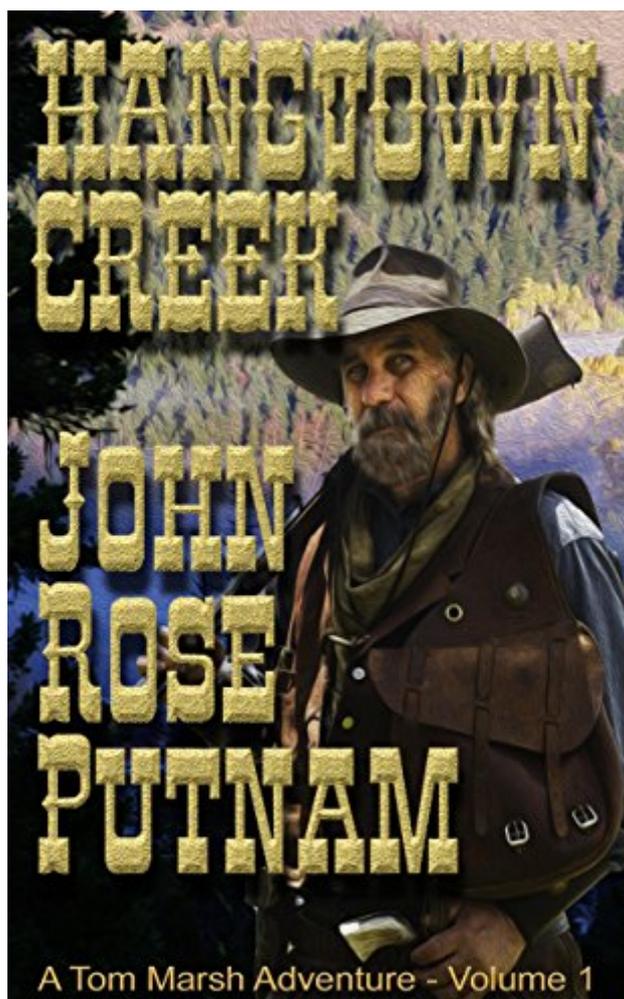


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Hangtown Creek: A Tale Of The California Gold Rush (A Tom Marsh Adventure Book 1)



Synopsis

The majestic landscapes of Brett Harte's California unite with Larry McMurtry's epic old west realism in an explosion of love, lust, murder and betrayal that comes to a powerful climax along a beautiful stream, home to the largest strike in the mines, where a burning barn ignites the passion of a gold rush boomtown and, in one dark night of revenge, earns that stream the name it bears to this day "HANGTOWN CREEK.

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Customer Reviews

I am currently teaching a class on the "Mining History of the Mother lode" at Folsom Lake College. Teaching & working as a professional geologist in the Mother Lode of California for the past 45 years has given me an unusual perspective on "Gold" and the importance of Hangtown Creek to the early development of the Gold Rush. This is a refreshing book that intertwines an engaging story with the actual places that it happened. This exciting story gives the reader a window to the hardships of surviving in the early stages of this massive western migration of rabid miners as gold

deposits were being exploited. I highly recommend this entertaining & educational book on the early exploitation of the Mother Lode area in California Professor George Wheeldon, Folsom Lake College

Hangtown Creek is at heart a suspense story with a satisfyingly deep plot - the intertwined threads of Maggie's flight from the wicked Smiling Jack and the Marsh family's agonizing trek into Gold Country are equally worthy of their own Western short novel. John works between the two themes with a score of well-timed crescendos and discoveries, gently leading the way with historical accuracy that doesn't bog down the narrative or come across as excessive. Elegant but with a thumping pace, vicious without being crude, it was a very good read - highly recommended.

Crazy that I read this author's first book last but it has only enhanced my affection for the sequel *Into The Face Of The Devil*, the book that got me hooked on his unique style of storytelling in the first place and that I will probably now read again. Now that I have his back story, I understand the character of Tom Marsh even better, and love him all the more, although my favorite character may very well be Eban... All the research done behind this tale shines through. I especially like the way that, though set in the old west or even earlier like with *River of Corn*, John's writing is so fresh you are always simply in the now with his characters. Can't imagine anyone not enjoying this good read. The pace, rich characters and smooth writing voice and style carried me along and kept me reading into the wee hours. Wonderful storytelling I am happy to highly recommend. Noble themes in the midst of lust, gold and greed as well as lessons on love and finally belonging.

Hangtown Creek is a well-planned, well-executed novel. The author impresses with his vast historical knowledge and the description of the places as they were back in the days of the Gold Rush. While his story is tense and exciting, it is his characters that really stand out. In particular, the female protagonist, Maggie, is so life-like and appealing as she experiences the worst and the best of what the West had to offer. She is a strong woman who stands out in a world of men and is as inspiring as the most heroic of the men around her. John Putnam writes with a strong sense of understanding the principles of the story arc and his writing is impressive. His style enables you to delve deeply into the novel because it is presented so smoothly. Warning: Putnam's description of the food eaten throughout the novel will make you hungry! This is a trait throughout his books. There has to be a cookbook somewhere down this author's path.

With "Hangtown Creek," author John Putnam produces elements of the classic Western reminiscent

of tales such as "Lonesome Dove." Instead of an epic cattle drive, Putnam uses his detailed knowledge of the California Gold Rush to weave a story of intrigue and adventure. He brings alive rich characters like Maggie Magee, whose feminine allure sparkles like a nugget even under a crust of tragedy and hardship when she is thrust into the world of hard-working, hard-drinking miners of the mid-19th century. She has to struggle against villainy embodied by the likes of a half-breed named Cherokee Bill and Smiling Jack, whose moniker stems from a knife scar that stretches almost ear-to-ear. Fortunately for Maggie, she is surrounded by nobler souls such as young Tom Marsh, who leans on her for maternal comfort as he watches his real family wither away under the pressure of conditions that molded a new era in American history. It is the author's keen familiarity with the unfolding of this era that makes "Hangtown Creek" such an absorbing story, and which creates a yearning for more.

In this epic saga, John Rose Putnam paints a real and gritty picture of life in the Gold Rush era through the stories of each of his characters. A red-haired woman, her husband and son dead from cholera; two army veterans; a widowed man and three sons; three ruthless killers - all of them heading for California. Their quests make for a gripping tale. My reading tastes are eclectic, and a good book will keep me up late at night, reading when I should be asleep. That was definitely the case with Hangtown Creek. Putnam drew me into the world of gold panning, saloons, traveling by horseback, and much more with his excellent storytelling, filled with memorable characters, vivid description, and historical detail. I'll be reading more books by this talented author.

I recommend this book to anyone who wants to read a really good book. I really could not put it down. You want to see what happens next Tom went through a lot more than any boy should have to go through. But he became a man in the process. I can't wait to read more about young Tom. I really hope this will be a series on Tom. I will read everyone I can get my hands on.

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