

# Youth Rides West

By Will Irwin  
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## THE STORY SO FAR

On their way to the newly-discovered "gold diggings" at Cottonwood, Colo., in the early Seventies, Robert Gilson, easterner, who tells the story, and his partner, Buck Hayden, veteran miner, secretly witness hand-to-hand a stagecoach and make away with an express box. Among the victims are a young woman, Mrs. Deane, and Mrs. Barnaby, who intends to start a restaurant at the camp. Gilson meets Marcus Handy, an editor on his way to set up the Cottonwood Courier. Arriving at Cottonwood, they enter a saloon, where an altercation between two men, one a pickpocket, arouses the mob to demand the lynching of the latter.

## CHAPTER III—Continued

"Drop that rope!" came a voice, a voice with ring and carry, which seemed to dominate all the noise. He who spoke stood in the door. Silence fell again—silence and quiet. It seemed that everyone froze in the midst of whatever he was doing—all except the newcomer. He was a tall man with a heavy brown mustache and imperial. He wore a black slouch hat of the G. A. B. pattern; and for all his height he moved with quick, flowing certainty. He did not wait for that mood of frozen hesitation to break; in two strides he had crossed to one of the empty chairs pushed against the wall when the players dropped their game. He stepped into it, stepped just as lightly to the table, his feet crunching on chips and the spilled stacks of twenty-dollar gold pieces. As the silence began to break into sinister mutterings, he spoke again:

"Bring that rope here—and that prisoner, too!"  
Momentary silence again. He stood, his feet planted apart, a drawn revolver in his left hand—which I thought odd. It rested so close to his body, its muzzle a little lowered. His eyes seemed to take us all in. The leader of the mob stood alone in the middle of the floor. He spoke suddenly:

"We'll hang a city marshal as quick as a pickpocket," he said. "Boys, bring on your rope. It's long enough for two."  
"Drop that rope!" came from the man on the table, shifting his eyes, shifting slightly the muzzle of his gun. There the leader made his mistake. The muzzle was turned away from him: he had an instant to act. His hand went to his hip. In the same instant I had a glimpse of a dozen forms beginning a prudent drop toward the floor.

I never saw the man on the table change the direction of his muzzle from the back door to the center of the floor. The motion was too quick. I was only aware that his right hand, held flat, had brushed across his gun. The "bang" sent the crowd to the floor as a strike in bowling drops the tenpins. The leader had his gun out, and no more. It dropped clattering to the floor. His left hand went to his right biceps; and he sank slowly onto one knee.

A tall, rangy man with a hat like a marshal's pushed through the door. "Charlie," said the marshal, "take that prisoner there. You with the rope, come here." The man with the rope, walking unsteadily, jerkily, crossed the floor. The audience was now beginning to get up; and the marshal spoke again, and again seemed to freeze everyone into a grotesque statue.

"Is there anybody else wants to shoot?" he inquired. No one responded. "All right," he continued. "There's been no lynching in this camp yet, and there won't be. Get that? Somebody fix up the man I just shot. He's only winged in the arm. He cast his eye about again. "Your blood was up, boys. Nothin' like a little blood to cool blood." His face had been as blank as a stone wall except for the steady blaze of his eyes. But now he smiled, and I liked the way his eyes crinkled. He leaped down from the table, turned his back deliberately on the crowd, began to strip the belt from the prisoner's arms, to snap on handcuffs. The bubble broke out again. Three minutes before, it had an animal note. Now, it sparkled with laughter. Before the marshal, the deputy and their now voluble prisoner passed out of the door, the poker-players were sorting out chips and piles of gold pieces at the tables, the bartenders were taking

orders, the stairs were black with an ascending crowd.  
"He is sure a shootin' man," remarked Buck in a tone of deep admiration. "Who might it be?"  
"Town marshal," replied Jim Huffaker briefly. "Name, Chris McGrath. You're right, he shoots."  
"Who's mayor of this camp, anyhow?" inquired Buck.  
"Ain't none," replied Huffaker. "A town marshal like that is all the mayor we need— There! There's our man!" he suddenly broke off, darting past the poker tables and laying hands on an individual who had just entered.

After all this space of years, the figure of Bill Talbot, who wanted to sell his claim, has grown a little dim in mind; he was to float into my life for a day only, and float out again never to reappear. Nor do I remember many details of the long dicker which he, Buck and Jim Huffaker conducted in a comparatively quiet corner of the Black Jack.

"I suppose your title is O. K.?" inquired Buck.  
"Good as the gold you'll dig," said Talbot.  
"That's got to be proved," said Buck. "Spese we kin look into that after I've seen the claim?"  
Now watching this transaction idly from the outside, I had perceived that Talbot was eager to be gone. I was not surprised, therefore, when he said, and I felt, with sincerity:

"I wanted to be travelin' tomorrow mornin'. That's why I'm sellin' so cheap."  
"Nothin' goes until I see your title's right," said Buck stubbornly. Here Huffaker came in with a solution.  
"Well, if Chris McGrath says it's right and sound, you'll believe him, won't you?"  
"What's he got to do with it?" asked Buck.  
"The whole works," said Huffaker. "He registers minin' claims, too."  
"Mebbe," allowed Buck.

So forth we went under the burning stars and through the thinning crowd, to find Town Marshal McGrath. We ran him to earth in the tiny Comstock Lode saloon, his foot on the bar rail, his hand on a glass of water.

In two minutes the marshal had certified unofficially but with certainty that No. 32 placer, held by William Talbot was a bona fide claim without encumbrance. As we left, Huffaker asked us about our lodging for the night. That question had been dimly troubling me all the evening. Our blankets were with our packs in the public corral. Sleeping there, on the wet, trampled ground, seemed out of the question.

"I sleep people in my shack," said Huffaker, "keep up the fire all night



The "Bang" Sent the Crowd to the Floor as a Strike in Bowling Drops the Ten Pins.

so you don't need blankets." We found, indeed, a dozen men already snoring under the table of the restaurant.

"Won't cost you nothin', secin's we done so much business—good night," whispered our host as he departed to his quarters in the rear.  
I threw myself down by the stove of the Golden Eagle and, with one side resting and the other freezing, slept until the cook woke me by stirring the fire for an early breakfast. In spite of youth, mountain air and fatigue, I

## Hard and Soft Solders

Soldering operations are classified, according to the composition of the alloy used, as either soft soldering or hard soldering. Solders of lead and tin in varying amounts, are known as soft solders, while those of high melting points, composed of varying amounts of copper, brass, zinc, silver and gold, are known as hard solders. The soft solder commonly used is made up of half lead and half tin, and melts at a temperature of 370 degrees Fahrenheit. The more lead there is in this alloy, the higher is its melting point, and an alloy composed of one part tin and two parts lead melts at 441 degrees Fahrenheit.

## E. W.'s Observation

I have noted this a long time: I visit at a home, and am introduced to a grandmother, an aunt, a niece, and always the kin of the wife.—E. W. Howe's Monthly.

was a little time in falling asleep—these had been the most crowded and excited three days of my life.  
"Cramped in every joint by one night on the hard floor, Buck Talbot and I rolled out and breakfasted by candlelight. When we started forth the sun had risen for the world below, but for us it shone as yet only on the white-rimmed peaks above. From the snows of the peaks the breeze came in puffs. A little shrill and piercing at first touch, once you had flung your lungs it whipped your blood like wine.  
The public corral, where we had left our stock and packs, had as by magic changed over night. The piles of boxes and barrels which had risen above us when we unpacked and hitched in the twilight, had assumed new shapes; and other piles were growing at the hands of the freighters. The very horses, mules and jacks seemed recent arrivals. As we baited, as we began to rub down our burros with gunny-sacking in order to make them presentable for sale, two mud-spattered men on blowing, lathered, drooping horses spurred into the corral. Without introduction or ado, they halted us.

"Where's these galena locations?" asked the nearest.  
"Up your way—up the hill!" said Buck, scarcely glancing from his work. With no further question, they jerked the savage Spanish bits in the lathered mouths of their weary mounts, whirled and spurred straight over the muddy ground, uphill.  
Now, Bill Talbot was with us. The dicker finished, he saddled, mounted and started to inspect that end of our bargain which most interested us, Talbot's claim lay a mile up the creek; but the road was so jammed and miry that we elected to take a side trail across the hill, which here started abruptly from the road and presently flattened out into a little plateau. My eyes were searching, as they had all the morning been searching half consciously. I dropped deliberately behind Buck and Bill Talbot. And suddenly my nerve centers gave a jump, my cheeks a little tingle. There was a sign, painted with the cross-line of the "N" turned the wrong way, with the stems of the capitals at all angles from the perpendicular. "Mrs. Barnaby's Boarding House, Open for Business Next Tuesday," it read. Behind it stood a tent, the posts and ridgepoles in place, but the cover flopping in a state of collapse.

Bent down, earnestly and efficiently driving a tent-peg with the butt of a hatchet, was a form which I recognized as that of Mrs. Barnaby. In the rear, a big sheet-iron cook stove, set up in the open field, emitted a faint ghost of smoke from its abbreviated pipe as though a fire which served to get breakfast was now dying out. Beside it were great packing boxes, some open, some still nailed shut, and all, in spite of the conspicuous sign, "Handle With Care," lying as though some freighter had rolled them from the top of his load, and simply let them drop. Over the nearest box, head and shoulders half hidden, stooped the figure of another woman. As I looked, she dropped back on one knee, her arms full of tin plates, and faced me. It was Mrs. Deane. And my first glorious impression was of her hair—brown, chestnut-brown with the same light in the beating sun of the morning, that one sees in molasses candy when it is being pulled—a tawny undertone which glistens.

I had jerked up the head of my protesting horse, was about to give spurt and to retreat in confusion, when she looked suddenly our way. Her face lightened with a smile in which I read recognition, and she dropped her load into a box. Then she rose; took a step toward me. Embarrassment ran across me in a hot flush; I felt for an instant as I did when, at my first dancing lesson, they told me to put my arm around the little lady.

She, on her part, as swaying across the uneven ground toward me, her eyes most friendly, but her smile with that same reserve. Now she stopped and held up, palm outward, a pair of strong but slender hands. I noted with one eye that the left had a ring on the third finger; and, as she dropped them with a pretty flutter, that it was a plain gold band.

"I won't offer to shake hands," she was saying; "they're disgraceful with this unpacking. So you landed safely! I hope you staked your claim?"  
"I think we staked," I said, my embarrassment beginning to vanish, to yield to gloomy interior reflections on that direct of gold. "And you arrived safely?"

"Yes, we're going to have a home soon, Mrs. Barnaby and I! We've been sleeping under the edge of the canvas so far—but it's been great fun! Fortunately, it hasn't rained."  
Mrs. Barnaby at this moment rose up from the tent peg, stood with one hand in the hollow of her back, and broke into the conversation—broke in like a fool.

"We're goin' to—maybe. We're goin' to if they deliver them pans and tinies—that freightin' company robbin' you right at the start and then leavin' out the pans and tinies, and goodness knows what's become of the carpenter I hired at ten dollars a day just to put the floor down which I could do myself—stampeded like a fool to the galena diggin's. I guess—and that sack of flour—" It flowed on, without punctuation or grammar; and from it all I gathered that Mrs. Barnaby's stake-out was merely temporary. She was erecting her tent on the bare ground, taking chances that there would be no rain until the pile of lumber stacked in between the boxes became a floor and a tent frame. "Anyhow, we open on Thursday if they eat off the stove," concluded Mrs. Barnaby.

"I hope I may come to see you when you get—settled," I said in parting. I had hesitated for the proper word, and when I came out with that "settled," suggestive of moving time in old, or-

dered New England scenes, Mrs. Deane laughed. Her laugh—I had noticed that before—ran a little gamut, played a half-tone. But the veil of inscrutable reserve behind her eyes had thickened, became momentarily a curtain. The gamut of her laugh died away on a grace note; and "I hope so," was all she replied. She went back to the boxes then, and I had to remember, as I withdrew and mounted, that it would be bad manners to stare at her over my shoulder. However, as I gathered rein and rode away, I did myself the luxury of another look. She was in her graceful, half-kneeling pose beside the boxes; the morning sun was making tawny gold of her hair.

## CHAPTER IV

Everyone who has picked wild berries knows the greedy joy in that innocent sport. You are getting something for nothing. And each bush, as you approach it, holds out glittering promises of a branch so bent and loaded that you have only to scrape it in order to fill your pail. Gold-digging, for the first three or four days at least, raises the same set of emotions, vastly intensified. All day long, Buck dug and I rocked, or I dug and Buck rocked. My feet were first wet through with standing in the polluted stream, and then, when I worked from the bank, congealed to chunks of ice by the shrill spring wind. Nevertheless, I worked with enthusiasm. My reward was that period late in the day when we assembled the scrapings from the rifles of our washer and panned them down still finer with our skillet and an old dishpan. Then at last the tiny flecks of gold began to glitter in the yellow mud. On the second day I even found a nugget about twice as big as a buckshot. This Buck let me keep as a souvenir; after all these years I have it yet.

It was brutally hard work. I thought that our struggles on the road had toughened me for anything; but when I woke on the second morning, muscles which I did not know I possessed creaked and ached their protest. My hands looked and felt like inflated, red blisters, and my wet clothes rubbed me raw in a dozen places.

Above and below us along the stream, other men in groups of two and three toiled with the same contracted monotony. And, meantime, just about the shoulder of the hill lay hidden the fascination of Cottonwood camp. By day, I could hear in rattles and roars, broken now and then by a louder sound of whose cause I could only speculate as I dug and rocked, rocked and dug.

It was by night, however, that the sounds and glimpses of Cottonwood became most alluring to youth and loneliness. On the second night, after we had stowed away our bacon and coffee, I had washed up, shaved, and brushed my hair, with the intention of visiting camp. Buck had spoken suddenly from the corner of our eight-by-twelve cabin, where he was mending a splintered shovel handle with wire, to ask:

"What're you up to?"  
"Thought I'd take a look at the camp before I turned in," I said.  
"Grand way to wash gold," remarked Buck. "Do your work all week and lay off like a Christian Saturday night and Sunday, or you'll never get ahead in this life."  
And though ours was a partnership, I had by now so completely yielded to the guidance of Buck in all things practical, that I accepted the rebuke with docility and turned in instead—to think, until I fell into dreamless sleep, of the camp and especially of that hillside where a boarding house built by my stand open for business.

On the third night, I forced from Buck an answer to a question which he had hitherto evaded.  
"How much are we taking out?" I asked.  
"First day, 'bout ten dollars. Second day wasn't as good. Today's a little better."  
"Apeee?" I asked.  
"Nope. Together."  
"That's about day wages," said I. "Won't we do any better than that?"  
"Oh, cert—if we strike a pocket," replied Buck. "A lot better. There was one good run of sand up in the Idaho diggin's that yielded sixty thousand dollars before she panned out."

I choked back my answer. Speaking generally, Buck was a pessimist. All the way to Cottonwood, he had never packed and started without expressing his certain conviction that the special obstacle of the day—whether mud, snow or steep grades—would plumb wreck us before night. By way

of compensation, he became a sappy optimist in face of a prospect. Though he usually took pains to conceal his hopes from me, Buck expected any day to break into a pocket. He had seen others do it; why not he?  
Now I, who had laughed inwardly at Buck's dismal prophecies of disaster on the way to Cottonwood—toward the main object of this expedition, I was the pessimist. I could not yet believe in my soul the fact that these picturesque rocks of the mountains held wealth in chemical solution. I had

come for adventure. I did not yet consider myself a citizen of the West; I still figured as a spectator at the drama, not an actor. Which may serve to introduce all there is to tell about me, Robert Gilson.

Tracing it back, I realize that the first impulse which sent me adventuring came one night in Holworthy hall during my senior year, and from Harry Tilden. He was a junior, and of a different crowd; in those days at Harvard we were very particular about our classes and crowds. Until that night, Tilden had been to me only a shadowy figure. It was ordained that he should for a moment blaze into a reality and then fade back into the shadows. That night I dropped into Harrison's room on some errand as trifling as borrowing a book. I found a rum-punch steaming on the table; and on the couch lounged Tilden, a big, vital figure of a Californian, cursing the dormitory cat. Some phrase of his caught my attention. I forgot my errand and listened.

## Removal Justified

Wife—I took the recipe for this cake out of the cook book.

Hub (sampling the soggy thing)—You did perfectly right. It never should have been put in.

## Frog Farm on Large Scale

One of the largest frog farms in the country is under construction near Denton, Texas. Several dams are being built and a low, swampy region, already plentiful with frogs, is being further stocked. The frogs will be raised for Texas and other markets. One of the preliminary operations was the draining of the lakes to get rid of fish, a menace to frogs. Several miles of fence will be built round the lakes to keep out snakes, another enemy of frogs. The several lakes will be used for frogs of different ages.—Indianapolis News.

## Recent Investigations show that nearly eighty varieties of mushrooms are poisonous.

Whoever can do as he pleases, commands when he retreats.—Cornellie.

## Their Warring

"Which is the way to— My start! What in the world are those children getting and getting about?" amazedly exclaimed a motorist who had halted his car in the big road to inquire his way. "They will kill each other with those clubs and stones."

"Aw, I reckon not," replied Gap Johnson of Humpton Ridge, who was interrogated. "They're my children and Gabe Giggery's, about half and half, and they 'pear to be putting on their regular monthly grudge battle."—Kansas City Star.

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"Husstockings" as a term for those going in for an overdose of learning, dates to an Eighteenth century literature.

Good men can more easily see through bad men than the latter can the former.—Richter.

Just who is this Gilson fellow, anyway? What's he doing in this rough country?



As I Looked She Dropped Back on One Knee, Her Arms Full of Plates, and Faced Me.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## Belief That Vikings Gave Name to London

The origin of the name of London has puzzled many historians. Londinium is first mentioned by Tacitus, a Roman author, in A. D. 61. He says it is "a place greatly celebrated for the number of its merchants and the abundance of its supplies."

There are many proofs in English and Swedish museums of the intimate intercourse between England and Scandinavia in early times, an intercourse that has probably gone on uninterruptedly for about 6,000 years. It may be conjectured that early Vikings from the south of Sweden ventured across the water and sailed up the mouth of the Thames and found a grove, which in Swedish is "lund," on the banks of

the river, where later on the Roman Londinium arose.  
The invaders called the place "Lund," from the Scandinavian "offen-lund," or sacred grove, says a writer in Notes and Queries. The name was later corrupted into "Lond."  
Hard and Soft Solders  
Soldering operations are classified, according to the composition of the alloy used, as either soft soldering or hard soldering. Solders of lead and tin in varying amounts, are known as soft solders, while those of high melting points, composed of varying amounts of copper, brass, zinc, silver and gold, are known as hard solders. The soft solder commonly used is made up of half lead and half tin, and melts at a temperature of 370 degrees Fahrenheit. The more lead there is in this alloy, the higher is its melting point, and an alloy composed of one part tin and two parts lead melts at 441 degrees Fahrenheit.

## All Bermuda Islands of Coral Formation

To many persons Bermuda's hundred odd islands are a dot on the map. In reality, Bermuda lies about 700 miles southeast of New York and about 600 miles directly east of Charleston, S. C. The extreme length of the archipelago is about 26 miles, varying in width from three-quarters of a mile to three miles. The principal islands are five in number—the mainland, St. George's, St. David's, Somerset and Ireland.

Just when Bermuda was created we do not know. Upon the top of a hidden sea mountain—said to be 15,000 feet high—millions upon millions of tiny sea creatures erected a mass of coral through long ages past. Up through the waves they built

## Phone Pests in Mexico

Parrots and monkeys are causing the telephone company in parts of Mexico great trouble and expense. After dark large numbers of these tree dwellers appropriate the wires that traverse the thinly settled parts of the country and play on them to such an extent that the service is badly crippled at times. Their weight has caused some lines to snap, with the result that miles of heavier wire have had to be strung.

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