

### The Secret of Saddle Gap

By Edith G. Bayne

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out of Nugget Bay that very night I bribed this Indian here not to tell. He guided me through the Pass, and I cleared for Australia. A case of cold feet with me. As a participator I was due for term in the pen, you see. White Eagle kept his promise until—

"Until the day after Comox chased me away," Bestwood supplied. "The Indian and I met by chance, he happened to mention he was an old Nugget Bay miner, the rest I easily got out of him by bribery.

To-day he was ready and waiting to help me and we got Comox just as he returned from one of his trips. Muscular old codger I'll say."

"Dan always was," agreed Frear, and extending his hand to Comox said: "Put it there, old-timer, I never did hold grudges."

"Charlie, Charlie," whimpered the old man. "You was always white, Charlie. An'—an' so 'twas the Swede—"

Frear sat down on a log and invited Comox to do likewise. The others had moved off.

"That engineer lad's a rare cute one," he remarked, his glance following Bestwood

and Gail. "Never opened his head to me about the girl. A radiant little lady, too. I saw how the land lay as soon as they met."

"It—it's up in the Saddle, in a pocket Charlie," whispered Comox. "I can't reach it now, too old, I guess. Might've dynamited it, but—somethin' held me back. So 'twas me was buffaloed. Serves me—"

"Omit the ghastly stuff, Dan. Say, I've a little girl of my own in Australia. Feel lonesome for her. Nearly nine years old now. Looks something like Menary's girl, too. Has red hair though, red curls," he mused aloud.

Bestwood and Gail walked to a bluff overlooking Chinook Valley. She had already told him of the skeleton. Now she swiftly changed the topic.

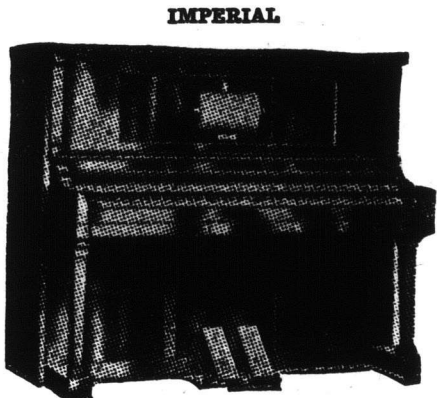
"Something kept telling me you'd come back, that you weren't the kind to fall down on a job."

"I'm always getting involved in adventure," he said, slowly. "Sometimes I wish I were a detective. I had to call one in to trace Frear so I can't claim all the credit. No, it's true the old man didn't chase me. I was going anyway. The only thing that worried me was not being able to get word to you. Every-

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