

**THE GOLD BRICK GAME
CONCEIVED AT SIDNEY**

(Continued from Page 4)

It was the origin of the game. This gang started with an output of thirty bricks. The first man they tried the swindle on was a banker of Hastings, Nebraska, and he was a victim for \$8,000. They saw they had an easy game. Doc Baggs and Jimmy Feen were the salesmen. They ranged far and wide and disposed of twenty-eight more bricks at prices ranging from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

The bricks were of the standard \$30,000 size. About \$100 worth of gold was used in the making. This was fused into the brick at different places, usually at the four ends and in or near the center. When the brick was submitted for examination by a prospective buyer he was told to take a sample for assay by any competent jeweler. The transaction was always carried on in secrecy. A banker or bank cashier was usually selected as a victim. He was asked if he had a gimlet or a cold chisel handy. Bankers do not usually have these implements in their offices. The seller happened to have a chisel with him. He sliced off a small piece of the gold and gave it to the victim to have tested. Or he sliced off pieces from all four corners. Of course the test proved it to be gold, and the victim bought.

Secrecy Strong Card.

The secrecy injunction was one of the strong cards in the game. The victim was picked with care. He must be a man who would not scruple to profit by another's crime. The seller must give him a plausible reason for disposing of a \$30,000 gold brick for one-third or one-half its value. He told the victim the brick was part of the loot of a train or stage robbery that had been brought to him for disposal. As the game unfolded its possibilities the crooks selected dates following some big train or express robbery for disposing of their bogus gold bricks, explaining that they were part of the loot of the robbery. This particular gang is suspected of having inspired and even participated in several robberies in order to create a market for their peculiar commodity. Be that as it may, they disposed of twenty-nine of their first output of thirty bricks among men as crooked as themselves, clothed, however, in the broadcloth of respectability and holding high heads in their respective communities. The thirtieth brick, after an eventful history, now ornaments the front of the Tobin building in Sidney, surrounded by the plebeian but honest clay bricks of that big structure.

These thirty bricks were made to order in Denver. A Larimer street Manufacturing jeweler undertook the job of turning them out, and he was an expert in his business. He obtained brass filings from an iron foundry then situated at Twelfth and Larimer streets. With the brass he mixed a certain proportion of glass, divided the mass into bricks, melted the mixture, and when it was brought to the right degree of heat he infused the gold at the designated spots. The amount of glass in the mixture was a matter of the nicest calculation. It gave the brick a ring which only an assayer possessed of a delicate sense of hearing could detect as false. For his services this wonderful manufacturing jeweler was paid \$100 a brick, and the many orders that came to him from the Sidney gang and their successors in after years laid the foundation of a fortune which his grandchildren are now enjoying.

Thirtieth Brick a Jonah

The thirtieth brick proved to be a Jonah to the Doc Baggs pirates. Twice its sale was frustrated by the annoying caution of prospective buyers who insisted on selecting a sample from spots in which it happened there was no golden plug. The gamblers dubbed it the "Hoodoo Brick" and withdrew it from the market. It was deposited in the Capitol saloon, which became their headquarters after Harberson's saloon was closed, and in the course of time its existence passed from their memory. They separated and wandered their separate ways. Johnny Barnes went to Deadwood and was caught in a crooked card deal by Wild Bill. He was a vicious, vindictive man and swore revenge. Together with some desperadoes of his type he hired Jack McCall to murder Wild Bill. Later he had a street duel with Charley Storms, without serious result to either.

Observe how fate works out its plans. Storms and Barnes met in northern Mexico in the course of their rambling pilgrimages. Storms killed Barnes and that ended the career of the man who was primarily responsible for the death of Wild Bill Hickok. Meanwhile the hoodoo brick reposed peacefully in the cellar of the Capitol saloon at Sidney.

In 1885 a Nebraska farmer, plowing a new field, uncovered what he believed was a gold brick. With visions of wealth dancing before his eyes, he carted it to the nearest town, Fremont, and submitted it for sale to his banker. The banker cut off a corner of it and took it to the town jeweler to be tested. The sample was gold—of that there was no doubt.

Scott Davis, the man who operated the treasure coach line between Sidney and Deadwood, heard of the find and went to Fremont. He declared the brick was bogus. The banker declared it was genuine. Davis chiseled off all the gold that covered the end of the brick and revealed the brass beneath.

"The hoodoo brick," many said. It wasn't the hoodoo brick, but it was time for its reappearance. A fire in the Capitol saloon brought it to light. The news reached Gus Patterson, superintendent of the American Express company at Omaha, that a gold brick had been found in the Capitol saloon and he rushed to Sidney on a special train. He thought it was one of the gold bricks lost in the great express robbery in 1882. He sent it to New York to be assayed, and there its true composition was revealed. Sadly, it was shipped back to Sidney, and when the Tobin building was erected, found a last lodging place there, a reminder of the days when the town was wild and woolly.

Take Advantage of this sale. Reduced prices will not last forever.

TRY HARPER'S FIRST

WE have secured extra clerks to give you service, come early and get the best selection.

**Weekly Bargain Saturday Sensation
In the Men's Dept. and All Over the Store**

**Day---
Saturday
Only** **88c** **HUNDREDS OF BARGAIN SPECIALS FROM ALL DEPARTMENTS**

The Greatest Bargain Event Ever

For real money-saving on dependable quality merchandise in just the things you need for your person and home this sale stands without precedent. We don't attempt to single out any one or two items and show you the savings of a few pennies. But we tell you to shop throughout this entire store in every department and then count your savings in DOLLARS. Every price ticket brings you a message of choicest merchandise greatly underprices. Heed their tale. Attend this sale.

88c Price Tickets Everywhere Tell the Story of Rare Economies

<p>PANTERS Overall Sale. 88c White's overalls for Panters and Paper Hangers.</p>	<p>SEE WHAT 88c WILL BUY</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="756 1513 1050 1706"> <p>Little Tot's Gingham -- WASH DRESSES are worth \$3.00. Size 3 to 7—Special— 88c</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1060 1513 1354 1706"> <p>Bungalow Aprons In light and dark patterns, \$3 values, special— 88c</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1365 1513 1648 1706"> <p>Canvas Slippers and Shoes Odd sizes, regular \$3.00 value, special sale— 88c</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Little Tot's Gingham -- WASH DRESSES are worth \$3.00. Size 3 to 7—Special— 88c</p>	<p>Bungalow Aprons In light and dark patterns, \$3 values, special— 88c</p>	<p>Canvas Slippers and Shoes Odd sizes, regular \$3.00 value, special sale— 88c</p>	<p>Ladies' Lisle UNION SUITS Regular \$1.25 values, special sale— 88c</p>
<p>Little Tot's Gingham -- WASH DRESSES are worth \$3.00. Size 3 to 7—Special— 88c</p>	<p>Bungalow Aprons In light and dark patterns, \$3 values, special— 88c</p>	<p>Canvas Slippers and Shoes Odd sizes, regular \$3.00 value, special sale— 88c</p>			
<p>Wooltouch COTTON PLAIDS Regular \$1.25 values. See these wonderful values, special sale— 88c yard</p>	<p>LADIES' HOSIERY White pure Silk and fibre 88c Regular \$1.98 values.</p>	<p>TWO SKIRTS FOR \$1.88 Men's \$2.50 Shirts for a Sweetening Clearance, \$1.88</p>	<p>Children's HOSE Eiffel brand, 65c values— 2 pairs for— 88c Regular \$1.30 value, 2 pairs, 88c</p>	<p>HAIR RIBBON Regular 65c, 75c yard quality, 3 yards for— 3 yards for 88c Special for Saturday.</p>	
<p>SILK GLOVES 88c \$1.48 values. Wonderful values for Saturday only.</p>	<p>Boy's WASH SUITS 88c These are wonderful values. Regular \$3, \$4 values. Odd sizes. Special Saturday.</p>	<p>Men's UNION SUITS \$1.25 values. 88c See these wonderful values. Saturday only—88c.</p>	<p>Red and White TABLE DAMASK 88c The best quality.</p>	<p>Formfit BRASSIERES 88c In Pink and White, these are \$1.50 values. Saturday Special, 88c</p>	
<p>MEN'S CAPS All sizes— 88c These are \$2.00 and \$3.00 values.</p>	<p>Green and Pink 88c Regular \$3.48 values. Special Saturday, 88c.</p>	<p>Blue and Pink Children's Sweaters 88c \$2.50 and \$3 values.</p>	<p>Boy's BLOUSES All sizes in light and dark patterns— 88c Regular 95c, \$1.25 and \$1.50 values.</p>	<p>Boy's KHAKI PANTS 88c \$1.50 and \$1.25 values, the best quality. Saturday special, 88c.</p>	

We Sell for CASH We Sell for LESS **W. R. Harper Dept. Store** **BIG STORE** **ALLIANCE, NEBR.** **We Sell for CASH We Sell for LESS**