

EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY BY H.E. SMITH

MY NIGHT IN A STAGE COACH

The boy took up the lines, the bright frank smile upon his face, the cherry word upon his tongue. "Good-bye." He said, to the man in the doorway.

The man stood for an instant in the door way looking after us, "Good-bye," he said.

We went on along the road that from the beginning of time it was ordained we were to go. I crept back into my corner. "Do not go to sleep," the pleasant voice warned me from the front." Thank you," I replied, cheered and warmed by its hearty glow. "I will not sleep."

Then followed a long silence, in which I had views of the falling snow, the white hills above us, the white hills still below us, in which I heard sounds from creaking, crooning branches, from the wind sweeping savagely past us. Then unconquerable drowsiness, fast coming darkness-then night.

I felt a hand on my face, then on my shoulder, shaking me roughly; a sweet, cheering voice in my ears, calling me back to life.

"If you go to sleep now, you won't wake up again," it said. I woke with a sudden start, for an instant, to a full consciousness of time and peace. I was not cold, only sleepy. "I am quite awake," I replied. "Have we far to go?"

"Five miles," and the voice was still the same cheery voice that I had heard from the first. He spoke to me often after that; then I saw him as in a dream, fixing a blanket that he had taken from the horse's back, to the hickory bows overhead, to keep the snow from driving in upon me, for I was covered with it to my knees. As God is my judge I did not then clearly know what he was doing, or I would have stopped him. I did not feel cold, though I knew afterward that I was freezing, and I did not think I was cold. I did not think at all. I was far past that. I had begun a longer journey than I started upon.

**Register of Deeds
Judy Lambert
(Continued)**