

## CHAPTER 1



### *SAN FRANCISCO*

The two nicely dressed men, each carrying a heavy suitcase and standing by their trunks, bought their tickets for the eastbound Union Pacific train headed for Washakie, in the Wyoming Territory. They graciously tipped the porters most generously due to the weight of the bags and trunks, joking that their work required heavy materials.

"Thank you, sirs, we'll take care of them," the baggage handlers assured them, grateful for a gratuity that nearly equaled what they normally made in a week.

The two men walked away from the baggage car and boarded the first passenger car, which was two cars ahead. They discussed the latest political news and their own previous personal travels. They sat together on one row, amid other rows of what appeared to be other businessmen on their way to important business dealings. Only a handful of women were on the train, and there were no children, at least not in their car.

When the conductor passed through the car and punched a hole in their tickets, they barely looked up at him, so engrossed were they in quiet discussion. They kept up this type of conversation, or they kept to themselves and read or dozed. They were courteous to other passengers when it was necessary to interact.

When the excitement of the journey's beginning began to wane in the car, the two men, one by one, stood and made their way to the baggage car. They were quite careful making their way between the railroad cars, not wanting any undue mishaps. When their business in the baggage car was completed, they made their way quietly back to their seats, one by one.

The trip to Washakie was uneventful for the men, and they once again handsomely tipped the baggage handlers who ran to the businessmen as soon as they spotted them groaning under the weight of their bags. They wanted to be the lucky ones to offload the heavy bags and trunks, anticipating a large tip.

The train continued on its route. The next stop of great consequence to Horace S. Milner was at Rawlins, where he'd meet representatives of the Rawlins Territorial Bank. Thus far, his boxes of gold had been exactly where and as they should be when he checked them at each stop. He was grateful there had been no robbers attempting to board the train at the water or food stops. It had certainly happened before, although not on his watch.

At Rawlins, Milner and Frazier were met by the president of the bank, Mr. Robert Bennett, two armed guards, and two burly bank employees who had been pressed into service to lift and carry the burden of gold. Once identities had been verified, Horace S. Milner allowed the muscled men to put the gold on a hand cart that was very similar to the one used back at the mint. This cart would be used to transfer the gold to the wagon that would be used to carry it to the bank.

With utmost dramatic gravity, Horace S. Milner demonstrated that the key would unlock the box's lock. Security protocol, as defined by the mint, didn't allow the box to be *opened* in a public

place, but it could be, and had to be, unlocked to prove he had the correct key. He relocked the box with an equal amount of drama, and placed the key ceremoniously in the hand of Mr. Bennett, bowing slightly with a smug sense of a job well done. He bid gracious goodbyes to the bank staff and re-boarded the train.