drink from springs which we have caused to rise in the desert.—B. H. Meison.

Nervous Restless Girls!

Cranky? Restless? Can't sleep? Tired easily? Because of distress of monthly functional disturbances? Then try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Pinkham's Compound is famous for relieving pain of irregular periods and cranky nervousness due to such disturbances. One of the most effective medicines you can buy for this purpose—made especially for women. WORTH TRYING!

Despised Danger

Danger comes the sooner when it is despised.—Syrus.

WHAT MAKIN'S TOBACCO STAYS PUT, ROLLS FASTER, SMOKES MILDER?

(By William H. Porter)

NO OTHER TOBACCO LIKE PRINCE ALBERT FOR MILDNESS, RICH TASTE, P.A. BURNS COOLER! IT'S THE FAST-ROLLING, EASY-FORMING BRAND, TOO—NO SPILLING, NO WASTE!

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