

THE SMOKY YEARS

By ALAN LE MAY W.N.U. Release

INSTALLMENT 10
THE STORY SO FAR:

Dusty King and Lew Gordon had built up a vast string of ranches in the West. 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

CHAPTER XIII—Continued

But now the scar-mouthed man spoke suddenly; from his position at one side he had dared flick his eyes to the door. "Walk, look out! Don't turn! Watch this buzzard, but wheel back and stand by me!"

Into the front of the bar two men had come; they came striding back the length of the room; their spurs ringing brokenly. Roper did not see their guns come out. But suddenly the weapons of both of them appeared in their hands, smoothly and easily, from no place.

The two men were Lee Harnish and Tex Long.

Tex Long's 45 clicked in the palm of his hand as it came to full cock. He said, "Howdy, Bill. A spic girl just brought us word. Dave Shannon and Hat Crick Tommy are up the street. And Dry Camp Pierce."

"Gosh," Lee Harnish said, "we've been hunting you for two months! You want us to blast these Indians, boss?"

Bill Roper drew a deep breath, and grinned. At first he could not even appreciate that here, at last, were the leaders he needed for his great raid. All he could think of was that he had been relieved from certain death; and he knew that life was good.

CHAPTER XIV

The tribute implied by the re-gathering of the wild bunch leaders was one of the most extraordinary things that had ever happened in Bill Roper's life. There was not much to their story. Driven out of Texas on the eve of Bill Roper's victory, for a while they had gone their separate ways. But gradually they had drifted together again, in the Indian nations, at Dodge, in the northern cow camps. With Cleve Tanner broken in Texas, and the roots cut from under Ben Thorpe's organization by the loss of his breeding grounds, the outlaw riders found themselves unwilling to leave their work unfinished. So at last they had come looking for Roper—and had found him.

The first thing was to get them out of there. He named as rendezvous a lonely shanty on Fork Creek.

Roper himself was the last to ride out of Miles City. Seasoned night riders though these men might be, with names now famous the length of the trail, most of them were youngsters still. No one of them could be trusted not to get a skinful of liquor, and go gunning for Lasham's men on his own hook.

Roper was relieved, therefore, upon riding into the Fork Creek rendezvous in the dreary February twilight, to find his Texas men already waiting for him there. They were eating fresh beef, but their own, as Roper came into the little cabin, stamping the snow off his boots.

Lee Harnish looked sheepish. "Say, I forgot something. I got a letter for you here."

Roper took the worn envelope and stood turning it over in his hands. The date showed it to be three weeks old—no great age, everything considered. But what took hold of him, so that for a full minute he dared not break the seal, was that the letter was from Jody Gordon.

Roper ripped open the envelope. The whole note covered no more than half a page; but as he folded it and put it into a pocket, his hands were shaking in a way that would have cost him his life if he had been walking into a gunfight then. There was a long silence.

With a visible effort, Roper pulled himself together. Briefly he told them what his new wild bunch had done.

"But we haven't even scratched the surface," he finished. "Unless we hit Walk Lasham quick and hard, Thorpe will get his balance again, and reach his roots back into Texas; and all the work we did down there will go for nothing."

"Me," Tex Long said, "I aim to swing with you, and try to finish up what we begun. But, way I see it, the layout up here is terrible bad, for our style of work."

"There isn't any profit in the way I figured," Roper admitted. "I've been taking a peasear up along the Canadian border; I figure it's an easy drive. If you criminals are willing to come on and take one more crack at Thorpe and Lasham—"

"There's no one beyond the border that's needing any stock," Dry Camp Pierce said gloomily.

"Dry Camp," Bill Roper said, "I'm thinking of the tribes."

There was a moment's silence.

"Granting that Canada's full of war paint," Tex Long said; "how the devil—"

"I've talked to Iron Dog."

Every one of them, each in his own way, pricked up his ears at that. Iron Dog was a famous warrior chief of the Gros Ventre Sioux. Ragged and starving, his decimated band driven far out of their home country, Iron Dog no longer was the stubbornly resisting force which had once made his name. But though he was broken and helpless now, remnants of his leadership re-

mained; his influence extended over many bands, and more than one tribe.

"I don't hold with dealing with red niggers, much," Dave Shannon said. "These bucks are forced out of their ranges without any deal made whereby they get fed," Roper said. "Half of them are in as pitiful a state of starvation as you ever saw. A big part of the blame for that is on Walk Lasham. Now I aim to square the deal."

"I already made us a rendezvous with Iron Dog, before I knew you were in on this," Bill Roper told them now. "Inside of a month Iron Dog will be camped on the Milk River with anyway seven or eight bands."

"Seven or eight bands!" Tex Long shouted at him. "My God, there'll be worse than a thousand Indians on the Milk!"

"A thousand, hell!" Roper said. "If there aren't that many buck warriors alone, I'll eat the beef myself! The men in this little cabin were not easily surprised, and less easily shocked or awed; but their usually unrevealing faces now gave them away.

"God Almighty!" Dave Shannon said. It was almost a prayer.

"He's done it now," Hat Crick Tommy said slowly. "You know

left her home to ride 500 miles to warn him. Walk Lasham, manager of Thorpe's holdings in Montana, saw Roper sitting alone and unarmed in a saloon one day. Gun in hand, Lasham prepared to kill his hated antagonist.

months their chuck wagons will be heading out, and the deep grass will be full of their riders. We have to move and move quick."

"It might be," Dry Camp Pierce declared himself, "it just could be done." A hard gleam was coming into the old rustler's wary eyes. "And if it can—great God! There's never been nothing like this!"

The others seemed to have had the breath knocked out of them by the unheard-of scope, the bold daring, the headlong all-or-nothing character of the plan.

"This is bigger than the Texas raids," Tex Long said wonderingly. "This is bigger than anything has ever been!"

Suddenly Dave Shannon smacked his thigh with his huge hand. "By God, I believe it'll bust 'em!"

Over the pack of outlawed youngsters had come a wave of that fanatic enthusiasm which sometimes sways men as they face the impossible, but Roper, strangely, was unable to share it. The great raid he had planned all winter now seemed futile—a plan senseless and cold.

"Bill," said Lee Harnish, "what's the matter with you? You got chills and fever, or something?"

Roper spoke to Harnish alone, as if he had forgotten the others. "That letter was from Jody Gordon," he said.

"Bad news, son?"

"I don't know. She wants me to come to Ogallala."

"When?"

"Now—right away."

"What for? Does she say?"

"She says she needs me; she says she needs me bad, and right away. I guess she does, all right. If she didn't, I don't believe she'd ever write to me."

The faces of the wild bunch riders were expressionless, noncommittal; Roper knew they wouldn't have much to say. They were youngsters still—all except Pierce; but their faces were carved lean and hard by long riding, and a lot of that riding had been for him.

He stood up, shaking his shoulders. "Get up your ponies."

"We pulling out? Tonight yet?"

"You bet your life we are. Ought to make Red Horse Springs by midnight."

"And after that," Harnish said slowly, "what is it, Bill? Is it Ogallala?"

Once more the silence, while they waited for Bill.

"It's the raid," Roper said.

what happens when you throw that many loose Indians together? You got a war on your hands, by God! They'll come whooping down Montana—they'll tear the country wide open! The whole frontier will go up in a burst of smoke. Nothing'll ever stop 'em, once they get together like that!"

"One thing will."

"What will?"

"Grub," said Roper.

"That might be so," Dave Shannon admitted. "I never yet see an Indian go to war on a full stomach."

A tent had come into that dark cabin; they were realizing now that they stood in the shadow of events of a magnitude they had not dreamed. In the quiet, Bill Roper's hands kept creasing and recreasing the letter from Jody Gordon. A faint dampness showed on his forehead, but his fingers acted cold and awkward.

"There's five of us here," Tex Long said. "You expect us to just suddenly feed every Indian in creation?"

"I've got twenty-seven riders waiting to throw in with us at the first word."

"Twenty-seven riders? Where?"

"All over Montana. What do you think I did all winter? Holed up like a she-bear?"

Silence again, while they all studied Roper.

"How many you figure to move?" Tex Long asked at last.

Roper's voice was so low they could hardly hear his words. "Between twenty and thirty thousand head."

Tex Long threw his hat against the roof poles in a gesture of complete impatience. "Dead of winter," he said; "maybe having to fight part of the time; why, thirty-four cowboys couldn't drive—"

"We don't have to handle this stock like fat beef," Roper reminded him. "We don't have to pull up for quicksand, or stampede losses, or high water. If a hundred head get swept down a river, what the hell! Some different Indians will get hold of 'em downstream. Working that way, hard and fast, thirty cowboys can move every head in Montana!"

"We're terrible short of time," Tex Long said.

"I know it; in another couple of



"Now I aim to square the deal."

CHAPTER XV

Lew Gordon came stumping across the corral of his little Miles City house, his spurs ringing at every stride. His big hands, rope-hardened and thickened at the knuckles, swung loose at his sides; but his face had the look of a man beset.

Opening the back door of the house he sent a great roar through the walls—"Jody! Jody, where are you?"

She answered him, and Lew Gordon went to find her.

"What's the meaning of this?" was his greeting as his daughter came running to him through the house. "You were supposed to stay in Ogallala!"

Jody threw her arms about his neck and pulled his head down to kiss him; but Lew Gordon was not to be put off.

"That horse wrangler just brought me word that you was here," he said. "There's a pretty kettle of soap, when some horse wrangler knows more about where a man's daughter is at than he knows himself!"

"Dad, will you please sit down? I tell you, I want to talk to you!"

"Oh, all right," Lew Gordon flopped into a chair, jabbed his spurs into the floor at long range, and tore off another huge mouthful of beef.

"There are two pieces of bad news," Jody said now. "First thing, Ben Thorpe has cut under us in the bidding for the government contracts, at Dodge."

A spark leaped into Lew Gordon's eyes; under the pressure of the last two years he had turned edgy and garrulous, as if his mind had become hasty on the trigger, now that his hands were idle. "I might have known it!" his big voice boomed. "Those infernal—"

"The loss of those contracts is going to hurt," Jody said; "I've brought the books up into fair shape, and it looks to me as if King-Gordon is starting the worst year in history. If the losses go on piling up the way they are—"

Jody Gordon came and sat on the arm of her father's chair. "There was a man rode up to Ogallala from Dodge City," she said. "He brought some very peculiar news, and I don't like it at all."

"If that renegade Colorado outfit think they're going to—" Lew Gordon began.

"This was a Bill Roper man," Jody said.

Lew Gordon checked as suddenly as if he had been struck across the face.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Jackets! They Play Important Role in the Fashion Picture

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



According to fashion's say-so, you must be smartly jacketed everywhere you go. Your play suits, your daytime ensembles, evening dresses and afternoon frocks are all supposed to have complementary jackets, with a few "extras" to be held in readiness to report for duty at the beck and call of time and occasion. So no matter how many jackets you have they will be none too many to include in a fashionable wardrobe.

In a program of interchangeable jackets the secret's out, as to how to go victoriously through the mid-season stretch between summer and actual fall with "flying colors" so far as keeping a well-dressed appearance is concerned. Every woman wants to maintain a refreshing up-to-the-moment look in summer hangover apparel until autumn styles are set. This is quite a "trick" in the art of dressing. Interchangeable jackets that flaunt "the latest" in styling details is an answer.

With the thought in mind that the attractiveness of the jacket fashions pictured might inspire you in a sewing spree venture, we are especially calling your attention to the several pen and ink sketches, selected because the numbers are really very easy to make. You can buy up such pretty remnants at this time of year, so reasonable and with the investment of a little time and effort you will find yourself the happy possessor of jackets that, ingenious interchangeably, will set new tempo for your frocks in keeping with every move of fashion.

Referring to the pen-and-ink sketches, the ones at top to right

and left, are of the casual type for town and travel wear. For these remnants of tweed will work up to good advantage and if you want to give them a "last word" touch, embroider a big scroll monogram somewhere about them—on pocket or sleeve or some other strategic point.

Outstanding on the season's program is the sleeveless long-torso jacket, known as the jerkin. It is the schoolgirl's idol and adored by sportswomen. The jerkin sketched at lower right is easy to make, easy to wear! Use bright corduroy or suede cloth. Jerkin patterns are available anywhere they sell patterns.

Coolie coats, the popular choice for evening wear, are ever so easy to make for they require little or no fitting. The "coolie" sketched at lower left is a "perfect little treasure." The material used in this instance is prettily embroidered in quaint little posies. Handsome brocade or metal cloth yields beautifully to the coolie treatment. Women of discriminating taste love coolie wraps made of fine wool or silk crepe in subtle pastel greens, violet shades, or Chinese reds. The newest thing is to embellish them with a restricted amount of sequin or bead embroidery. Note the model in the lower oval inset. In this instance the sheer crepe is in a soft stone blue, the embroidery done in silver threads and beadwork.

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

Sun Hat and Bag



Here is a practical sun-hat and bag that should interest beach strollers who want to protect their complexion from burning sun rays. The large sun hat worn so appealingly by the young lady as she poses in the picture at the top acts as a perfect "freckle fender."

In the pose below you see how this huge brim folds to pancake size so as to fit into the outer pocket of a made-to-match rubber-lined beach bag. This hat has a navy blue brim with red and white striped crown and the color combination is repeated in the bag.

Accent Is on Luxury Blouse Type for Fall

The blouse program as mapped out for fall and winter will use much luxurious fabric. Pastel metal cloth made up in classic simplicity is one of the happy outlooks. Matching the pastel of the metal weave with crepe in identical tone presents endless possibilities for achieving charming effect. In some instances a bit of the crepe used for the skirt is repeated in stylizing accents on the metal blouse.

Wide use will be made of deep-toned satins and they will be made up similar to the manner suggested above for metal weaves. Silk jersey is also a favored medium. Used in vivid reds, greens or blues to wear with black suits, the new jersey blouses are stunning.

Drastic Changes Seen In New Fall Silhouette

Here are changes you will find as the new silhouettes make their debut this fall. There will be very few if any set-in sleeves. The trend is to deep armhole effects in dolman sleeves, cut all in one with the bodice or blouse top. Bulk above the waistline and slimming of skirts is noted.

Everything is being done to accent lower waistlines, especially with inset belts. Beltless dresses are very new in style stressing sophisticated simplicity.

There will be hosts of pleated fashions that emerge from long-torso lines with pleats manipulated to retain slenderized lines.

Chiffon House Coats

Torrid days call for cool apparel, a need which is filled in very lovely house coats made of pastel chiffons. You can bring the summer to a very happy conclusion wearing one of the very lovely chiffon creations.

FARM TOPICS

CARE ESSENTIAL IN FILLING SILO

Dry, Unpacked Materials Spoil Readily.

By PROF. R. C. MILLER
(Agricultural Engineering Department, Ohio State University.)

Most effective results in avoiding spoiled silage are obtained by taking proper precautions in silo construction and by harvesting the silage crop at the right period.

In general, silage spoils because it comes in contact with air after it is placed in the silo. Defects in silo construction, use of material which is too dry to pack well in the silo, and too much speed in filling or too little tramping of the material are the chief agencies that permit air to ruin the silage.

Every type of silo whether it be a permanent upright type, a temporary fence structure, or a trench below ground surface can be built to preserve silage effectively if the material placed in the silo is moist enough to pack well or if water enough is added to permit thorough packing of drier material.

The rule of thumb method for determining the correct moisture content for plants going into a silo is that it should be possible to press or wring water from the chopped material. If that cannot be done, water should be added. Plants with 60 to 75 per cent moisture are at the right stage for silage. Materials placed in the silo while too green may result in considerable losses of juice and produce silage which is unpalatable to livestock.

The spoilage of silage at the top of an above-ground silo or at the end of a trench silo cannot be avoided entirely without prohibitive cost. Repacking at intervals of a few days after the silo is filled or putting chopped, wet straw or other material on top of the silage will reduce the loss.

Considerable silage is lost while the silo is being emptied because too great an area of surface is exposed in feeding. This loss can be reduced by feeding from half the area of a surface silo at a time or by taking a slice only a few inches thick from the end of a trench silo.

Egg Production Reflects Kind, Quantity of Feed

Efficient egg production is influenced by the amount of feed it is possible to induce each laying hen to eat daily, according to George P. McCarthy, extension poultry husbandman at Texas A. & M. Normally one hen will eat about 80 pounds of feed a year, approximately half of which should be mash and one half grain for best results.

Egg mash, or laying mash, is the important portion of the feed for hens that are expected to lay. Laying mash is a combination of feeds which are high in protein and other ingredients essential for keeping the hens in good health, as well as for producing a maximum number of eggs.

Laying mash must constitute one-half, or 40 pounds, of the yearly ration. The usual mixtures for laying rations comprise 100 pounds protein supplement and 200 pounds of ground home-grown grains to make a suitable mash mixture. The grains may be corn, maize or hegari in combination with oats.

One hundred laying hens will consume about 3 1/2 tons of home grown grains a year, McCarthy adds. If the net income from the flock is figured on the basis of increased return from home produced grain, the producer will find that he sold his grain at about double the market price. In some cases even greater return can be made.

Farm Notes

The 25 per cent of the people in the United States living on the land are furnishing 50 per cent of the increase in the country's population, according to the bureau of agricultural economics.

A dairy bull, after he is two years old, should be kept a little on the thin side rather than fat. He will be more fit for breeding, and this slight limitation of feed need not injure his growth.

The U. S. department of commerce has ceased publication of statistical information on exports of American farm produce and will keep such information secret because of the war.

An effective farm windbreak should have several kinds of trees, including evergreens.

Contrary to many beliefs, the tractor can work more efficiently on curves in farming on the contour than in working up and down the hill.

Good poultrymen will see that their birds are well fed on growing mash, whole corn, whole oats and green feed during the late summer and fall.

Too-Thin People Gain On a High-Calory Diet



Swim Suit Reveals Bony Figure.

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