

306 Trails to Two Moons

Ranch, of which the oldsters in Two Moons still spin yarns, smashed the invaders and broke the back of the cattle clan. For all time thereafter the Big Country became everyman's land and not the fief of the cattle barony.

As for Zang Whistler, when he rode back to the Spout that day from Hilma's cabin it was the beginning of a ride into exile. For Original Bill's expedition had, in truth, cleaned up the Spout even without its little general. Zang himself narrowly escaped the capture that fell to the lot of most of the outlaws who had beleaguered Original in the cabin on Teapot. Zang drifted to the Southwest, where there yet remained adventure for the untamed.

It was the first day Original had been permitted by the domineering Woolly Annie to crawl from his bunk to the door. He sat there in the flooding sunshine, gazing off to the purple ramparts of the Broken Horns. Hilma sat on the step below him. Her golden head, color of dandelions in dew, was laid on his knee. One of his hands strayed through the fugitive tendrils that dropped over her ears.

A great content was theirs. They were one with the bluebonnets that flecked the sweep of the divides with royal color; one with the