

Rec'd Aug 26, 1971

August 25, 1971

Mr. Mac McGalliard
The Daily Ardmoreite
Ardmore, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. McGalliard:

Our local history is being so grossly distorted in the popular literature that I feel that these irresponsible writers should be ridiculed into paying some attention to the facts.

An example of this rewriting of our local history in a national magazine is enclosed. Mr. Sam Henderson in "The West" Magazine has our Buck Garrett, who was not even in the posse, killing the infamous Bill Dalton. Each and every detail given by Mr. Henderson is false.

I sent a rebuttal to Mr. Henderson's fantasy to the "True West" Magazine but I found that the "True West" was not sufficiently interested in the truth to publish a correction to Mr. Henderson's errors.

I am enclosing my rebuttal to Mr. Henderson (originally sent to the "True West") and since it is "our" local history that Mr. Henderson has falsified I hope that the Ardmoreite will help me set the record straight.

Sincerely,

Harrell McCullough
Harrell McCullough
721 N.E. 21
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Encl: Henderson's article
Ardmoreite story of June 9, 1894
McCullough's rebuttal

#1227²

Mr. Harrell McCullough
721 N. E. 21st Street
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Mr. Pat Wagner, Editor
True West Magazine
1012 Edgecliff Terrace
Austin, Texas 78704

Dear Mr. ~~Wagner~~ *McGalliard*
Ardmoreite

Perhaps ~~your magazine~~ would be interested in correcting a grossly inaccurate article which appeared in the July 1968 issue of "The West" Magazine. In this July 1968 issue of "The West" is an article entitled "The Many Careers of Sheriff Buck Garrett", authored by a Mr. Sam Henderson. The errors made by Mr. Henderson are nothing less than astounding; his information is blatantly incorrect and should be reviewed with careful scrutiny.

The most glaring error made by Mr. Henderson is that he attributes the death of the infamous Bill Dalton to Sheriff Buck Garrett, stating that Garrett led the posse that found Dalton, and, further, that Garrett himself fired the shot that ended Dalton's reign. Buck Garrett did not lead this posse, he was not a member of this posse, nor did he fire the shot that felled Dalton. (As a matter of fact, Buck Garrett himself, in his entire career as a lawman, never killed anyone. Referral to Garrett's own obituary will substantiate this fact.)

According to Mr. Henderson's story, a man named Hank McGee walked into Buck Garrett's office in Ardmore and told Buck that Bill Dalton was hiding out near his (McGee's) place in the Arbuckle Mountains. The following quotes Mr. Henderson's story on page 16 of "The West":

"Do you wanna find Bill Dalton?"
The words caught Deputy United States Marshal Buck Garrett completely off guard. When the question hit him he was busy behind his desk, boot top deep in a pile of legal papers. He looked up and found a rangy, sun cured farmer standing in the doorway, wearing gallus bibb overalls

and a railroad cap. The stranger had no chin, unless it had merged with his Adam's apple, and his cheeks were grizzled with snowy fuzz.

In reaction to the stranger's "Well, do you?" the marshal exploded. "Hell's bells, man," he shouted, "don't you ever read the newspapers? Bill Dalton is the most wanted man in the whole god-darn territory. He's the only one a them desperate brothers left. Rest of 'em got it at Coffeyville, Kansas. There's a big reward up for him."

The farmer turned, swiveled his head and spewed tobacco juice. "That's why I'm here," he said. "Cause I need that five thousand dollars!"

Buck Garrett looked the stranger over and wondered. This hayseed-- was he the one to pull a large rabbit out of a very small hat? Could he succeed where expert manhunters--men like Bill Tilghmann, Chris Madsen and Heck Thomas--had failed? He sure didn't look the role. But then again, Billy the Kid hadn't come in a very impressive package.

"Where's Dalton hidin' at?" the marshal asked.

"Up near my place. Up in the Arbuckle Mountains."

"How can I be sure you're tellin' the truth. You might be leadin' me into an ambush."

"Dalton's old lady is in town. She's right now down at the general store buyin' supplies. If'n you don't believe me, check with her."

Buck slid from behind his desk, began buckling on his six guns.

"What you waitin' for?" he demanded. "We don't wanna let 'er get away!"

This exchange is straight out of Mr. Henderson's wild imagination. There is no mention of a Hank McGee or of Buck Garrett in any of the news stories of the time! No such conversation ever took place.

Seldon T. Lindsey--my grandfather--was the man who led the posse against Dalton, and he described to me many times the events of those two days in early June of 1894. No one named McGee told Seldon Lindsey--or anyone else--that Dalton was in the area. Even when Marshal Lindsey (not Garrett) led his posse toward Elk, he did not know that the man he sought was Bill Dalton. Indeed, Dalton's identity was not learned until after he was dead, and it was only upon the return of Dalton's body to Ardmore that the wife of the slain outlaw was herself identified. (To my knowledge, the complete and unexpurgated story of these events has never been told and is long overdue; it is the intention of the writer to someday publish the story of Seldon Lindsey's life and career, including these details of Dalton's death.)

The circumstances of Dalton's demise were also described at the time by reporters. The reader is referred to the June 9, 1894 issue of the Daily Ardmoreite, of Ardmore, Chickasaw Nation, Indian Territory. While even this newspaper account is in error in some respects, it is sufficiently accurate to expose Mr. Henderson's tale as a complete fabrication.

Mr. Henderson proceeds with his tale, describing Mrs. Dalton's actions:

As the two men walked up onto the porch, the door burst open and a woman with a Lily Langtry figure flew out at them, clawing and scratching.

"I know what's happened!" she screamed. "You, Hank McGee, have turned my man over to the law!"

The two men fell back, trying to protect their eyes while loafing cowboys howled with glee and shouted suggestions.

Garrett, far from amused, took refuge behind his horse. "What you bastards laughin' at?" he demanded. "This here is Bill Dalton's woman-- a real battlin' hell-cat!"

The shock stilled the screeching. One of the men grabbed the woman from behind, pinning her arms to her sides. The others moved in fast. Screaming, biting, squirming, she was bodily carried to the Ardmore lockup, and minutes later Garrett was riding with a posse through the Arbuckle Mountains.....

(The horses we have today cannot cover the 17 miles from Ardmore to the Arbuckles so quickly!)

This scurrilous description of Mrs. Dalton is shameful, unwarranted and grossly insulting to Mrs. Dalton. She was not the "battlin' hell-cat" that Mr. Henderson so ungallantly portrays. There is no record of Mrs. Dalton having behaved in any but an exemplary and lady-like fashion. From the relatively well-to-do Blevins family of Merced county, California, Jennie Dalton is described in the Daily Ardmoreite--the June 9, 1894 issue--in this way:

SHE (MRS. DALTON) IS A WOMAN ABOVE ORDINARY INTELLIGENCE AND PERFECTLY LADY-LIKE IN HER DEPARTMENT.

In the days following the death of Bill Dalton, the intelligence and dignity of his widow won the respect and admiration of all, and especially of Marshal Lindsey, who often spoke to me of Mrs. Dalton's courage and refinement.

Mr. Henderson continues his fabrication on page 17 of "The West", saying:

Just before sunset they spotted the smoke of a fire. The farmer suddenly reined in his horse.

"That's it!" he whispered. "That smoke's comin' from Dalton's cabin. Get your guns ready!"

Edging silently ahead, the posse slowly stalked through the clearing and found Bill Dalton at work at his wood pile. The bad man's axe was gripped in his fists and drawn far back over his right shoulder. Mightily he swung forward.

"Don't move!" Garrett shouted, coming first into the clearing.

Even before the command was completed Dalton's axe came down, cleanly snapping a piece of firewood in two. The badman dropped the axe instantly. As he leaped desperately for a nearby rifle, a volley of gunshots rang out. Dalton hit the ground, twisting in agony. He groaned once, twice, and then lay lifeless in the dust.

Bill Dalton, the last of the four notorious brothers who had long spread terror across the great Southwest, was dead. Buck Garrett's action had marked the end to another chapter of outlaw history.

This rendition, however colorful, is a flagrant concoction and absolute nonsense. The Daily Ardmoreite, describing the particulars of these days, states that on Thursday, June 7, 1894, Houston Wallace, a man known to be "of limited means and doubtful integrity" was noticed in Ardmore in the company of two strange women. Wallace had spent some \$200--an extraordinary sum for a man of his reputation to possess--on ammunition and various other supplies. He then went to the Express office where he obtained a box. Deputies Seldon Lindsey and W. B. Freeman, having noted Wallace's suspicious behavior, made an arrest when Freeman discovered that the box contained whiskey. Wallace remained silent upon arrest, as did the two women, who were held also. The women did identify themselves as "Mrs. Brown" and "Miss Pruitt", however. Acting on "suspicion and a strong clue" (it had apparently been common knowledge that a band of thieves were making the country between Healdton and Elk their headquarters) Marshal S. T. Lindsey organized a posse and rode all night toward Elk (now Poolville), arriving at the house of Houston Wallace at about 8 a.m. on Friday morning.

Having separated into squads, the posse approached the house, where everything seemed quiet. Advancing slowly, the posse was seen, however, by a woman driving in some calves. The woman quickly made her way to the house, notifying Dalton, who was inside. Dalton immediately jumped through a window in the back of the

house, thinking that side was unguarded. Dalton was mistaken, however, for he was facing a Deputy Marshal, who fired once as Dalton went for his gun. Dalton fell and died in a few seconds.

(It must be noted here that while the newspaper account, and therefore the history books written later, credit Loss Hart with firing the fatal bullet, I must take issue with this important detail. At the time, my grandfather Seldon Lindsey and Loss Hart agreed that Loss should be named in this way--and there was good reason for their agreement--but the truth is that Loss did not shoot Dalton, and my own written account of Lindsey's life will one day document my contention.)

The Ardmorite further states that "This man, the terror of the West, was laid low with but a single shot fired." Mr. Henderson, in attempting to create a sensational scene, would have us believe that a "volley of gunshots rang out", but in fact the truth is far more dramatic than Henderson's fiction. It is also interesting to note that Henderson states that Dalton tried to reach for a rifle, when in fact not a single winchester was found on the premises. This lack of a winchester in the arsenal of the most daring and wanted fugitive in the West puzzled Marshal Lindsey and was considered so unusual this fact was mentioned in the news story.

Continuing on page 17 of the article in "The West", Henderson continues to romanticize:

Strange indeed is the fact that Buck Garrett has been denied his just due in the pages of history. His life span could be used to mark off the Last Frontier, for he was one of the few who saw its dawn and witnessed its sunset....

Mr. Henderson is in sad need of a primer of American history. Before Buck Garrett was ten years old, the buffalo were gone, the Indian fighting past; the cattle drives across the Indian Territory were only a memory by the time Buck was 14. Although Buck was born before the rapidly disappearing frontier had completely vanished, he saw the last of the Old West only as a child, since his family

moved from Tennessee to Texas, finally settling in Paris, Texas in 1880, when Buck was but eight years old. Buck Garrett will never get his "just due in the pages of history" so long as we have the likes of Mr. Sam Henderson to distort the truth!

I have shown by records compiled at the time and by first-hand evidence that Buck Garrett was not a member of the posse that located Dalton on that fateful day in 1894, nor was he present when Dalton was killed. If he were alive, Buck Garrett would be the first to call Mr. Henderson's hand. However, it should not be said that Buck Garrett played no part at all in the Bill Dalton story. Certainly he did and he deserves full credit for his contribution. Actually, though Buck Garrett was little more than a kid when Dalton was killed, Marshal Seldon T. Lindsey left the two ladies that he had detained, "Mrs. Brown" and "Miss Pruitt", in Ardmore, under Buck's guard. Of course Buck had no idea that the "Mrs. Brown" left in his charge was actually the wife of the infamous Bill. The fact that Mrs. Dalton did not escape or get warning to her husband that Marshal Lindsey was in the saddle and closing in indicates that Buck carried out his assignment efficiently--as would be expected of the able Buck Garrett.

Indeed, at the time, Buck Garrett was the protégé of Marshal Lindsey. Buck was married in Lindsey's home, and when, even in later years, Buck was out of town, Mrs. Garrett frequently stayed with Mrs. Lindsey. Mr. Henderson would perhaps be surprised to learn that the Ben Lindsey he mentions on page 68 was the son of Marshal S. T. Lindsey. It is not in the least amazing that Buck should be able to approach Ben even under such tense circumstances--the two men had known each other for years. Ben would never have shot Buck Garrett.

It is amusing that some of the western writers are now trying to depict Buck Garrett as a gunslinger. Buck usually would not carry a gun--and even he could not be a very good gunfighter without one. Buck was essentially a politician and a very proficient one; he kept Bud Ballew around to do the shooting, but Buck and Bud were not personally close as is often assumed. Of Buck's deputies, Earl Young was personally closest to Buck and was the brains behind many of Buck's achievements.

I knew Earl Young well; he was an exceptional man.

To correct all of Mr. Henderson's errors would take as long as it took to win the West, so I will simply state in summary that with the single exception that Bill Dalton did in fact die, every detail Mr. Henderson gives concerning his death is totally inaccurate.

I do not mean to say that there is anything wrong with fiction, but it does not belong under the heading of "True Stories of the Old West", which "The West" magazine purports to publish. Fiction should be entertaining, but the irony of Mr. Henderson's fiction is that the simple truths of Bill Dalton's killing are infinitely more interesting than any fiction account could portray.

As I have stated, my grandfather Seldon T. Lindsey, who was born in 1854 and died in Ardmore in March of 1939, at the age of 84, described to me in great detail the killing of Bill Dalton and the events that followed. There are a number of interesting angles in this story, not the least of which was the friendship that developed between Mrs. Dalton and the man who killed her husband and how this marshal actually violated the law to help her. Bill Dalton was killed by a 38-56 Winchester (not a 38-551), although 99 out of 100 ^{WESTERN} fans will swear that no such gun was ever made. As a matter of fact, my grandfather owned such a gun--a Winchester Model 1886 Carbine--as did J. M. Chancellor, another Deputy U. S. Marshal at that time. It is also a fact that when Dalton was shot, two of the possemen lay over three hundred yards away, drunk and passed out. It was on Dalton's own whiskey that they had gotten drunk, much to the disgust of the posse leader Seldon T. Lindsey--and these two men never did see the shooting. Seldon told me that one of these drunk possemen was his own brother-in-law!

If ever there was a man whose "life span could be used to mark the Last Frontier" it was Seldon T. Lindsey. He saw more phases of the West than any legendary western character. The killing of eleven outlaws during his twelve years as a Deputy U. S. Marshal--during the wildest days of the Territory--was only one episode in the saga of his experience. At the age of sixteen, Seldon was forced to beat a "White Cap" gunman to the draw in order to save his father's life. Held

for this offense, he escaped from jail (a hole in the ground covered with logs) and robbed a stage that he might hire a lawyer to save his father from the hangman. Still a teenager, he fought a bloody war with the "White Caps" in Texas and made one of the early cattle drives across the Indian Territory to Baxter Springs. This was the Old Cloud Trail that ran through the rough ground east of the better known--but less difficult--Western and Chisholm Trails used later, after the railroad was built to Dodge, Kansas. Seldon Lindsey also fought the Comanches on the buffalo ranges of West Texas, some fifteen years before becoming a lawman in the Indian Territory.

Some day there will be a book written about the life of my grandfather, as there were enough interesting incidents in his life to fill one easily. But for right now I just want to warn Western fans about a character named Sam Henderson.

If I have not made it clear, what I mean to say is that you, Sam Henderson, are a fourflushing, two bit, lying pole cat who would not know the truth if it bit you! I'm calling for a show-down. Step up and prove that Buck Garrett led the posse and killed Bill Dalton---or get out of western literature before sundown. But the first thing I want to hear out of you is an apology to Mrs. Dalton.

Harrell McCullough

HM:ge

THE MANY CAREERS OF

by Sam Henderson

DO YOU WANNA find Bill Dalton?

The words caught Deputy United States Marshal Buck Garrett completely off guard. When the question hit him he was busy behind his desk, boot top deep in a pile of legal papers. He looked up and found a rangy, sun cured farmer standing in the doorway, wearing gallus bibb overalls and a railroad cap. The stranger had no chin, unless it had merged with his Adam's apple, and his cheeks were grizzled with snowy fuzz.

In reaction to the stranger's "Well, do you?" the marshal exploded. "Hell's bells, man," he shouted, "don't you ever read the newspapers? Bill Dalton is the most wanted man in the whole gaw-darn territory. He's the only one a them desperate brothers left. Rest of 'em got it at Coffeyville, Kansas. There's a big reward up for him."

The farmer turned, swiveled his head and spewed tobacco juice. "That's why I'm here," he said. "Cause I need that five thousand dollars!"

Buck Garrett looked the stranger over and wondered. This hayseed—was he the one to pull a large rabbit out of a very small hat? Could he succeed where expert manhunters—men

Photo: Univ. of Okla. Library.



Bill Dalton, killed by U.S. Marshal Buck Garrett.

16 Dalton not killed by Harrell
Harrell was not in the posse



Photo: Univ. of Okla. Library.

Lawman Buck Garrett lived in aura of violence.

like Bill Tilghmann, Chris Madsen, and Heck Thomas—had failed? He sure didn't look the role. But then again, Billy the Kid hadn't come in a very impressive package.

"Where's Dalton hidin' at?" the marshal asked.

"Up near my place. Up in the Arbuckle Mountains."

"How can I be sure you're tellin' the truth. You might be leadin' me into an ambush."

"Dalton's old lady is in town. She's right now down at the general store buyin' supplies. If'n you don't believe me, check with her."

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As the two men walked up onto the store porch, the door burst open and a woman with a Lily Langtry figure flew out at them, clawing and scratching.

"I know what's happened!" she screamed. "You, Hank McGee, have turned my man over to the law!"

The two men fell back, trying to protect their eyes while loafing cowboys howled with glee and shouted suggestions.

Garrett, far from amused, took refuge behind his horse.

"What you bastards laughin' at?" he demanded. "This here is Buck Harrell, used to be school teacher."

July 2, 1918

Travis of Okla. Harrell

NO ARCH. Dalton 07 9/1/84

The West July 1968

SHERIFF BUCK GARRETT

On his first day as sheriff this lawman who effortlessly straddled two eras poured 140 gallons of moonshine over twelve gambling tables and 44 slot machines and then struck a match... as Deputy U.S. Marshal he had shot the last of the notorious Daltons... he had also looked wrongways down the barrels of U.S. Army rifles in Wyoming's Johnson County range war...

Photo: Wyo. State Arch. & Hist. Dept.



"Invaders" from Texas; Buck Garrett, who was to become feared manhunter, is 5th from left, seated.

Bill Dalton's woman—a real battlin' hell-cat!

The shock stilled the screeching. One of the men grabbed the woman from behind, pinning her arms to her sides. The others moved in fast. Screaming, biting, squirming, she was bodily carried to the Ardmore lockup, and minutes later Garrett was riding with a posse through the Arbuckle Mountains. Just before sunset they spotted the smoke of a fire. The farmer suddenly reined in his horse.

"That's it!" he whispered. "That smoke's comin' from Dalton's cabin. Get your guns ready!" The posse slowly stalked through the underbrush. Finally they slithered to the edge of a campsite and found Bill Dalton at work at his wood pile. The bad man's axe was gripped in his fists and drawn far back over his right shoulder. Mightily he swung downward. "Don't move!" Garrett shouted, coming first into the clearing.

Even before the command was completed Dalton's axe came down, cleanly snapping a piece of firewood in two. The badman dropped the axe instantly. As he leaped desperately for a nearby rifle, a volley of gunshots rang out. Dalton hit the ground, twisting in agony. He groaned once, twice, and then lay lifeless in the dust.

*Bill Dalton was a lady
with a red hat
B.F.M. not a lady
Dalton was a lady
with a red hat
B.F.M. not a lady*

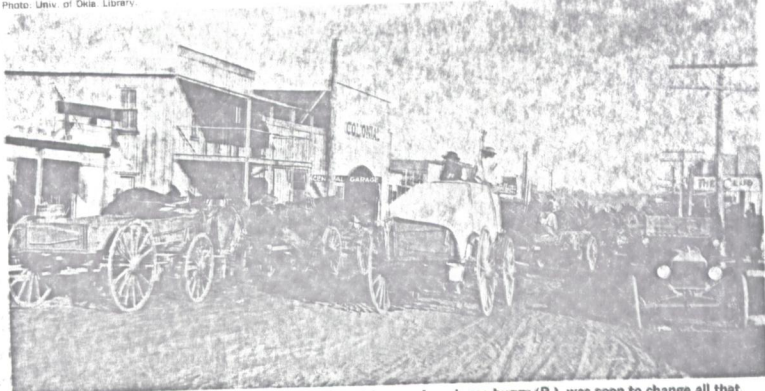
Bill Dalton, the last of the four notorious brothers who had long spread terror across the great Southwest, was dead. Buck Garrett's action had marked the end to another chapter of outlaw history.

Strange indeed is the fact that Buck Garrett has been denied his just due in the pages of history. His life span could be used to mark off the Last Frontier, for he was one of the few who saw its dawn and witnessed its sunset. As we have just seen, he brought an end to the Daltons' trail of terror; he also played a key role in Wyoming's Johnson County range war. He was one of the last of the horseback lawmen, and one of the first oil town marshals. His career as a lawman did not end until his death in 1927. He was indisputably the last of the old-time peace officers.

His story, long untold, began on a farm near Columbia, Tennessee where he was born in 1872. Shortly after his birth the entire family migrated west to Texas. They settled in Paris, just south of the Red River.

Like most boys growing up on the Texas plains, Buck fell easily into the life of a cowboy. At the age of fourteen he talked himself into a horse wrangler's job on the famed Leeper Ranch. He rose quickly through the ranks, becoming a night herder.

Photo. Univ. of Okla. Library.



Wonderful scene in Wirt, Okla., of horse-drawn vehicles—and mud; gas buggy (R.) was soon to change all that.

then a fence liner and, finally, a top hand. By the time he was sixteen, his roping and riding skills were the talk of the frontier.

Although he didn't realize it, Buck was witnessing the last days of the open range. The Union Pacific Railroad was rapidly making its way west, crossing the plains, opening up the continent and shaping the nation. The United States government had suddenly become aware of the vast and rich pastureslands that lay west of the Mississippi River. In the latter decades of the century, Americans were urged to respond to their pioneering blood and head west to open up and homestead the Arizona-Wyoming frontier.

Any citizen, by merely staking his claim in that country, could assume ownership of 162 acres of free land. That was the law—as spelled out by the Homestead Act of 1862.

The cattle barons, who had grazed these lands for many years without rightful ownership, reacted violently. They had settled the frontier. They had fought off the warring Indian tribes and the strong-arm outlaw bands. They had braved fierce snowstorms and bitter winters. Finally, after years of struggle, they had brought raw but viable forms of civilization to the plains. They had established their domains and were ready for lives of leisure. They had at long last won what they had been fighting for—the right to live off the fat of the land.

Then...the homesteaders came, and the nesters and the sod busters. They streamed into the badlands by the thousands, traveling on horseback, in buckboards and covered wagons. They carved the range up into 162-acre sections, establishing homesteads and breaking the virgin soil with their plows. They of course had every reason to think themselves in the right. They were just "poor folk come West" lookin' for free land to make a home on. None of the homesteaders had thought it would be necessary to fight a never-ending range war to protect that free land. Being in the majority, they had no trouble electing one of their own, "Red" Angus, sheriff of the Powder River country.

Angry, and unwilling to give up their land, the cattle barons decided to provide their own law. They went into Texas and recruited a private army. Buck Garrett was among the fifty-odd gunfighters whom they brought back to "protect the range." For days on end Buck and the other hardcases patrolled the streets of Casper, Wyoming, threatening lives, pushing men from the boardwalks, making themselves feared.

While plainly showing their fear, the homesteaders refused

to flee the badlands. They had come to Wyoming in search of the Promised Land. They had found there what they had always wanted: a piece of land on which to build a home and raise a family. And nothing, neither man nor devil, was going to chase them away. One sodbuster put it bluntly to Frank Canton, the gunfighters' leader: "We won't leave until the day we're laid in our graves."

Canton took them at their word. A few nights later he, Garrett, and some twenty other gunfighters surrounded the homestead shared by Nate Champion and Nick Ray. They burned the cabin to the ground and riddled its occupants with bullets.

Almost immediately after receiving the news, a mob of homesteaders began forming in the streets of Buffalo, Wyoming. A deep moaning bellow, like that of brutes stirred to fury, arose from within their ranks. The hired gunmen had at long last made clear their intentions; they meant to kill anyone who dared defy either them or their employers. It was either leave Wyoming to the cattle barons or suffer the consequences.

"What we gonna do?" a farmer asked the sheriff helplessly. "We're gonna give them bastards a dose of their own medicine." Red Angus answered. "Everybody go home and get his gun. We'll meet later at the county jail. We'll storm the K.C. Ranch and show them bastards what's what. We've took enough of their abuse!"

Within the hour the homesteaders were gathering at the jail. Hundreds of them clamored outside the building, catching the carbine repeaters tossed to them from the upper steps. Others filled their arms with cartridge cases. Makeshift gatling guns were loaded on wagons. The men were ready to fight now to the death.

They moved into the underbrush on a hillside overlooking the K.C. ranchhouse. Stern-faced farmers, men who had spent their entire lives peacefully, prepared themselves for battle against seasoned gunfighters. They leveled their rifles and settled in.

Finally, a black haired youth stepped into the clearing that separated the two factions.

"What you want?" demanded a voice from the ranch house.

"We want you! Every one of you! Either come out with your hands up—or else."

"Or else what?"

"We open fire!"

After a moment's silence a shot was fired. The youth leaped

for cover as the battle erupted. Both sides now opened fire. Within seconds the clearing between was ablaze with exploding shells. Down below them the homesteaders could see jets of flame streaking from the building. Every so often they could hear a man scream.

For nearly three days the battle raged. Finally one of the hired guns named Mike Shonsey slipped from the besieged cabin. Slipping snake-like through the night, he was able to escape. He borrowed a horse from a nearby pasture and rode hard to Fort McKinney.

"For God's sake!" he shouted at the post commander, "bring your men to the K.C. ranch! Otherwise a hundred men are gonna be murdered. Our men are surrounded!"

The officer at first refused to intervene. The Johnson County range war was considered by the army a civilian affair. He had orders not to take part. He turned his back on the gunman's plea.

Shonsey stood frozen in his tracks, pale, wild-eyed, his clothing torn. He stared for nearly a minute at the closed door of the commander's office. "By God," he finally said, "I'll call 'em myself." He stomped into the office, grabbed the telephone, and put a call through to Governor Barber. It took him but a minute to explain the situation. The governor, who had been elected with the cattlemen's support, wasted no time in wiring Senators Carey and Warren in Washington. They rushed to the White House, roused President Benjamin Harrison from bed, and persuaded him to order the United States Cavalry's intervention.

Shonsey rode beside the post commander as the troops pulled out of Fort McKinney. They arrived at the ranch in the nick of time. Just as the posse was getting ready to set the cabin a-fire, they came thundering over the hill. The soldiers placed the invaders under arrest and ordered the nesters to their homes.

As a result of this foray, Buck Garrett was presented with a key to the whole wide world—outside Wyoming. He was told in no uncertain terms: "Get out and stay out!"

Back in Texas, Buck found another army being organized. This one to uphold rather than oppose law and order. Peace officers were needed to chase down outlaws, dangerous men like Sam Starr, Crawford Goldsby, Zip Wyatt, Bill Doolin, the Daltons, the Cooks and the Benders, all hid out in the Indian Territory. By now Buck was hopelessly addicted to ex-

Author's Photo.



Dalton Museum at Coffeerville, Kansas; reminder of exciting raid.

Author's Photo.



Headstone erected by Emmett Dalton to brothers Bob and Grat, and Bill Powers, casualties at Coffeerville.

citement and adventure, and he wasted no time in getting his name on the United States Marshals' pay roll.

Garrett played a bigger part in the fight against the organized outlaws in the West than is generally realized. He was among the peace officers responsible for the establishment of the frontier's first espionage system. From agents cleverly planted in the outlaws' ranks he received news of hideouts and planned hold-ups. This information made it possible to prevent the further spread of terrorism.

Probably the most adept of these spies was a woman named Julia Lewis. She had grown up in the northeastern corner of Indian Territory near the Kansas border. Many of the outlaws had been among her childhood playmates. In her teens, she called Emmett Dalton a "favorite sweetheart." The romance did not end until her beau followed his older brothers into a life of crime.

Julia's love did not die quickly. For nearly two years she followed her "wild young cowboy's" exploits in the daily papers. Her heart quaked every time he came within a breath of either death or capture. Then, finally, the gang's trail of terror was brought to an end at Coffeerville, Kansas. Emmett's brothers were shot and killed while attempting to hold up the banks. He himself was apprehended and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Shortly thereafter Julia married a rough and ready cowboy named Earnest Lewis. Together they opened a burdy-gurdy "leg house" in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Lying just beyond the Santa Fe railroad tracks, the establishment became a rendezvous for outlaws and cattle rustlers alike. All went well until the night Oklahoma became a state, when an argument arose between Lewis and two federal marshals. Six-guns roared and two men fell dead. Earnest Lewis and one of his adversaries.

A few months later Marshal Garrett and several fellow peace officers paid Julia a visit. They found the grieving widow busy behind her bar, pouring

(Continued on page 66)

she might prove useful as an interpreter with the Shoshone. Of course she would take care of her baby. Charbonneau's other wife, Otter Woman, would stay behind.

On April 6 the expedition got on again. It was a strangely mixed party. In addition to the captain, Clark and his wife, there were three men, two boys and a dog. The movement of baggage, provisions and boats was carried on by slow painful degrees. Bears raded the camps. Cold winds blew off the snow-capped Rockies. Hard rains made the portage even more difficult.

On June 29 Clark and Charbonneau, with Bird Woman and the baby, went down into a ravine where an overhanging rock offered shelter against a growing storm. Clark did not know how dangerous a western ravine can be when there is a storm over nearby mountains. Suddenly there was a thunderous roar and water came rushing like a tidal wave

Bird Woman held her baby. Woman grabbed Bird Woman's hand. Bird Woman clainly began to cry. Bird Woman's every wish was to get away from the water. She and started up the ravine hill. Miss... rapidly did the water rise that Clark found himself waist deep before he could boost the girl and her baby to safety and then scramble after her.

In this mishap Clark lost his compass, and an umbrella he had carried to shelter little Baptiste. Bird Woman saved the baby, losing only the netlin which she carried him. Charbonneau lost his gun, shot pouch, and tomahawk. And the three adults learned where not to take shelter in a storm.

It was mid-July before the portage was completed, and all the equipment repaired or reassembled. Wearily the expedition started upstream again.

Fear and doubt still hung over the men. In rugged country any river may have its falls; but did that heart-breaking portage do no more than carry them

farther up the wrong stream? Were they moving blindly to some point of no return?

Above the falls the river quickly became more narrow, winding, and swift. Paddles and sails were nearly useless. Most of the time the men were in the icy water, towing the boats against the fierce current. Their hands blistered from the tow ropes, their feet and legs ulcerated from the constant soaking.

Those who walked the bank were no better off. Flinty rocks burd shoes to pieces; cactus spines penetrated the thickest leggings; rattlesnakes lurked beside the trail. Clothing rotted and fell to rags. Mosquitos swarmed, and stinging flies. Gnats clustered around the men's eyes. Smoke of Indian signal-fires hung pungently in the air.

And then, on July 22, 1805, when morale was beginning to ebb, Bird Woman announced that she recognized the country.

(To Be Concluded In The Next Issue)

SHERIFF BUCK GARRETT
(Continued from page 19)

drinks and drawing beer for her customers.

"Mrs. Lewis," Buck said brightly, "we could close this place. Whiskey became illegal when Oklahoma became a state."

"Marshal, you know my circumstances. This is the only way I have to make a living."

"Yes," Buck nodded, "I know. Perhaps we can make an arrangement."

By the time the meeting adjourned, Julia had agreed to inform on her outlaw customers. She would keep her ears peeled for information and in return for this, Emmett Dalton would in due time be pardoned.

After his release, Emmett returned to Coffeyville, married the loyal Julia, and placed a tombstone where his brothers lay silent in their graves. The remainder of his days were spent in peace.

Probably the most elusive of the marshals' quarry was Henry Starr. Remembered by history as the most spectacular of all bank robbers, he posed problems on the frontier for nearly three decades, robbing more banks and trains than Jesse James, eluding railroad detectives, Pinkerton men and sheriffs' posses. Several times Buck set out after the bad man, only to find his trail vanishing in the Osage Hills. But while he was successful at escaping the law, Starr did without accumulating any spectacular amounts of wealth to match his risks. There was not even enough loot left to

pay for a headstone to mark his last earthly resting place.

Learning of this, Buck Garrett, by then the sheriff of Carter County, Oklahoma, called together a delegation of ex-deputy United States Marshals. Each of them in bygone years had pursued the elusive Starr. Buck suggested they pass the hat and place a gravestone over Starr's tomb.

"Where's Henry buried at?" someone asked.

"In Dewey, Oklahoma. Right near the Osage Hills where he was raised. You member the child he had that died? He put a stone over her grave? Well, he's been buried next to it."

The hat was passed and a tombstone ordered. As a result of Buck's initiative Henry Starr does not rest in an unmarked grave.

It was also due to Buck Garrett's efforts—and also those of fellow peace-officers like Bill Tighmann, Chris Madson, Hesk Thomas and Bud Ledbetter—that order was restored to Oklahoma. By 1900 organized outlawry was at an end. Bank robberies and train hold-ups seemed to be things of the past. Decent citizens found it safe, now, to walk the streets. At long last, it seemed, law and order had arrived in Oklahoma.

But in 1912 honky tonks, brothels, dance halls and gambling dens were running wide open in Ardmore, Oklahoma! The oil boom was going full swing and the air was awirl with thousand dollar bills. Border bandits were streaming in by the thousands, along with high jacks, bank robbers, gamblers, whores, and pimps. Oil rights had hooped wealth into the treasuries of reformed chutes

and the flocking vultures intended to get themselves a share. This was the oil boom: in full swing, bonanza-land in all its glory.

Indians who yesterday had been poverty stricken suddenly found themselves wearing diamond tie clasps, smoking big cigars, and zooming across the prairies in high powered cars. After garnering enough wealth to buy out the Browning Arms Company—and the Old Crow distillery to boot—they went on an rampage to make both Geronimo and Sitting Bull step back in awe. They came roaring through the streets of Ardmore in their bright red automobiles, running down any and all who might venture into their paths. It was considered a hazard to even try to cross the street.

A grizzled old-timer once told this writer: "The crazy glaucos drove them cars like they was on the back of a bucking bronco. They made 'em buck, paw, snort, pitch, and leap. To them a car was just a wild-cayuse, an untamed Mustang."

It wasn't unusual to find a shining new automobile abandoned out on some country road. After runnin' out of gas, the rich Indian wouldn't bother with huntin' a service station. He'd just go and buy himself another new car. Leave the old 'naight there where she sat.

Most everythin' somebody was found robbed and killed out in the sage brush. The blackjack timber was full of hi-jackers, all of them busier than bees. You hadda keep on the lookout. They'd get a Stetson hat or a rubber tire and place it in the road and then hide themselves back in the underbrush. Finally somebody would come along and think they

were lucky. But after stopping they'd find themselves being swept down on by border bandits. There sure wasn't much law during those early days in the oil fields."

Then suddenly it happened. The first nitroglycerin blast went off and a spew of black murky oil shot skyward. "Oil! Oil! Oil!" went resounding by telegraph across the nation. Oil beneath the red clay soil of Oklahoma, in measures bountiful enough to meet the demand that had been created by the invention of the motor car.

Overnight the wild frontier sprang back to life. Tent cities and shanty villages sprang up everywhere. There came again the gambling tent, the canvas saloon, the roaring six-gun, the painted harlot. In Oklahoma City, in Tulsa, and in Pawhuska, gigantic buildings were pushing skyward. Once again flyers appeared on telegraph poles WANTED—DEAD OR ALIVE. Posters appeared, offering rewards of five, ten, and fifteen thousand dollars for bank and train robbers. Names like Al Spencer, Kelly Nash and Pretty Boy Floyd had replaced those of Jesse James, Bob Dalton, Cherokee Bill, and Will Doolin.

Faced with the problem of finding a lawman with guts enough to hold the lid on Ardmore, Oklahoma, the Carter County Council agreed all around that the best man for sheriff was Buck Garrett. The ex-United States marshal accepted their offer, and wasted no time in showing the people what could be expected of him as sheriff.

On his first day in office he led a party of deputies downtown, raided twenty bagnios, arrested ten bootleggers, confiscated 140 gallons of moonshine liquor, twelve gambling tables and forty-four slot machines. The gambling equipment he piled in front of the Carter County Court House. The kegs of whiskey were broken and their contents poured on top. When night fell Garrett set the whole works ablaze. The sporting crowd stood up and watched their lawless regime go up in flame.

Shortly after Buck became sheriff, Ragtown, a roaring boom camp, sprang up full-to-bursting amid the Oklahoma oil fields. Tents and shanties—rag dwellings from which the community derives its name—rose like clusters of mushrooms from out of the sun-parched, oil-soaked soil. A few years before there had not been one cabin. Then oil had been discovered and almost overnight the area was swarming with thousands of rough-necks, wildcaters, and fortune hunters.

Ragtown, officially named Wirt, Oklahoma, ran wide open. Dozens of illicit saloons, bordellos, and gambling halls crowded the main street. Every night, boom-camp bully boys swaggered up and down the boardwalks. And their cheeks painted red and hair dyed raven

black, beckoned to cowboys from open doorways. Almost every night six-guns roared and men fell dead in the streets. It was like Dodge City, Tombstone, Abilene, and Deadwood all rolled up into one.

The Law and Order League was somewhat less than pleased with Buck's choice for Ragtown marshal, a job made necessary overnight. He brought from out of the Texas badlands a professional gunslinger named Bud Ballew. Bud made no secret of the fact he'd killed men in gunfights. To the contrary, he openly boasted of it—one notch on the oak butts of his Colt revolvers for each life he'd taken. Many said he'd previously killed for self gain; others claimed he'd only shot in self defense. However, Buck defended his choice, saying: "Makes no difference to me whether he's a good man or bad. What matters is that he's tough. Ragtown is a tough camp. It's gonna take a tough man to police it."

Ballew encountered violence his first night on duty in Ragtown. Shortly after dusk, when the tempo of the camp sped up and the music from the dancehalls only partially drowned out the tumult of the town, he made an initial round of inspections. He went from one to another of the restaurants, soft drink places (thinly disguised saloons), gambling houses, dancehalls, and bordellos, checking each to see that all was in order—from the Blue Moon to the Silver Spoon, from the Gold Dollar to the Brass Rail, from the Lone Star to the Pink Pony.

Coming through the door of the Pink Pony, Ballew stopped short. A masked gunman stood behind the bar, emptying the cash register. The customer and proprietor were backed against the wall. With lightning swiftness Bud's six-gun was out and roaring, with the bandit's gunshots quickly seconding his own. Bud felt a red hot jet of flame sear its way through his gut. He flinched but kept shooting, and the robber fell forward.

After the fracas was over Sheriff Ballew found he'd shot a good friend, Pete Byrum!

Byrum was one of Ballew's closest friends. They'd ridden the Texas range together, shared many a blanket, woman and bottle. Bud fell back against the wall, staring sadly at the dying man. Suddenly a woman's blood-curdling scream rent the air.

"Where's that comin' from?" Bud demanded quickly.

"From behind the building," someone answered.

Forgetting his own wound, Bud raced through the rear door and out into a pitch black alleyway. From a nearby tar-paper shack he could hear sobbing. Through the door he saw a woman in a flimsy night-gown bent over a bed. The woman looked appealingly into Bud's



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grey eyes, her own dazed with shock. "They've killed him!" she cried. "They've killed my son!"

After the lawman calmed her, she continued: "Just a few minutes ago, shooting broke out in the Pink Pony. My son was sitting by the window. A bullet shattered the glass and struck his head!"

Bud turned and walked out into the night. Had he killed that innocent boy? There was no way of knowing. It could have been his bullet, or Byrum's.

The earth had barely settled over Byrum's grave—and that of the innocent youth—when six-guns roared in Ardmore. It happened late one evening. Buck Garrett had just completed his inspection tour of the bars and returned to his office, intending to boil himself some coffee, meditate, and relax. Just then, however, a gunshot rang out, and he was on his feet, gun in hand. He waited a minute, hoping against hope that other shots would not be fired. If others didn't follow it would more than likely be some harmless but drunken roughneck blowing off steam. Immediately what seemed to be a fusillade echoed through the streets. Buck returned his own gun to its holster and walked out into the pitch black night.

He moved slowly through the streets; to be out of breath unsteadied a man's aim. He turned a corner. A hundred yards away he saw a young man swaggering through the streets, holding a gun in his hand. Buck knew that fellow didn't fire those shots, for they had come from down on Main Street. Then he recognized the man. It was Jim Foushee.

"Jim!" he demanded. "Where you think you're goin'?"

"To kill Wobblin' Willie Ballew."

"Wobblin' Willie? That harmless cripple who runs the cigar store? What you wanna kill him for?"

"He ain't so harmless. He just shot and killed my brother!"

In the conversation that followed Buck pieced together what had happened. Erb Foushee, the gunman's brother, had verbally abused Willie for poor service. Crazy mad, Ballew had pulled a pistol and shot his provoker dead. Now holed up in the Dew Drop Inn, a deserted *colar* parlor, Ballew was crazily firing shots into the street.

"Hell, man!" Buck bellowed, "you ain't gonna kill Willie. Walk out onto Main Street and he'll kill you. He's under cover. You won't get within ten feet of that building. He'll drop you on sight!"

Foushee wasn't listening. "Willie killed my brother," he repeated. "I'm gonna get 'im!"

By now Garrett was but a yard away from the wavering barrel of the Colt 45. His move was so fast that even the spectators were not sure what happened.

With his left hand he knocked Foushee's gun straight up into the air, while his right fist struck him squarely on the chin.

Soundlessly, Foushee fell into the dust and lay still.

Buck now turned his attention to Willie Ballew. Approaching the Dew Drop, he could see Willie holding his battle station at the front window. The lamed man took a long drink from a whiskey bottle and fired several shots into the street.

"Who's gonna take me?" he cried. "Who thinks he's tough enough to take me?"

Then suddenly Willie saw Garrett approaching. Slowly he lowered the gun, squinting his eyes. "Buck Garrett? What you want?" he cried.

"I want you, Willie."

"You're crazy. You're wantin' me to kill you. You're out in the open—I can drop you in a minute!"

"Why don't you?"

"You're my friend. I don't wanna kill you."

"You'll have to stop me." By now Buck was standing in the doorway of the Dew Drop. His steady gray eyes held the cowering gunman. Willie's rifle slipped from his grasp and clattered to the floor. His fingers tightened around the neck of a whiskey bottle.

"Just a minute, Buck," he said meekly. "I need me a drink."

"All right, Willie," Garrett said, quietly. "Help yourself to the bottle. Then we've got business at the county jail."

While awed townfolk looked on, Buck led Willie to the county lockup.

In 1916, when Bud Ballew was promoted to the position of chief deputy sheriff, Buck was faced with the problem of finding a man to replace him in Ragtown. Among the applicants was a tall and haggard man called R.P. Highnote who wore a top hat, black frock coat, white shirt and string tie. The belligerent smirk on his thin lips and the cold defiance in his dark eyes mirrored his icy nature. He had all the characteristics of a professional killer.

Although he was the shadiest applicant in appearance, Highnote had the most impressive record. He claimed to have served with the 7th Cavalry during their campaign against Geronimo, and said he had worked with Tom Horn in Arizona's Tonto Basin range war. He had kept order in Bob Ford's Creede City saloon, and later been a Soapy Smith henchman in that same Colorado camp. Where could Buck hope to find a more logical candidate to replace Bud Ballew?

As it turned out, almost anywhere. Despite the proper background, Highnote was gravely handicapped for a policeman's duties by a close relationship with Ragtown's sporting crowd. He found it impossible to make justified arrests without treading on the toes of his closest friends. He refused to interfere with "jack rolling," (robbing customers), practiced in many of the bawdy houses. Most of the saloon keepers were his friends.

Bud Ballew, however, expected him to close down his friends' businesses. Then, after Highnote had ignored several of Buck's orders, Ballew was forced to ride out to pick up his badge and commission. He found the discharged deputy sitting drunk on the office porch, a jug of red-eye liquor by his side.

"You've been fired," he told the gunman. "We've got another man who's supposed to take over the office tomorrow."

Highnote raised his head drunkenly. "Nobody's gonna take my badge!" he insisted. "Nobody!"

Bud had other ideas about that. By now he was on the porch and standing over the drunken officer. Swiftly he brought an arched hand down against Highnote's neck and sent him sprawling to the floor. He then grabbed the deputy by the scruff of the neck and flung him through the door.

"Now," he barked, "get that badge before I hafta get tough!"

Highnote suddenly sobered and did as he was told. While Bud rummaged through the papers in the desk drawer, Highnote began gathering up his belongings. But on his way to the door he paused.

"Ballew?" Highnote said in a flat voice.

"Yeah?" Bud replied without looking up from the desk.

"I'm going to kill you!"

"You are, eh? Well, that's good. Now get on out here and start plottin' my murder. I ain't got time to fool with you."

"Mister Ballew, you don't understand. I'm going to kill you now!"

There was something in the man's voice that made Buck look up. He raised his head—and found Highnote going for his pistol. Quickly he kicked back the chair and went sprawling floorward. By the time he hit, his gun was out and roaring. Teeth clenched, eyes wide, he brought his fist down again and again against the hammer, fanning shot after shot. The last shots were useless, though, for the first one had caught Highnote in the chest, spinning him half way around and dropping him dead on the floor.

Trouble next bubbled in Ardmore. One day Ben Lindsay went on the war-path. Bored with the normal routine of a wildcatter's life, he decided one morning to hurrah the town. He whipped his pony to the end of the street, turned, dug his spurs in deep, and came back at top speed, his six-guns roaring. He shot into stores and business houses, shattering windows and barely missing customers. The town was thrown into a frenzy.

Farmers in the general store leaped for cover. Women in the dress shop began screaming hysterically. Cowboys in the gambling halls leaped under tables. Satisfied he had "everybody's" heart a-quake, Lindsay proceeded to the nearest saloon.

Angry men meantime began collecting in the streets. Everyone agreed that something had to be done to "learn" the wild-catters a lesson. It was agreed that Lindsay should be made an example.

"Tarn't feather 'im," was the cry. "Yes, let's!" came the echo.

With a roar the mob stormed toward the barroom. They were cursing and shaking their fists in the air. With them they carried a smoldering pot of tar and feathers.

Lindsay, leaving the saloon, saw them coming. He stopped short on the porch, pushed back his Stetson hat and stared in disbelief. He leaped on his horse's back and pulled a rifle from the scabbard. His first shot knocked up dust a few feet from the approaching mob.

"That's far enough," he bellowed. "I don't wanna kill none of you fellows."

The mob came steadily on. "We don't wanna hurt you, Ben," the leader said quietly, "but you boys have to be taught a lesson. Otherwise somebody is gonna get killed. I wouldn't want my little daughter terntin' hit by a stray shot fired by some drunk wildcatter."

Desperately Lindsay looked for a way out. Suddenly he spied a towering construction project, a building frame that reached a height of several stories. Waving his rifle in the air, he struck out for the framed structure. Up one flight and around another he went, until at last he was at the very top. Lindsay leveled his rifle down into the mob and shouted: "You fellows gonna take me? You think you can take me?"

For one terrible second the leader stared up at the threatening gunman. Suddenly he realized the seriousness of the situation. What started out as "a lotta fun" had gotten completely out of hand. Lindsay meant business. Were something not done, he might very well kill somebody. Quickly he turned away from the mob.

"Where you goin'?" someone asked.

"Where you think? To get Buck Garret, of course!"

Arriving on the scene a few minutes later, Buck quickly sized up the situation. Lindsay, still standing on the grider and filled with liquid courage, was continuing to shout his defiance down into the mob.

"Who's gonna take me?" he repeated.

"Who's tough enough to take me?" Sheriff Garrett and everyone there knew the answer to that. Only thing left was to convince Ben Lindsay. Buck took over immediately.

"Hey, Ben!" he shouted, looking up into the sun.

"Yeah, Buck."

"I'm coming up to arrest you."

"What the hell? You wantin' to die?"

"I'm not gonna die. I'm gonna take you to jail!"

"You'd better not try!"

"These words apparently fell on deaf

ears. Seemingly unmindful of the fact that a rifle was targeted on his heart, Buck walked across the street and into the shadow of the towering project. He mounted flight after flight, until at last he was on the level occupied by Lindsay. Little by little he inched his way across the grider. Finally, he was facing the dark and menacing barrel of the .30-30.

"Careful Ben," he said, pushing the rifle aside. "I don't want one of us falling off."

Lindsay went suddenly sober. "I'm sorry, Buck," he said. "I don't know what's been wrong with me."

"You're drunk, that's all. Let's get down to the ground. You go first, I'll follow."

Buck Garrett had thus once again restored order to the streets of Ardmore.

There now began to build up a feeling in the town that left Buck Garrett believing his vigilance hadn't been appreciated. Many of his old friends were openly hinting that he now went hand in glove with the unsavory element of the town; that he was just a whiskey-sodden tool of the oil field racketeers; that he was making a mockery of the law he had once served so honorably.

They noticed that most of the bordellos in both Ardmore and Ragtown had reopened, flagrantly disregarding the law.

A Pair of Winners THE WEST GOLDEN WEST

Every Saturday night roughnecks and wildcatters went in with a full week's wages; every Sunday morning almost every one of them awoke with a sore head and empty pockets. It was whispered that the operators paid a protection fee for the privilege of staying open.

Also, hi-jackers were operating on a large scale in the oil fields. Many believed the sheriff to be in cahoots with the highwaymen.

Finally in 1921 Buck was brought to task by the Law and Order League. He defended his record with virtuous indignation.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I've never taken one dishonest dime. Not one dime. I've run this county the best I know how. I can explain to you anything and everything you see in the streets of either Ragtown or Ardmore!"

Doctor Charles Christian Weight, a Presbyterian minister who had long supported Buck in his struggle for law and order, turned hopeful eyes on the sheriff.

"Yes, Buck," he said. "Go ahead."

"Look, Doctor," Buck said, patiently. "Things here ain't like elsewhere. The lines here aren't drawn so sharp and clear. This is an oil town filled with thousands of hell roarin', rough and ready wildcatters. Without their entertainment they're gonna be goin' around cussin'

everybody's guts out. Yeah, just like anywhere else, we've gotta hold the lid on, but not too tight. I'm usin' Ragtown for a safety valve where the roughnecks can blow off steam.

"After a night of drinkin', wenchin', and gamblin' the boys are ready for a day of oil riggerin'. That's why I ain't done nothin' about all the bootleg joints and gamblin' dens."

Buck went ahead to describe himself as a public servant. He explained that he had to give the people the kind of service they wanted. Otherwise they would hire another servant. The people wanted their town wide open. So "that's the way she's gonna stay."

Buck Garrett hadn't changed; but times change, and the attitudes of men change with them. The committee men looked from one to another. What Buck said might very well have been true in a by-gone day. But now, in 1921, he just didn't seem to realize the frontier had vanished.

The new Westerner, the modern plainsman, didn't think that way. Even the sheriff's most loyal friends and supporters were suddenly demanding honest law enforcement. They wanted reform—and fast. Finally, a ranchman named Ewing London spoke for the committee.

"Buck, you're past fifty. Don't you think it's time you retired?"

"London! You too?"

"Yes, Buck. Me too!"

"You headed the committee that asked me to take this job."

"We needed you then. Now it's time for reform. Either you provide it or we'll get somebody who will."

"You know better than to ask me for reform."

"That's why I didn't ask you. I asked you to retire."

"Yes. And I'm tellin you to go to hell. Every one of you. I'm not quittin'..."

"Okay," London said. "Have it your way." Then he nodded to one of the men. "Jim, go ahead over to Western Union and put the message through to the governor's office. Tell 'im we want an appointment."

During the weeks that followed events happened fast in Ardmore. First the Ku Klux Klan moved into action. Wearing black hoods and white capes, they swept down on the saloons. Huge quantities of moonshine liquor were seized, poured into the streets and set aflame. They dynamited houses of prostitution and shot real bullets into the homes of bootleggers. They threatened the lives of men they considered corrupt officials.

Finally Doctor Weight appealed to Governor Robertson, and the sheriff was ousted from office. Ewing London was named to replace him. The career of the man who brought law and order to the oil fields thus ended in disgrace, and Buck Garrett never fully recovered from the shock.

He died a victim of paralysis in 1929. ●

