

# The Blazed Trail

By STEWART EDWARD WHITE

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## Chapter II Continued

When Helen Thorpe read this she cried. Things had gone wrong that morning, and an encouraging word would have helped her. The somber tone of her brother's communication threw her into a fit of the blues from which for the first time she saw her surroundings in a depressing and distasteful light. And yet he had written as he did with the kindest possible motives.

Thorpe had the misfortune to be one of those individuals who, though careless of what people in general may think of them, are in a corresponding degree sensitive to the opinion of the few they love. This feeling was further exaggerated by a constitutional shrinking from any outward manifestation of the emotion. Perhaps for this reason he was never entirely sincere with those he loved.

After the disgrace of his father Harry Thorpe had done a great deal of thinking and planning which he kept to himself. They had produced a money-jug and had collected the remainder of the passengers, with the exception of Shearer and Thorpe, and now were passing the jug rapidly from hand to hand. Soon they became amused, striking up one of the weird, long drawn out chants so popular with the shanty boys. Thorpe slowly guessed his companion to be a man of some weight and did not hesitate to ascribe his immunity from annoyance to the other's presence.

"It's a bad thing," said the walking boss. "I need to be at it myself, and I know."

"Bess' Lake," cried Jimmy freely through the aperture of the door.

"You'll find the boardin' house just across over the track," said the woodsman, holding out his hand. "So long. See you again if you don't find a job with the old fellow. My name's Shearer."

"Mine is Thorpe," replied the other. "Thank you."

Thorpe followed and found himself on the frozen platform of a little dark railway station. Directly across the track from the railway station a single building was perched from the dark by a solitary lamp in a lower story room. The four who had descended before Thorpe made over toward this light, stumbling and laughing uncertainly, so he knew it was probably the boarding house and prepared to follow them.

The five were met at the steps by the proprietor of the boarding house. This man was short and stout, with a barrel-chest and cleft palate, which at once gave him the well known slurring speech of persons so afflicted and imparted also to the timbre of his voice a peculiarly hollow, resonant, trumpetlike note. He stumped about energetically on a wooden leg of home manufacture. It was a cumbersome instrument, heavy, with deep pine socket for the stump and a projecting brace which passed under a leather belt around the man's waist. This instrument he used with the dexterity of a third hand. As Thorpe watched him he drove in a projecting nail, kicked two "turkeys" inside the open door and stuck the armed end of his peg leg through the top and bottom of the whisky jug that one of the new arrivals had set down near the door. The whisky promptly ran out. At this the cripple flung the impaled jug from the wooden leg far out over the rail of the veranda into the snow.

A growl went up. "What 'n thunder's that for?" snarled one of the owners of the whisky, threateningly.

"Don't allow no whisky here," snuffed the barrel.

The men were very angry. They advanced toward the cripple, who retreated with astonishing agility to the lighted room. There he bent the wooden leg behind him, slipped the end of the brace from beneath the leather belt, seized the other peg end in his right hand and so became possessed of a murderous bludgeon. This he brandished, hopping at the same time back and forth in such perfect poise and yet with so ludicrous an effect of popping corn that the men were surprised into laughing.

"Bully for you, pegleg!" they cried. "Rules an' regulations, boys," replied the latter, without, however, a shade of compromising in his tones. "Had another?"

## CHAPTER III.

THORPE was awakened a long time before daylight by the ringing of a noisy bell. He dressed, shivering, and stumbled downstairs to the round stove, big as a boiler, into which the cripple dumped huge logs of wood from time to time. After breakfast Thorpe re-

turned to this stove and sat half dozing for what seemed to him untold ages. The cold of the northern country was initiating him.

Men came in, smoked a brief pipe and went out. After a time he himself put on his overcoat and ventured out into the town. It seemed to Thorpe a meager affair, built of lumber, mostly unpainted, with always the dark, menacing fringe of the forest behind. The great sawmill, with its tall stacks and its rows of water barrels—protection against fire—on top, was the dominant note. Near the mill coughed a little red painted structure from whose stove-pipe a column of white smoke arose, attesting the cold, a clear hundred feet straight upward, and to whose door a number of men were directing their steps through the snow. Over the door Thorpe could distinguish the word "office." He followed and entered.

In a narrow aisle railed off from the main part of the room waited Thorpe's companions of the night before. The remainder of the office gave accommodation to three clerks. One of these glanced up inquiringly as Thorpe came in.

"I am looking for work," said Thorpe.

"Wait there," briefly commanded the clerk.

In a few moments the door of the inner room opened and Shearer came out. A man's head peered from within.

"Come on, boys," said he.

The five applicants shuffled through. Thorpe found himself in the presence of a man whom he felt to be the natural leader of these wild, independent spirits. He was already a little past middle life, and his form had lost the elastic vigor of youth. But his eye was keen, clear and wrinkled to a certain dry facetiousness, and his figure was of that bulk which gives an impression of a subtler weight and power than the merely physical. You felt his superiority even when he was most comradely with you. This man Thorpe was to meet under other conditions, wherein the steel hand would more plainly clink the metal.

He was now seated in a worn office chair before a littered desk. In the close air hung the smell of stale cigars and the clear fragrance of pine.

"What is it, Dennis?" he asked the first of the men.

"I've been out," replied the lumberman. "Have you got anything for me, Mr. Daly?"

The mill owner laughed.

"I guess so. Report to Shearer. Did you vote for the right man, Dennis?"

The lumberman grinned sheepishly.

"I don't know, sir. I didn't get that far."

"Better let it alone. I suppose you and Bill want to come back too?" he added, turning to the next two in line.

"All right; report to Tim. Do you



"We are a very busy firm here," he said, want work?" he inquired of the last of the quartet, a big, bashful man, with the shoulders of a Hercules.

"Yes, sir," answered the latter, uncomfortable.

"What do you want?"

"I'm a cant hook man, sir."

"Where have you worked?"

"I had a job with Morgan & Stephens on the Clear River last winter."

"All right; we need cant hook men. Report at seven, and if they don't want you there go to thirteen."

The man went out. Daly turned to Thorpe with the last flickers of amusement in his eyes.

"What can I do for you?" he inquired.

"I am looking for work," Thorpe replied.

"What kind of work?"

"Any kind, so long as I can learn something about the lumber business."

The older man studied him keenly for a few moments.

"Have you had any other business experience?"

"None."

"What have you been doing?"

"Nothing."

The lumberman's eyes hardened.

"We are a very busy firm here," he said, with a certain deliberation. "We do not carry a big force of men in any one department, and each of those men has to fill his place and stop some over the sides. We do not pretend or attempt to teach here. If you want to be a lumberman you must learn the lumber business more directly than through the windows of a bookkeeper's office. Go into the woods. Learn a few first principles. Find out the difference between Norway and white pine anyway."

After his speech the business man whirled back to his desk.

"Have you anything for me to do in the woods, then?" the other asked quietly.

"No," said Daly over his shoulder.

Thorpe went out. He had made the elementary discovery that even in chopping wood skilled labor counts. He did not know where to turn next, and he would not have had the money to go far in any case; so, although Shearer's brusque greeting that morning had argued a lack of cordiality, he resolved to remind the river man of his promised assistance.

That noon he carried out his resolve.

"Go up and tackle Radway," said Shearer. "He's jobbing for us on the Cass branch. He needs men for roading, I know, because he's behind. You'll get a job there."

"Where is it?" asked Thorpe.

"Ten miles from here. She's blazed, but you better wait for the supply team Friday. If you try to make her yourself you'll get lost on some of the old logging roads."

Thorpe considered.

"I'm busted," he said at last frankly.

"Oh, that's all right," replied the walking boss. "Marshall, come here."

The perogee boarding house keeper stumped in.

"What is it?" he trumpeted snuffingly.

"This boy wants a job till Friday. Then he's going up to Radway's with the supply team. Now, quit your holering for a chore boy for a few days."

"All right," snorted Marshall. "Take that ax and split some dry wood that you'll find behind the house."

"I'm very much obliged to you," began Thorpe to the walking boss, "and—"

"That's all right," interrupted the latter. "Some day you can give me a job."

## CHAPTER IV.

FOR five days Thorpe cut wood, made fires, drew water, swept floors and ran errands. At the end of the week he received \$4 from his employer, dumped his valise into a low bobbleigh driven by a man muffled in a fur coat, assisted in loading the sleigh with a variety of things, from Spearhead plug to raisins, and turned his face at last toward the land of his hopes and desires.

The long drive to camp was at once a delight and a misery to him. First his feet became numb, then his hands, then his nose was nipped, and finally his warm clothes were lifted from him by invisible hands, and he was left naked to shivers and tremblings. He found it torture to sit still on the top of the bale of hay, and yet he could not bear to contemplate the cold shock of jumping from the sleigh to the ground. The driver pulled up to breathe his horses at the top of a hill.

"You're dressed pretty light," he advised. "Better hoof it a ways and get warm."

The words tipped the balance of Thorpe's decision. He descended stiffly, conscious of a disagreeable shock from a six inch jump.

In ten minutes the wallowing, slipping and leaping after the tail of the sled had sent his blood tingling to the last of his protesting members. Cold withdrew.

After a little while they arrived by way of a hill, over which they plunged into the middle of the camp. Thorpe saw three large buildings, backed end to end, and two smaller ones, all built of heavy logs, roofed with plank and lighted sparsely through one or two windows apiece. The driver pulled up opposite the space between two larger buildings and began to unload his provisions. Thorpe set about aiding him and so found himself for the first time in a "cook camp."

It was a commodious building. One end furnished space for two cooking ranges and two bunks placed one over the other. Along one side ran a broad table shelf, with other shelves over it and numerous barrels underneath, all filled with cans, loaves of bread, cookies and pies. The center was occupied by four long bench flanked tables, down whose middle straggled utensils containing sugar, apple butter, condiments and sauces and whose edges were set with tin dishes for about forty men.

The cook, a rather thin faced man with a mustache, directed where the provisions were to be stowed, and the "cookee," a hulking youth, assisted Thorpe and the driver to carry them in.

In a few moments the task was finished, with the exception of a half dozen

in other cases, which the driver designated as for the "van." The horses were unhitched and stabled in the third of the big log buildings. The driver indicated the second.

"Better go into the men's camp and sit down till the boss gets in," he advised.

Thorpe entered a dim, overheated structure lined on two sides by a double tier of large bunks partitioned from one another like cabins of a boat and centered by a huge stove over which hung slender poles. The latter were to dry clothes on. Just outside the bunks ran a straight, hard bench. Thorpe stood at the entrance trying to accustom his eyes to the dimness.

"Bet down," said a voice, "on the door if you want to, but I'd prefer the 'deacon seat.'"

Thorpe obediently took position on the bench, or "deacon seat." His eyes, more used to the light, could make out a thin, tall, bent old man, with bare cranium, two visible teeth and a three days' stubble of white beard over his meager, twisted face.

He caught, perhaps, Thorpe's surprised expression.

"You think th' old man's no good, do you?" he cackled without the slightest malice. "Looks like deevilin'." He sprang up swiftly, seized the toe of his right foot in his left hand and jumped his left foot through the loop thus formed. Then he sat down again and laughed at Thorpe's astonishment.

"Old Jackson's still purty smart," said he. "I'm barn boss. They ain't a man in th' country knows as much about horses as I do. We ain't had but two sick this fall, an' between you an' me they's a skate lot. You're a greenhorn, ain't you?"

"Yes," confessed Thorpe.

"Well," said Jackson reflectively, but rapidly, "Le Fabian, he's quiet, but ban; and O'Grady, he talks loud, but you can bluff him; and Perry, he's only bad when he gets full of red hiker; and Norton, he's bad when he gets mad like, and will use axes."

Thorpe did not know he was getting valuable points on the camp bullies.

At dark the old man lit two lamps, which served dimly to glaze the shadows, and thrust logs of wood into the cast iron stove. Soon after, the men came in. They were a queer, mixed lot. There were active, clear built, precise Frenchmen, with small hands and feet and a peculiarly trim way of wearing their rough garments; typical native born American lumber jacks, powerful in frame, rakish in air, reckless in manner; big blond Scandinavians and Swedes, strong men at the sawing; an Indian or so, strangely in contrast to the rest, and a variety of Irishmen, Englishmen and Canadians. These men tramped in without a word and set busily to work at various tasks.

Some sat on the "deacon seat" and began to take off their socks and rubbers. Still others selected and lit lanterns from a pendant row near the window and followed old Jackson out of doors. They were the teamsters.

"You'll find the old man in the office," said Jackson.

Thorpe made his way across to the small log cabin indicated as the office, and pushed open the door.

A man sat at a desk placing figures on a sheet of paper. He obtained the figures from statistics penciled on three thin leaves of beechwood riveted together. In a chair by the stove lounged a bulkier figure, which Thorpe concluded to be that of the "old man."

"I was sent here by Shearer," said Thorpe directly. "He said you might give me some work."

So long a silence fell that the applicant began to wonder if his question had been heard.

"I might," replied the man dryly at last.

"Well, will you?" Thorpe inquired, the humor of the situation overcoming him.

"Have you ever worked in the woods?"

"No."

The man smoked silently.

"I'll put you on the road in the morning," he concluded, as though this were the deciding qualification.

One of the men entered abruptly and approached the counter. The writer at the desk laid aside his tablets.

"What is it, Albert?" he asked.

"Job of chawin'," was the reply.

The scaler took from the shelf a long plug of tobacco and cut off two inches.

"Ain't hittin' the van much, are you, Albert?" he commented, putting the man's name and the amount in a little book. Thorpe went out after leaving his name for the time book, enlightened as to the method of obtaining supplies. He promised himself some warm clothing from the van when he should have worked out the necessary credit.

At supper he learned something else—that he must not talk at table. For one thing, supper was a much briefer affair than it would have been had every man felt privileged to take his will in conversation, not to speak of the absence of noise and the presence of peace. Each man asked for what he wanted.

"Please pass the beans," he said, with the deliberate intonation of a man who does not expect that his request will be granted.

Besides the beans were fried salt pork, boiled potatoes, canned corn, mince pie, a variety of cookies and doughnuts, and strong green tea. Thorpe found himself eating ravenously of the crude fare.

That evening he underwent a catechism, a few practical jokes, which he took good naturedly, and a vast deal

of chaffing. At 9 o'clock the lights were all out. By daylight he and a dozen other men were at work hewing a road that had to be as smooth and level as a New York boulevard.

Thorpe and four others were set to work on this road, which was to be cut through a creek bottom leading, he was told, to "seventeen." He learned to use a double bitted ax.

From shortly after daylight he worked. Four other men bore him company, and twice Radway himself came by, watched their operations for a moment and moved on without comment. After Thorpe had caught his second wind he enjoyed his task, finding a

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## A N W Club

The A. N. W. Club met at the home of Mrs. Charles Dangan Thursday afternoon. By consent of the Club because it was the birthday of the hostess she served refreshments, which were highly enjoyed by all. The next meeting of the club will be with Mrs. Edman.

## The Coming Attraction

Clara Mathes Company will begin an engagement at I O O F hall about Feb. 1st. The star is said to be one of the cleverest, the company experienced and clever and the equipment extensive and elaborate. In addition to the excellent dramatic company, a number of high-class vaudeville artists appear between the acts and make the performance continuous.

The following are a few press comments:

"Of the many fine performances La Belle Marie was certainly one of the best."—Vancouver, B. C., News-Advertiser.

"Entire engagement a success."—London Free Press.

"Clara Mathes scored a triumph."—London Advertiser.

"Standing room only at an early hour Clara Mathes is always welcome."—Atlanta, Ga., Constitution.

"The house is filled whenever Clara Mathes appears."—St. John, Nfld., Sun.

"Clara Mathes was exceedingly good!"—New York Mirror.

## New Club

The Coos river ladies have fallen in line by organizing a sewing club. The objects of the club are charitable, and every family on South Coos river was represented at the first meeting, which was held a few days ago at E. J. Coffett's place. Mrs. Coffett being general manager of the club.

## An Appreciation

A man went with his wife to visit her physician. The doctor placed a thermometer in the woman's mouth. After two or three minutes, just as the physician was about to remove the instrument, the man who was not used to such a prolonged spell of brilliant silence on the part of his life's partner, said: "Doctor what will you take for that thing?"—Tib-Bits.

## Autumn

The naked hills lie wanton to the breeze. Nude are the fields, the groves unfrosted, And bare the limbs of the shivering trees: What wonder that the corn is shocked.—New York Sun.

## John D. Garfield

On all sides are heard expressions of regret at the news of the death of John D. Garfield, which occurred at Oakland, Cal., on Jan 23th, and was the result of a collision with a dairy wagon while he was riding a bicycle.

John D. Garfield was well known by all the older residents of the Bay, where he lived for many years. He engaged successfully in logging operations, his last work in that line being near the head of Isthmus slough.

Making a handsome clean-up, he sold out his logging outfit and opened a hardware store in Marshfield, constructing the building on Front street, recently gutted by fire. He also brought down

from the Isthmus the residence which he had constructed there and this house now stands at the corner of First and A streets. The building was brought down on rollers, this being the first operation of the kind here.

When the attempted boom was launched, in the 80's, Mr. Garfield built the large hotel, which stands as a monument to his energy and his propensity for building up the town fortunate enough to claim him as a resident.

Mr. Garfield was a native of Michigan and his age was 73 years, 3 months and 23 days. He is survived by his wife, formerly Miss Florence Dyer, a son and two daughters, Albert, Maud and Grace.

Dave Wallace of Moss Slough, brought down two fat beavers to Flanagan's market yesterday.

Wm. Bonebrake and daughter, of Catehing slough were Marshfield visitors yesterday.

Geo. Norton, who is visiting his uncle F. P. Norton, thinks this country is all right in at least one respect. He was weighed yesterday and found he had gained 17 pounds since Jan. 6th, when he was mustered out of the army in San Francisco after a couple of years in the Philippines.

The Roseburg and Eugene baseball clubs are signing up papers for the coming season. Roseburg has signed Sadler who played in the Marshfield nine last year. Albany has signed McGinnis Brodeur.

Rep. Hermann has protested to Chairman Burton against the action of the committee in refusing to report a river and harbor bill. He told Burton that on most work's the damage from failure to continue the improvements and protect what had been done would cost more than the bill.

The Czarina rolled and pitched in the waves. "Deah boy," groaned Otto at the end of his first hour on shipboard, "promise me you will send my remains come to Coos Bay!" A second hour passed. "Deah boy!" feebly moaned Otto, you needn't send my remains home. There won't be any."

While the weather in the eastern and middle states is kept busy freezing the logs off cast-iron kettles we are basking in balmy June breezes here on Coos Bay.

The sheriff of Marion county has attached the plant of the Salem Sentinel which was packed up and ready to be moved to California.

A run of Chinook salmon are in the Columbia river.

The Empire arrived yesterday morning.

The C. A. Jensen stock was moved to the Bonebrake store yesterday.

E. A. Philpot the painter returned from a short trip to Bandon.

Guy Lattin of South slough was in town yesterday.

Peter Mikelbrink of Allegany brought in a lot of apples yesterday for shipment below.

Times were made lively on South Coos river last Sunday evening by a sort of masquerade carnival procession which visited a large part of that section.

A. B. Campbell went to North Bend yesterday on business.

Sheriff Alderman of Tillamook committed suicide Monday in his barn by shooting himself. The deed was committed while laboring under the stress of a reported shortage in his accounts.

Mrs. Frank Rogers, of south Coos river, was shopping in town yesterday.