

CHAPTER I

LOST HOLLOW lies close at the foot of the mountain which gives it its name. The height of neither is great, geographically considered; the peak is perhaps eighteen hundred feet above sea level: The Hollow, a thousand, and from that down to The Forge there is a gradual descent by several trails and one road, a very deplorable one, known as The Appointed Way, but abbreviated into — The Way.

There are a few wretched cabins in Lost Hollow, detached and dreary; between The Hollow and The Forge are some farms showing more or less cultivation, and there is the Walden Place, known before the war — they still speak of that event among the southern hills as if Sheridan had ridden through in the morning and might be expected back at night — as the Great House.

Among the crevasses of the mountains there are Blind Tigers, or Speak Easies — as the stills are called — and, although there is little trading done with the whiskey outside the country side, there is much mischief achieved among the natives who have no pleasure of relaxation except such as is