

**EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY
BY H.E. SMITH**

My Night in A Stage Coach

It may have been an hour, or two hours, but it seemed but a minute after this that the boy shook me roughly by the shoulder.

"We are to get out here," he said. I was very stiff in my joints, but I could get up and climb out of the stage, and no more. If I was cold I did not know it; my limbs were numb, yet otherwise I was comfortable enough. I crawled out and followed the boy into a miserable-looking shanty by the roadside, in front of which we had stopped.

There was a rough bar running across the room; there was a thick, black haired, brawny-looking man behind it, and there were two or three kegs of liquor behind him. There was an iron stove in the middle of the room, a bench along the wall, and that was all. The boy asked for some brandy, drank a glass of it after handing one to me, which I drank, and felt so much better for drinking that I called for another and got it; but the boy refused to take the glass I offered him. "I have had enough," he said.

"We were going out, when the land lord opened the door before us. Looking out into the storm, he asked incredulously; "Are you going on?" "Yes!" said the boy, "I was told to drive this gentleman to Ilium tonight, and I'm going to do it."

"If you get there at all, it will be night sure enough," the landlord said. "I will get there all the same," was the boy's reply. "Let us stop here tonight," I said; "we can go on in the morning." "I would rather take you on, sir! There's no danger. I can't put my horse up here, and my master would kill me if anything happened to him."

That decided me to go on. Beside, I did not care to talk. I was beginning to feel cold again standing in the wind, so we got into the stage. It was not snowing any faster than before, simply because not. But the roads were heavier, and when we tried to start, the jaded horse balked and struggled through the drift, for the stage had frozen fast where it stopped.

It was 3 o'clock, the light in the west growing dimmer and dimmer-the gloom of the mountains and the bare woods coming nearer to us, making their meaning felt in our souls, filling mine with an awful dread of the snow-covered road beyond. Ten miles to go yet, the night coming quickly on, the cold growing more intense, the road rougher, more precipitous, the horse evidently giving out! But 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.

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