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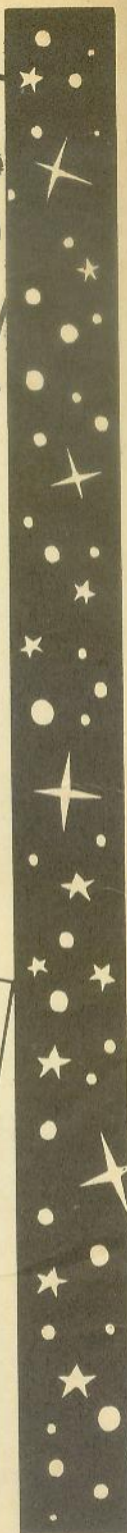
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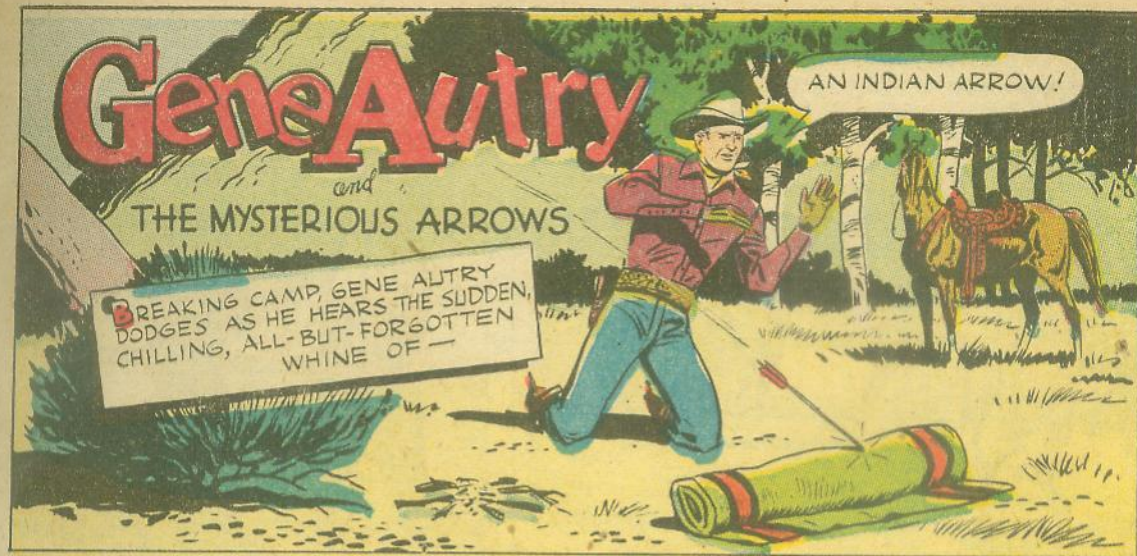


Gene Autry

and THE MYSTERIOUS ARROWS

BREAKING CAMP, GENE AUTRY
DODGES AS HE HEARS THE SUDDEN,
CHILLING, ALL-BUT-FORGOTTEN
WHINE OF —

AN INDIAN ARROW!



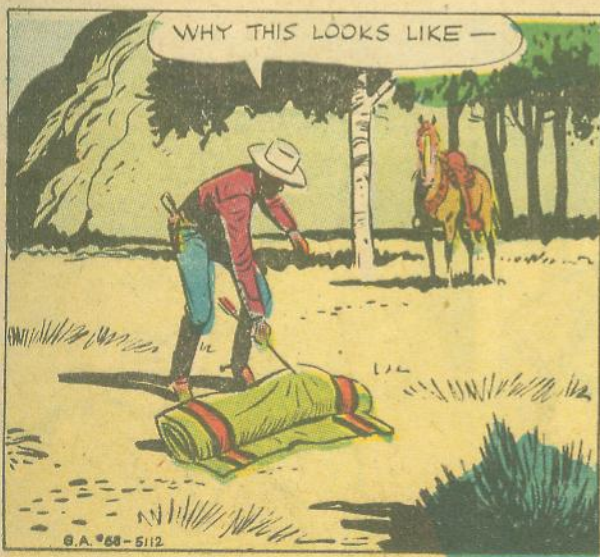
AND I THOUGHT INDIAN FIGHTIN'
WAS ALL OVER!



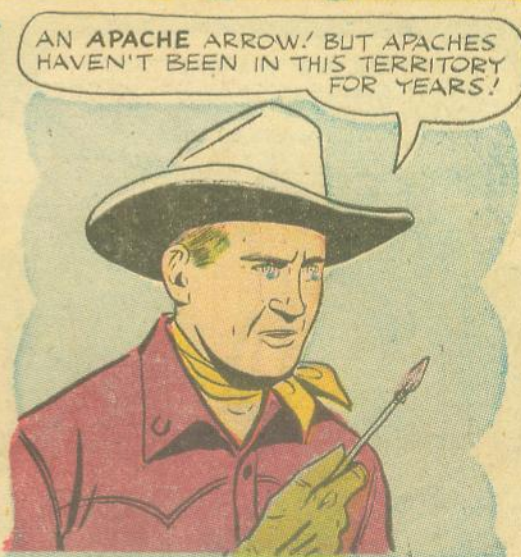
THERE HE GOES! NO USE
TRYIN' TO CATCH HIM
IN THESE MOUNTAINS!
I WONDER —

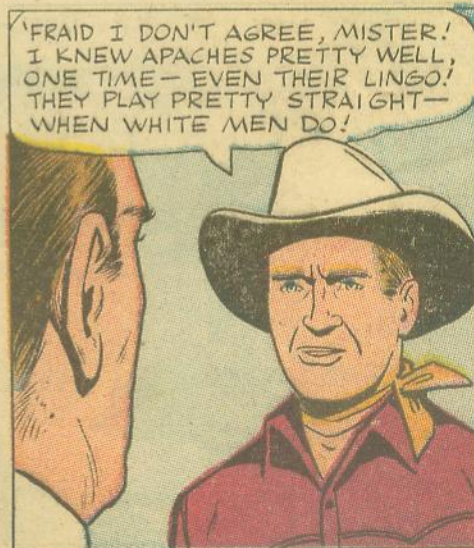
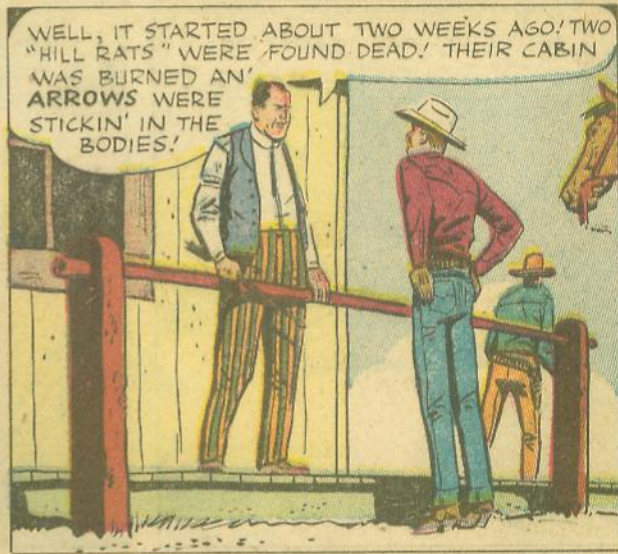
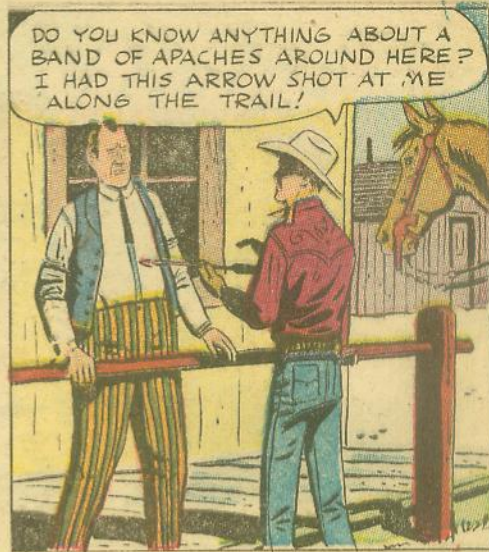


WHY THIS LOOKS LIKE —



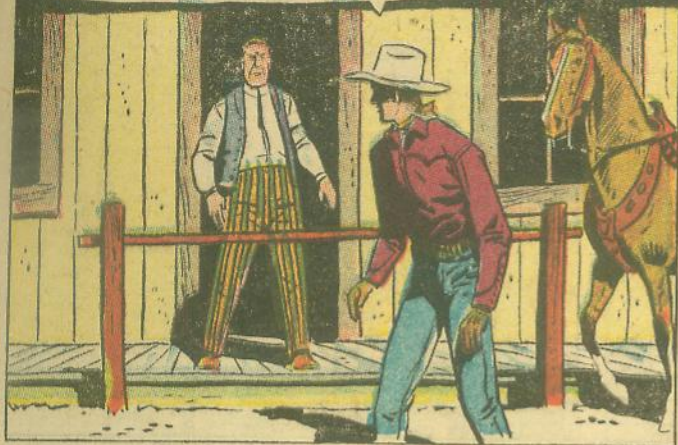
AN APACHE ARROW! BUT APACHES
HAVEN'T BEEN IN THIS TERRITORY
FOR YEARS!





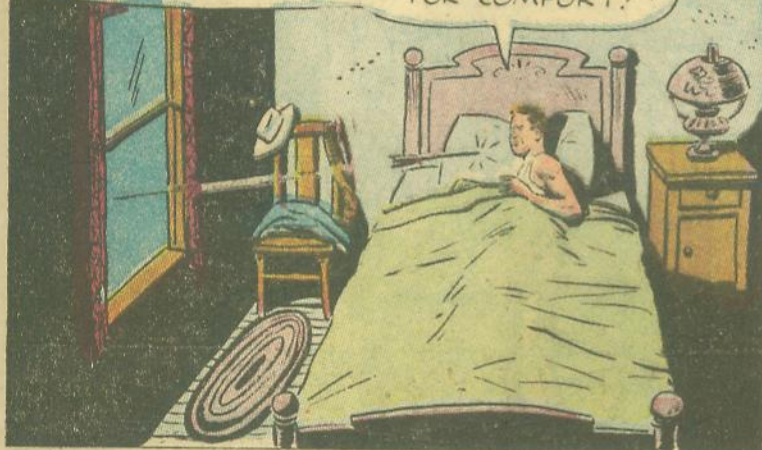
AND I'LL BET WHITE MEN'RE MIXED UP IN THIS FRACAS, SOMEWHERE! MAYBE I'LL STICK AROUND AND SEE! COME ON, CHAMP!

I WOULDN'T, IF I WERE YOU, ATRY! THIS TOWN'S TOO SMALL FOR TURNCOAT INDIAN-LOVERS!



THAT NIGHT, IN GENE'S HOTEL ROOM...

ANOTHER ONE! AND THAT WAS TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT!



OUTA RANGE ALREADY! IF I COULD JUST SET MY SIGHTS ON THAT HOMBRE JUST ONCE!



NEXT MORNING...

BUT HOW IS IT THERE'RE STILL APACHES 'ROUND HERE? I THOUGHT THEY MOVED UP NORTH YEARS AGO!

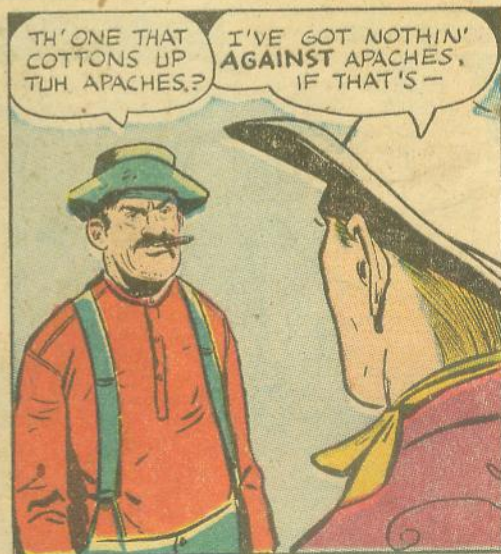
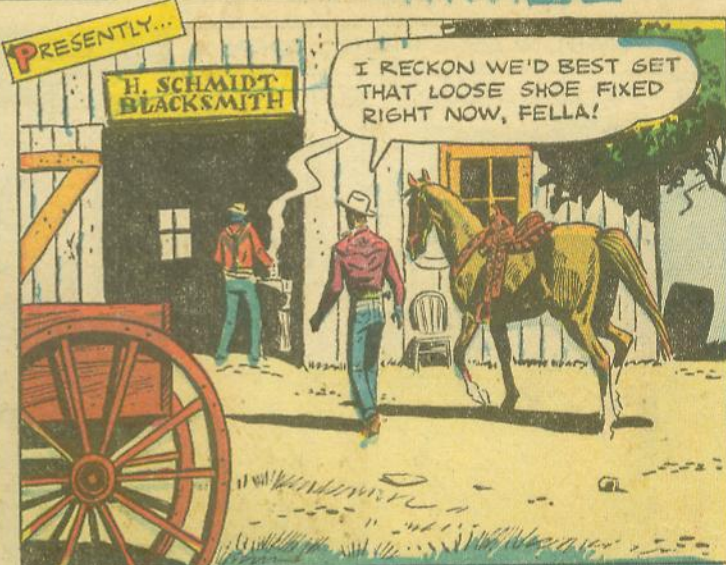
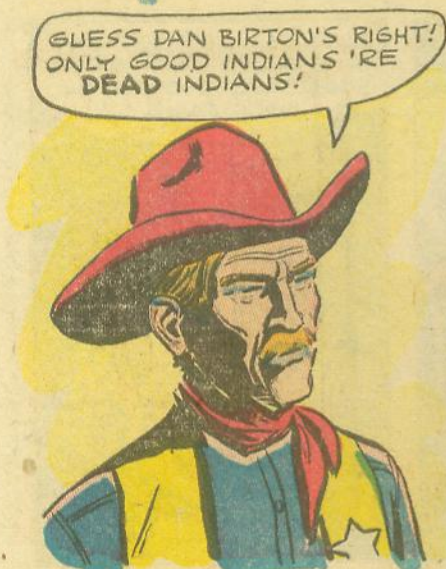
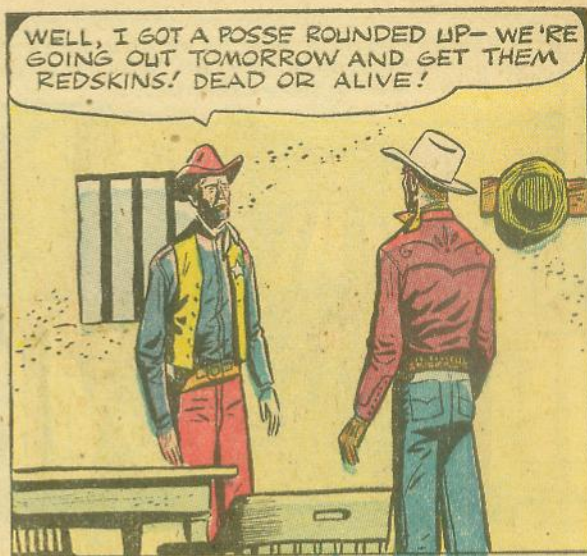
MOST OF 'EM DID! ALL BUT A FEW FAMILIES!

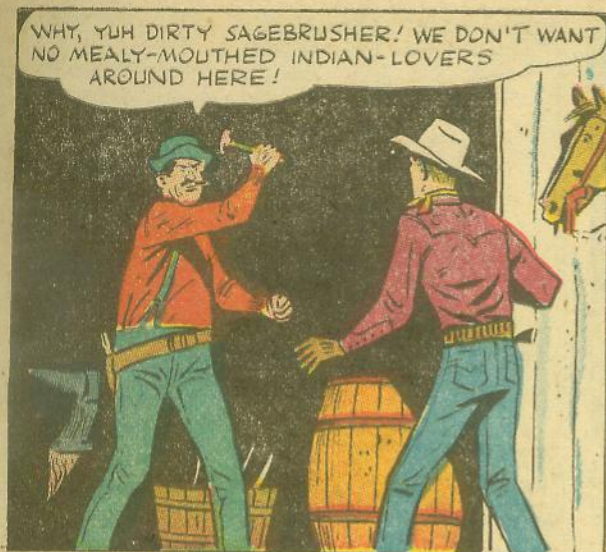


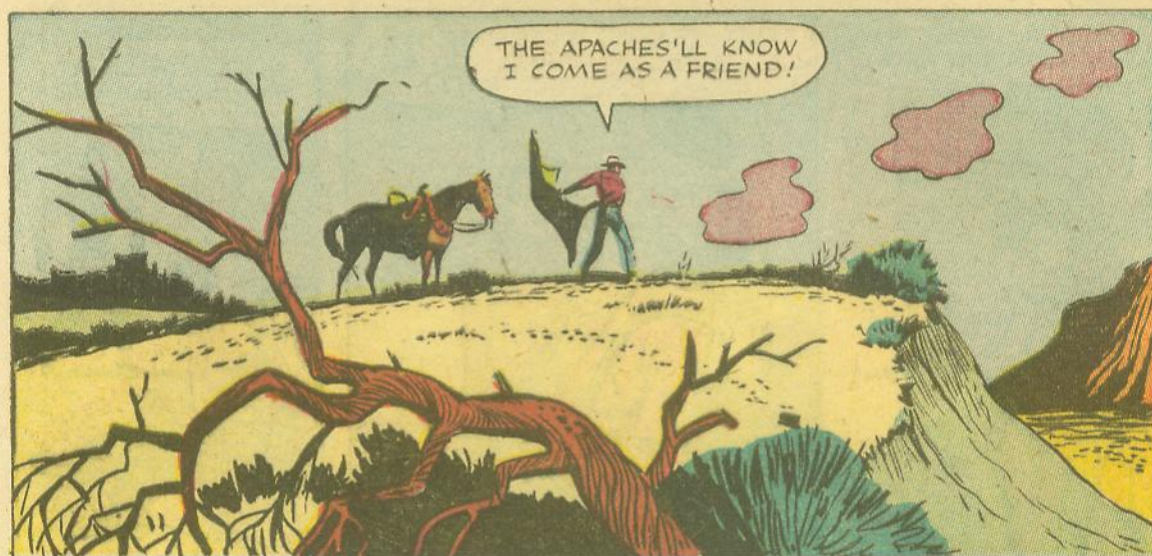
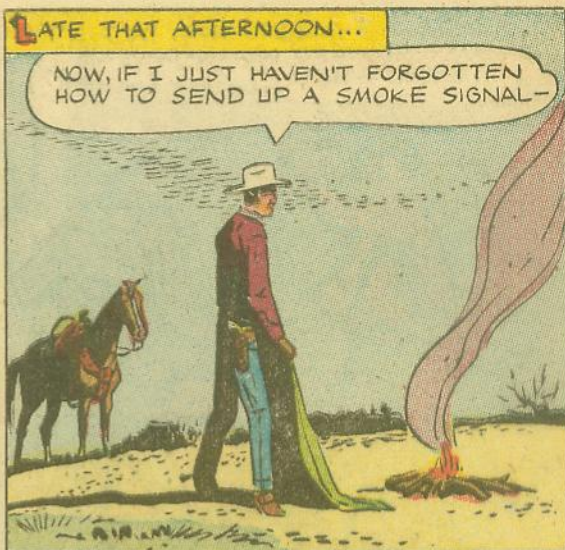
THEY STAYED ON, FOR SOME REASON! THEY LIVE 'WAY BACK IN TH' MOUNTAINS, KEEP TO THEMSELVES! HARDLY EVER SEE 'EM!

ANY TROUBLE BEFORE NOW?









LATE THAT NIGHT...

WHA--? WHAT'S GOIN'-- BIRTON?

YOU! I MIGHT 'VE KNOWN!



WHEN SOMEONE MENTIONED SMOKE SIGNALS OUT HERE, I DIDN'T WAIT FOR THE SHERIFF! ROUNDED UP SOME VIGILANTES OF MY OWN-- TO CATCH ME SOME REDSKINS!



'STEAD, WE FIND YOU!



I CAME OUT HERE TO SEE WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT! THOSE SIGNALS--

I KNOW WHAT THOSE SIGNALS WERE FOR-- YOU WERE WARNIN' TH' INDIANS SO THEY COULD AMBUSH TH' POSSE COMIN' AFTER 'EM!



BUT I--

DIRTY WHITE TRAITOR!

STRING HIM UP!

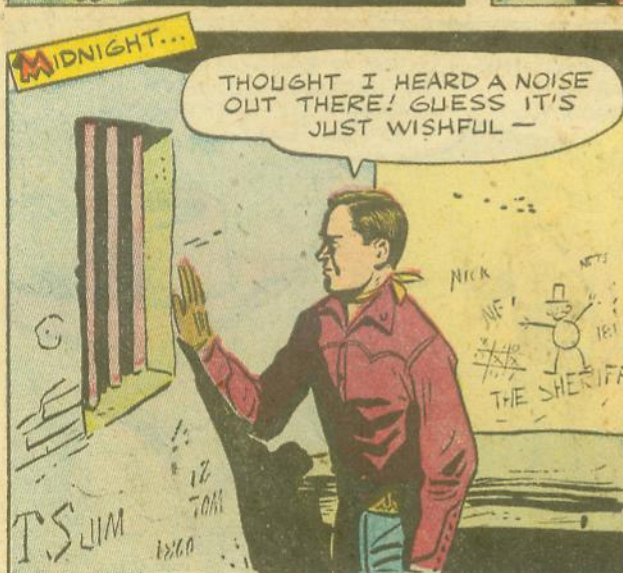


WAIT! IF WE HANG HIM HERE, WE'LL ALL BE IN TROUBLE! LET'S TAKE HIM BACK TO TOWN!

NO, HANG HIM NOW!

QUIET! LET'S HEAR BIRTON OUT!







UNLESS WE CALL OFF OUR RAID TODAY! THAT'S IT! WE'LL RAID TOMORROW! AN' CATCH 'EM OFF GUARD!



MEANWHILE, AT THE APACHE HIDE-OUT...



SO YOU SAW MY SMOKE SIGNALS YESTERDAY?

YES! THEN SCOUT SEE WHITE MEN CAPTURE YOU LAST NIGHT! ME SEND BRAVES TAKE YOU FROM JAIL!



BUT WHY DID YOU BRING ME HERE?

WHEN WHOLE TOWN THIRSTY FOR APACHE BLOOD, ME WANT SEE WHITE MAN WHO SIGNALS! HIM FRIEND!



I WANTED TO FIND OUT WHY YOU'RE ON THE WARPATH! WHY YOU KILLED THOSE PROSPECTORS, WHY YOU SHOOT AT STRANGERS, WHY YOU ATTACKED ME—



APACHES NOT SHOOT AT STRANGERS! APACHES NOT ATTACK YOU!

THEN WHAT ABOUT THOSE PROSPECTORS WHO—



ALL BRAVES HUNTING, FAR 'WAY, TILL YESTERDAY! WE KNOW NOTHING OF MURDER! THEN TRAPPER TELL US — TELL US WHOLE TOWN WANT KILL US!

THEN WHY HAVEN'T YOU—

YOU KNOW, NO USE! WE GO TOWN, WHITE MEN KILL US BEFORE WE SAY ONE WORD! THEY NO BELIEVE TRUTH!



BUT THOSE ARROWS?

APACHES USE GUNS, NOT ARROWS! WE KEEP MANY OLD ARROWS IN CAVE —

BUT NOW ALL ARROWS GONE! SOMEONE STEAL!

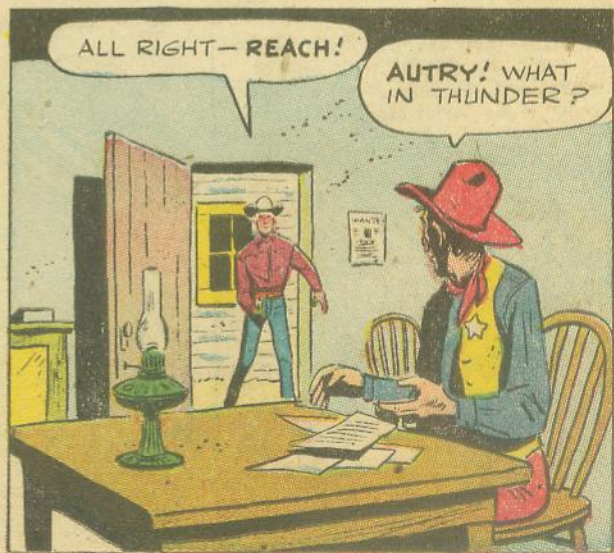
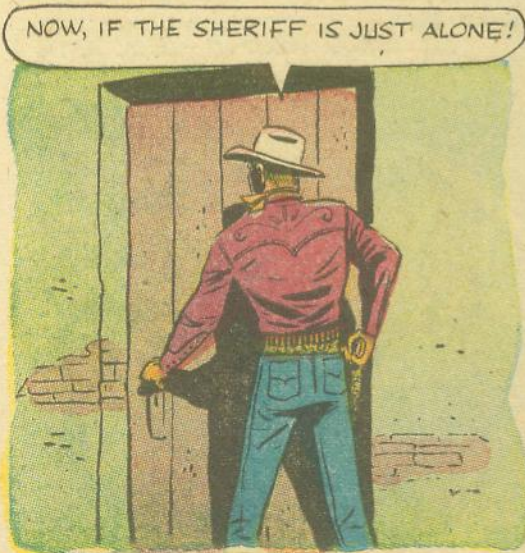


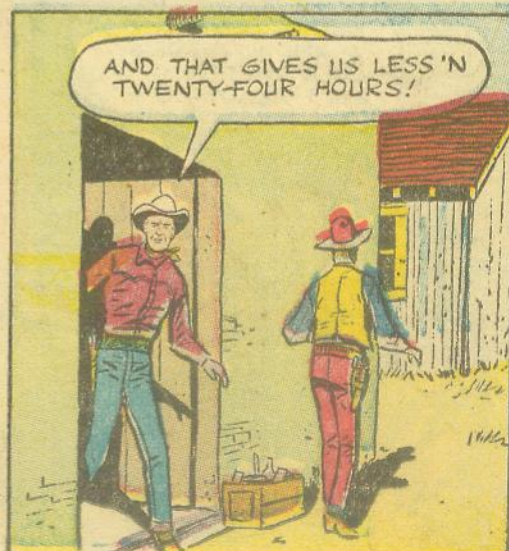
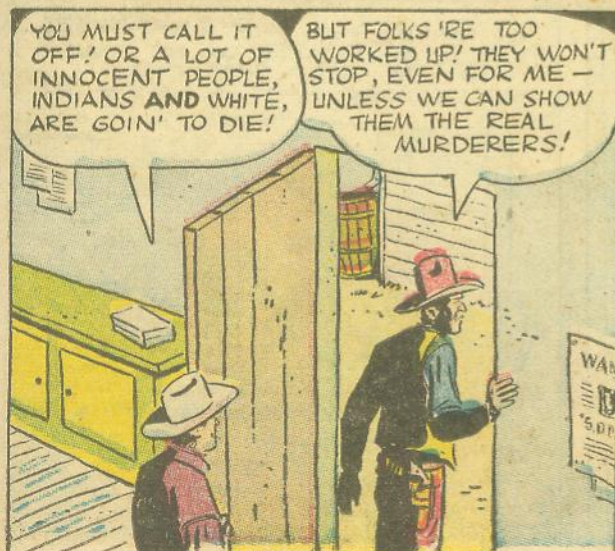
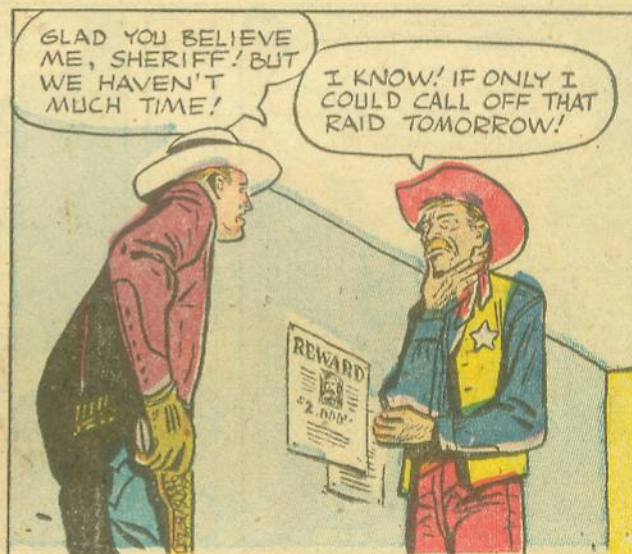
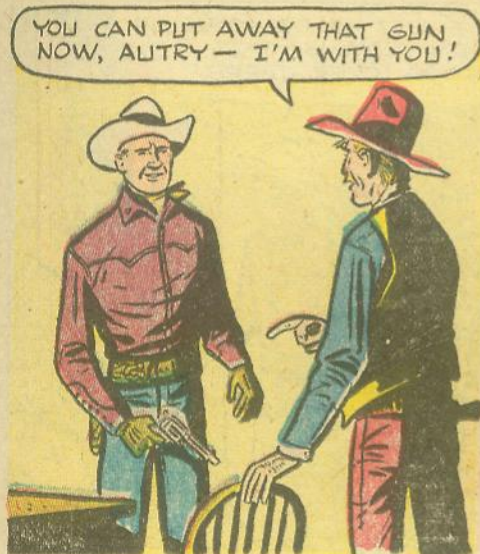
SO THAT'S IT! SOMEONE MURDERED THOSE PROSPECTORS IN COLD BLOOD — AND USED ARROWS TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE YOU APACHES DID IT!

BUT, WHY? WHY?

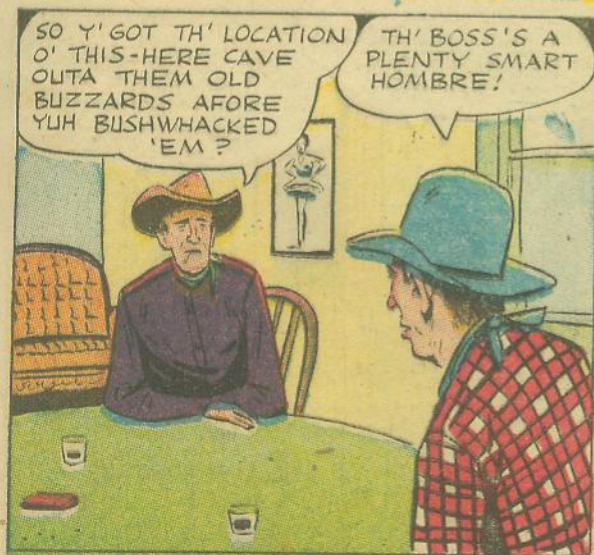
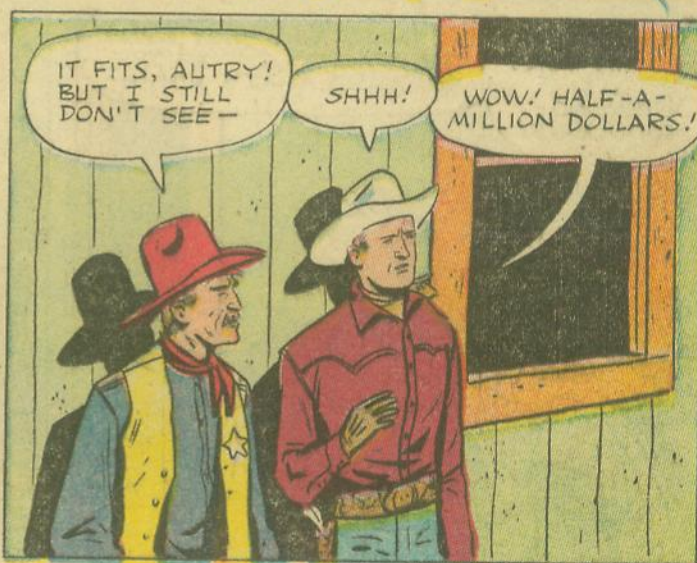
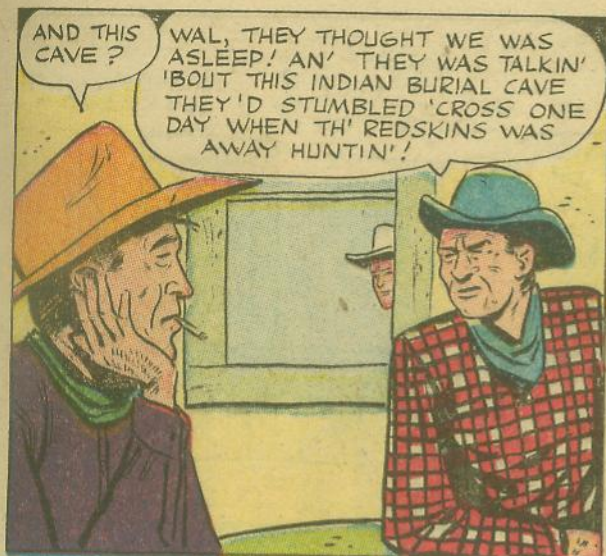
MANY PEOPLE STILL HATE RED MAN!









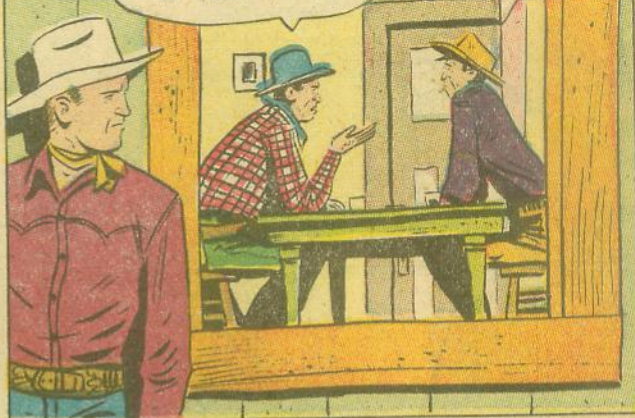


THEM ARROWS, AN' TH' ONES WE
BEEN SHOOTIN' AT STRANGERS!
THEY ALL MAKE IT LOOK LIKE TH'
APACHES IS ON TH' WARPETH! SEE?



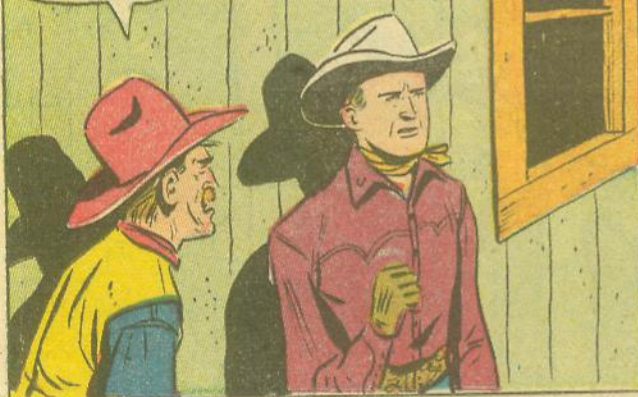
THEN WE LETS TH' SHERIFF'S
POSSE KILL 'EM OFF FOR
US, AN' WE CAN DIG OUT
THAT GOLD ANY OL' TIME
AFTER THAT!

SOUNDS MIGHTY
SLICK! BUT—



WHAT'RE WE
WAITIN' FOR?
LET'S GET
THEM NO-
GOOD RATS!

SO THAT'S WHY THEY WANT
THE APACHES OUT OF THE
WAY! AND THAT'S WHY—



THIS AIN'T NO
TIME FOR
CHIN MUSIC!
I'M TAKIN'
THESE TWO
NOW!

WAIT! MAYBE
THEY'LL SAY
SOMETHIN' MORE
'BOUT THEIR BOSS!



ALL RIGHT, YOU POLECATS,
REACH! AUTRY! THEY'RE
GONE!



THEY MUST'VE HEARD
US OUT HERE AND
SKEEDADDLED!

YOU WAIT HERE!
AIN'T SAFE FOR YOU
OUT ON TH' STREET!
I'LL TAKE A LOOK
'ROUND FRONT!





BAD NEWS, SHERIFF! HE WOULDN'T DARE BUST IN ON THE CHIEF'S POWWOW LIKE THIS!



WONDER WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT?

WE'LL FIND OUT, SOON ENOUGH!



SCOUT SAY SIX WHITE MEN COMING IN MOUNTAINS! FAST—TOWARD APACHE SACRED CAVE! WE GO TO CAVE! THEN—



AN AMBUSH! CHIEF, HOW ABOUT LETTIN' US COME ALONG? MAYBE THAT GANG'LL LISTEN TO THE SHERIFF HERE—AND GIVE UP WITHOUT A FIGHT!



ME NOT THINK SO! BUT WE TRY WHITE MAN'S WAY FIRST! COME!

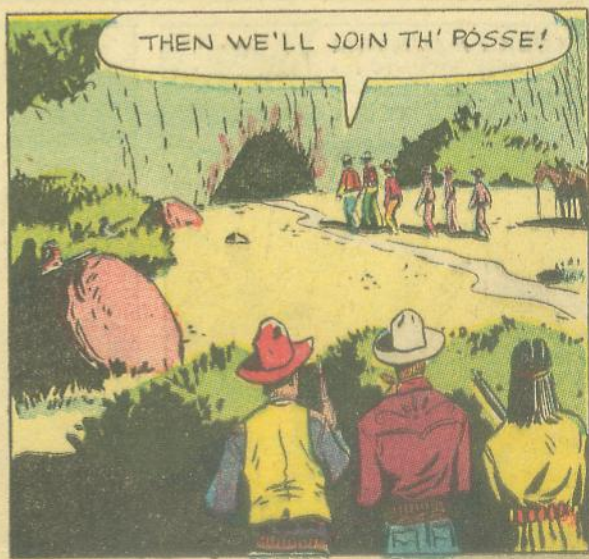
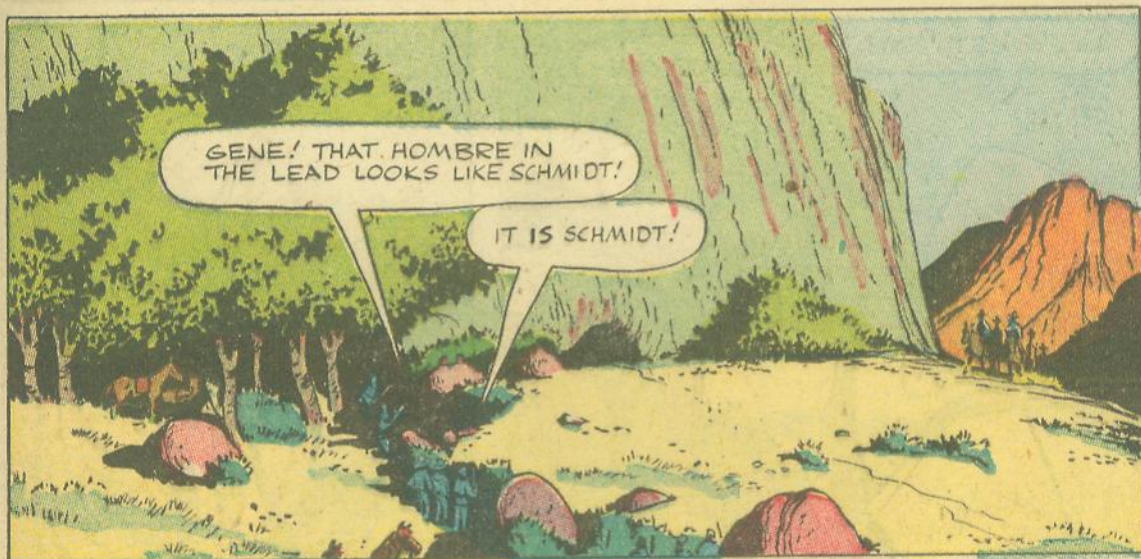
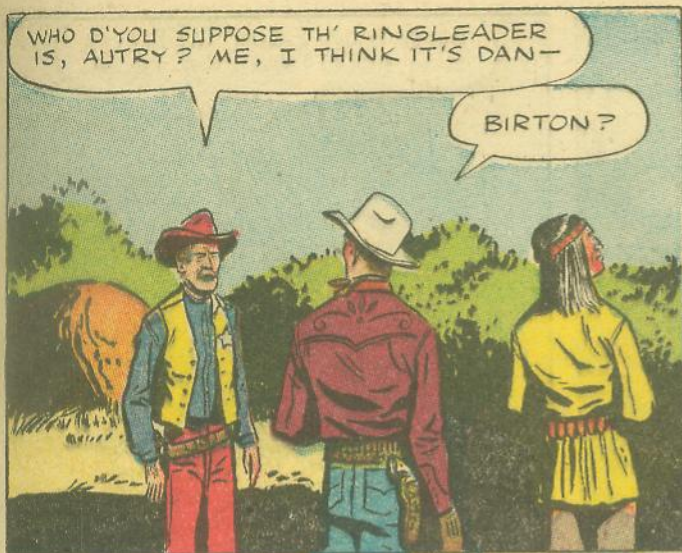


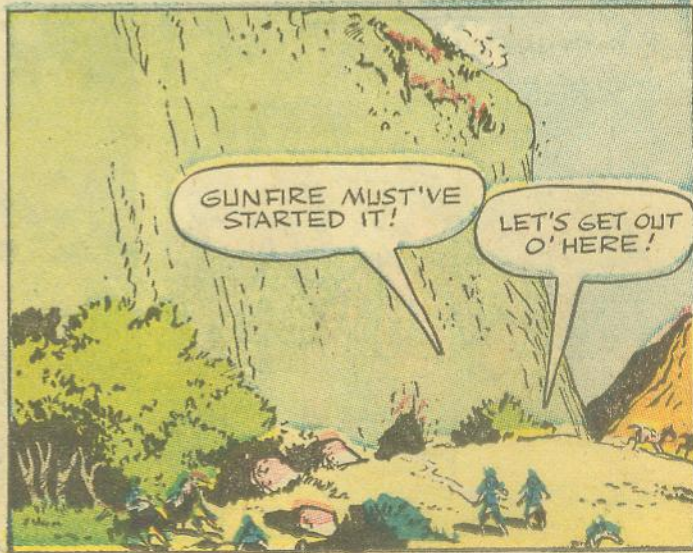
PRESENTLY...

LOOK AT 'EM TAKE COVER! YOU'D THINK THERE WASN'T ONE INDIAN HERE!

WE BETTER GET HIDDEN, TOO! HOW 'BOUT OVER THERE, WITH TH' CHIEF?



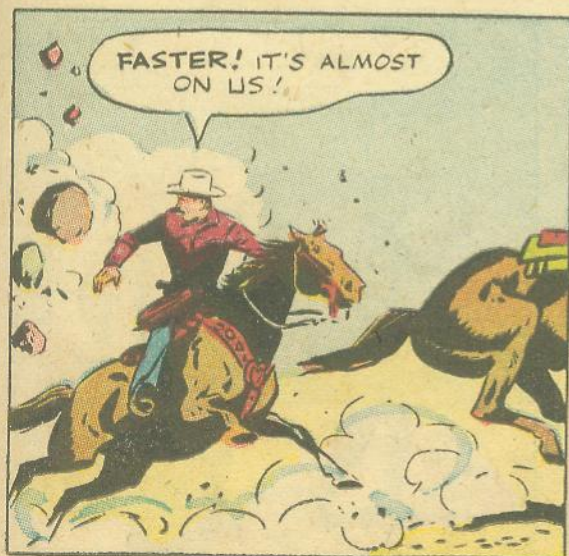






FOLLOW THE INDIANS!
THEY KNOW WHERE TO GO!

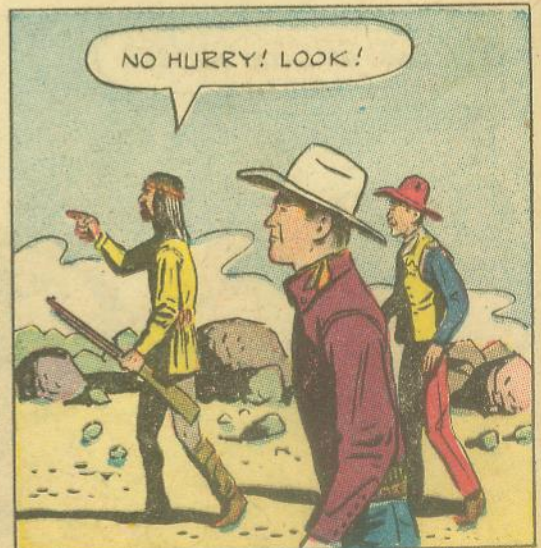
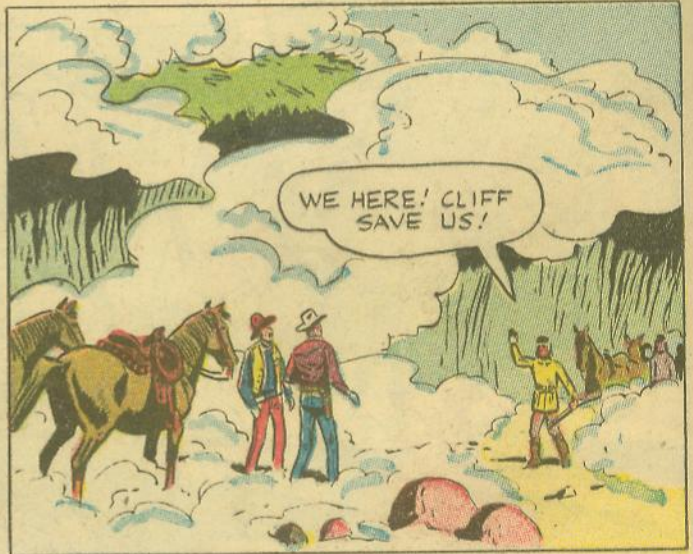
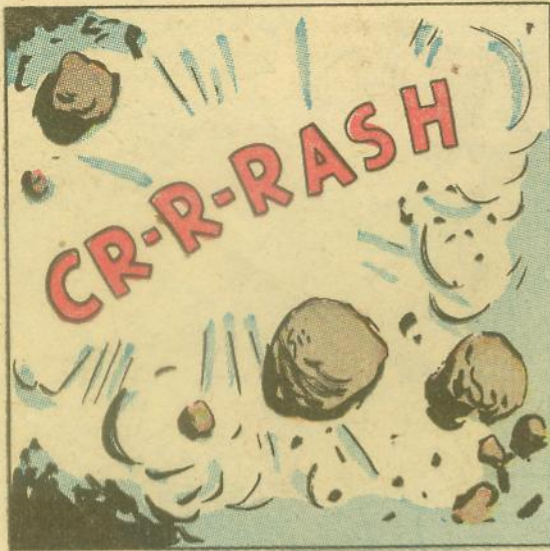
THEY'RE HEADIN' FOR
THAT SLANTIN' CLIFF!



FASTER! IT'S ALMOST
ON US!



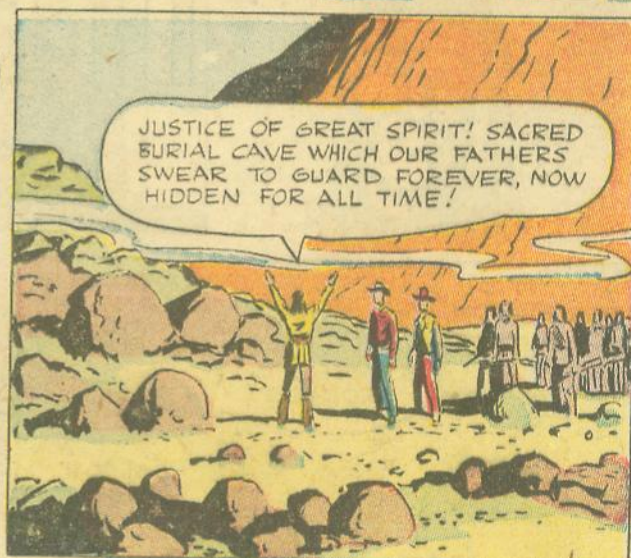
STOP, SHERIFF - HERE!





THE WHOLE MOUNTAIN
MUST'VE CAVED IN
ON SCHMIDT AND
THE OTHERS!

WELL, IT WAS
QUICK, ANYWAY!
AN' IT SAVED TH'
LAW A LOT OF
TROUBLE!

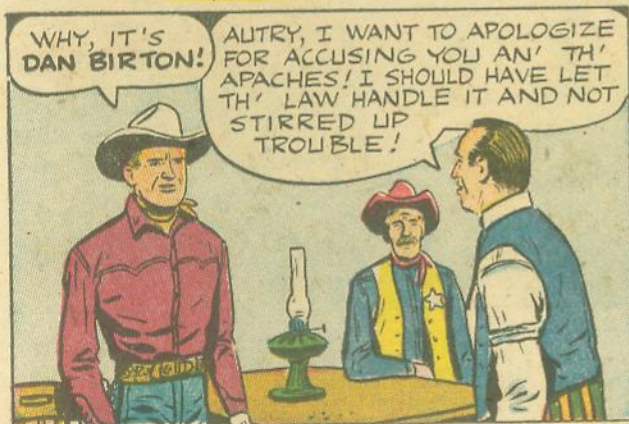
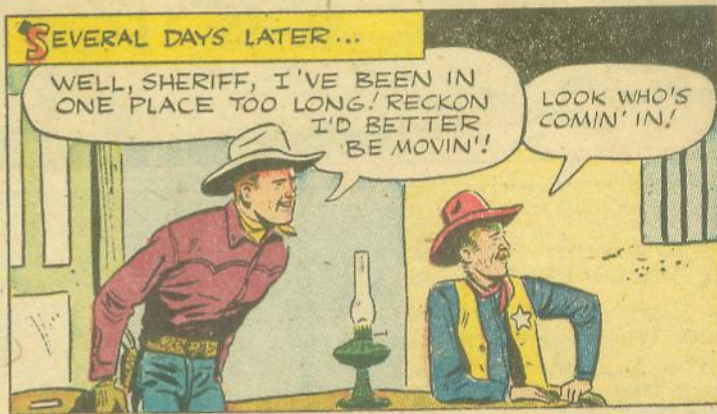


NOW WE CAN GO NORTH,
JOIN APACHE BROTHERS!



BECAUSE OF YOU, FRIEND OF ALL
PEOPLE, WE GO IN PEACE - NO
BLOOD ON HAND!





STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Section 293) of Gene Autry Comics published monthly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1951.

1. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, George T. Delacorte, Jr., 261 Fifth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.; Editor, Helen Meyer, 261 Fifth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.; Managing editor, None; Business manager, Helen Meyer, 261 Fifth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.

2. The owner is: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 261 Fifth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.; George T. Delacorte, Jr., 261 Fifth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.; Margarita Delacorte, 261 Fifth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.

3. The known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders

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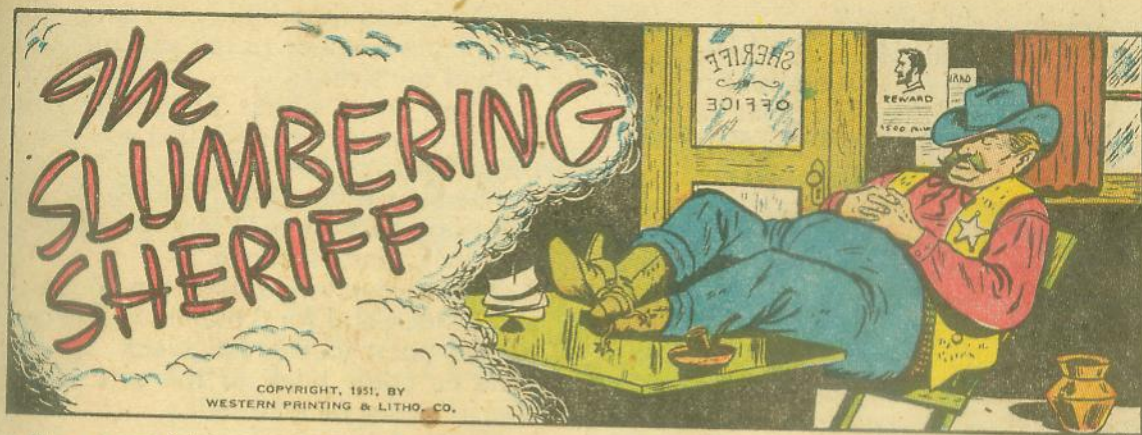
(Signed) HELEN MEYER
Business Manager

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 12th day of September, 1951

JEANNETTE S. GREEN

(Seal)

(My Commission Expires March 30, 1952)



Because of his weight and his years, Sheriff Tom Barlow believed wholeheartedly in the Mexican idea of a siesta. Now, with the door locked, his feet balanced on the desk, his ponderous body fitted into the chair, and his hat tilted down over his face, he was ready for the usual afternoon sleep. He closed his eyes with a happy sigh...

"SHERIFF!" The urgent voice crashed into his dream, and he awakened to hear the door rattling noisily with impatient pounding. "Tom? Tom, I know you're in there—WAKE UP!"

Peering over at the door through sleepy eyelids, Tom finally pulled his feet from the desk. Then, struggling to lift his 270-pound body out of the chair, he got to his feet and unlocked the door.

"Tom Barlow, you're worse than a hibernatin' bear! Been poundin' here at least ten minutes!" The tall, weary-faced man grinned and stuck out his hand. "But it's good to see you, Tom!"

"You, too, Marshal. How be you?"

After they had shaken hands, the Sheriff motioned his visitor to a chair.

"But I'm only congenial in the mornin' and evenin'," he grumbled. "NOT afternoons. And you haven't made a three-day ride just to come here and wake me up and say 'Howdy!'"

He looked up sharply. "You're here on official business, Marshal—what is it?"

"Plenty! Tom, we've got a killer on the loose—and he's supposed to be right here in Colville!"

A flicker of interest pulled the fat man's eyelids open wider. "Know who he is?"

"Uh, huh. He's called Dude Fallon, or 'The Dude.' Killed seven men so far."

"This is a fair-sized town, Marshal. And we get a lot of loose cowpokes, headin' South. But if you've got a description, we'll pick him up for you." The Sheriff smiled. "Tonight, of course—after I finish my sleep!"

The Marshal shook his head. "It's not that easy, Tom. We know who he is, all right. But we haven't a description."

"Any leads?"

"Not really, except that he's here in Colville, playin' 'possum for a while."

The Sheriff pursed his lips. "'Dude,' eh? Must be a dapper varmint."

"But Fallon's no dude now, from all I can learn." The Marshal stood up to lessen his nervous tension. "He's just like the rest of the cowpunchers in this part of the country. He's smart. And we don't know what he looks like."

Watching the Marshal pacing back and forth, Tom tried another approach. "Has he got any dude habits?"

"You might call 'em that." The Marshal stopped pacing.

"One," he said, ticking off a finger, "Fallon's supposed to shave every day, normally." Then, ignoring the Sheriff's disgusted snort, he continued. "Always has his duds laundered regularly. Keeps his gun sparklin'. Wears a neat little mustache. Always carries a clean handkerchief. Smokes those long, thin stogies. Seasons his food with lots of salt. Uses a perfumed hair tonic. He always—"

"Should be simple!" the Sheriff interrupted.

"We'll get the bartenders to look for a man with clean fingernails. If he's a

real dude, we'll find—"

This time, the Marshal interrupted. "I told you, he dropped those habits!"

Obviously irritated, he began raising his voice: "We did check the fingernail angle. We talked to washer-women. We studied mustaches. We interviewed storekeepers about cigar sales, even about salt sales. We've sniffed at the hair of a hundred men in every town within five hundred miles of here!"

The Marshal reined himself in. "It's a box canyon so far, Tom," he said more quietly. "Just thought you might have run across such an hombre recently." Then, looking at the Sheriff, seemingly asleep, he shouted, "But I guess you've been sleepin' for the past fifteen years!"

Tom's feet slid off the desk. "Marshal," he said softly, "I'm a fat man. Really fat. Always have been. So, instead of legs, I've had to use this!" He tapped his head.

"What're you drivin' at, Tom?"

The Sheriff leaned forward, a smile spreading through his jowls. "You fellers get an idea, and what do you do? You run right out to your horse and ride all over the West before you find out whether you're right or wrong! Me, I stretch out right here and find out—without travelin'!"

"So?" The Marshal's impatience returned. "We've spent five weeks trackin' the meanest, slickest killer in the Southwest, and you think you can lasso him by combin' your brain, without movin' off that chair?"

Tom's face quivered with a slight chuckle. "You keep on, your way. I'll stick to mine. But, Marshal—drop by here this time next week, will you? After sundown, that is!"

His face a bright strawberry red, the Marshal walked quickly to the door. Then, he turned around. "Tom Barlow, if you can even find out what this Dude Fallon LOOKS LIKE, I'll eat my right boot—sole, heel and all!"

Three days later, the Sheriff opened his eyes reluctantly as a figure punched his shoulder vigorously and none too gently. "Oh, it's you, Marshal," he mumbled drowsily, looking up.

"Your deputy said you had some information on Dude Fallon?"

"Dang-nab that deputy!" Tom growled. "I told him not to tell you till after I'd had my siesta!"

"Tom, what about Fallon? Did he leave town? What is it? Did you get a tip on where he is?"

The Sheriff yawned. "This 'Dude'... what's his last name? Fallon? Anyways, he's back there, in a cell."

Staring open-mouthed, the Marshal stood stock-still for a moment. Then he rushed back to the cell block. By the time he came back to the office, the Sheriff's eyes were closed.

"Tom, it IS him! Tom, wake up! It's him, I said—it's Dude Fallon!"

"That's what I just told you," the Sheriff murmured.

"But, HOW? How did you find him?"

Grumbling, the Sheriff pushed back his hat and looked up. "You fellers always make things so complicated, with your clues and all. Me, I slept and figured, and figured and slept. And, finally, I came up with the answer."

"Which was what?"

"Well, I figured the Dude could cure himself of most of those habits you mentioned. But, he's human, and he's got to eat, and it's hard to change eatin' habits. So—I concentrated on the salt."

"But we checked that, too! I interviewed both storekeepers in town."

The Sheriff's face was wreathed in smiles. "A bachelor," he pointed out, "doesn't cook his own grub when he's in town. No, Marshal, he boards. And since we've only got three roomin' houses here, I got the cooks to forget to put salt shakers on the tables."

"And," he added, "when they told me which hombre kept complainin'—well, I sent my deputy over to pick up your Dude Fallon." He grinned impishly. "Not very excitin', is it, Marshal? That's why I'd rather sleep!"

Puffing at the exertion, the Sheriff reached down in his desk drawer. "Somethin' for you, Marshal."

"A knife and a fork!" The Marshal's face wrinkled in bewilderment. "What are these for?"

"That boot of yours!" the Sheriff chuckled. "Reckon you'll need the knife, 'specially—when you start eatin' the heel!"



OH, DEAR! THAT WAS SUCH AN EXCITING STORY! I HATED TO HAVE IT END!

WHAT WAS IT? ONE OF THOSE GOOFY VARNES ABOUT KNIGHTS AND LADIES AND STUFF?

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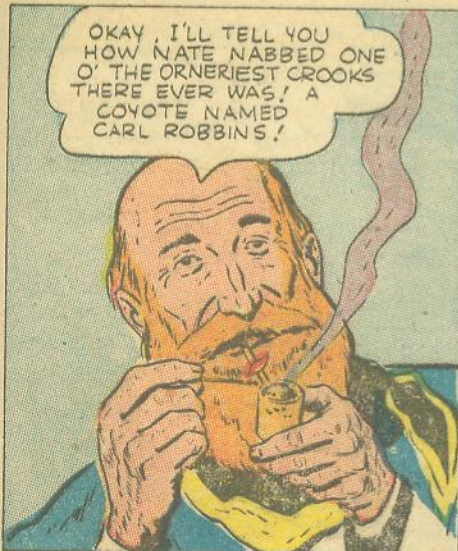
NO! A SHERLOCK HOLMES MYSTERY! I BET THERE NEVER WAS A REAL DETECTIVE AS SMART AS HE!

HUMPH! RECKON YOU NEVER HEARD ABOUT SOME O' THE PUZZLES NATE PETERS UNTANGLED!



NO, WE DIDN'T! DO TELL US... OH! I'M GORRY!

I'M NOT! I WAS LOSING! BESIDES, I'D LOTS RATHER HEAR A STORY! PLEASE TELL US, PANHANDLE PETE!



OKAY, I'LL TELL YOU HOW NATE NABBED ONE O' THE ORNERIEST CROOKS THERE EVER WAS! A COYOTE NAMED CARL ROBBINS!

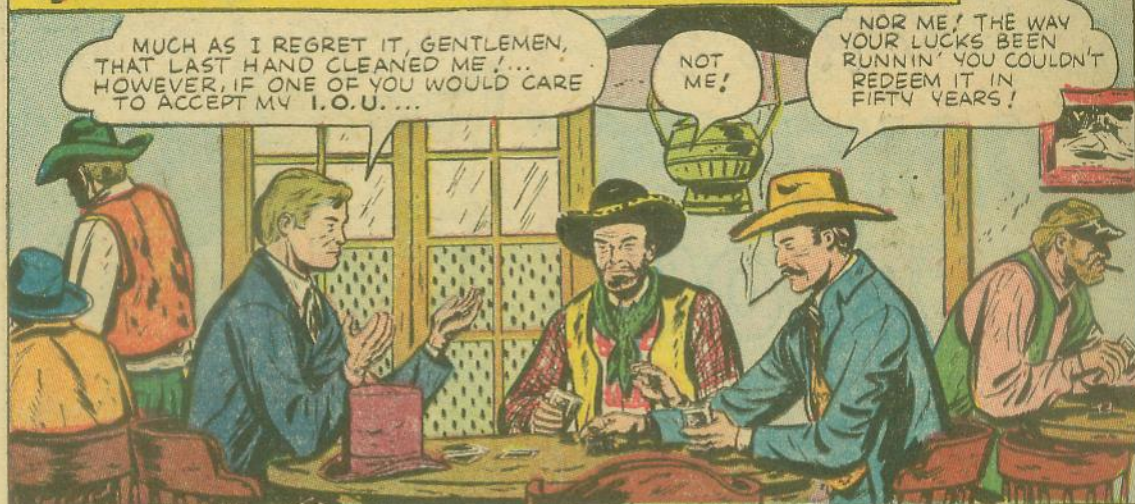


WHEN ROBBINS BLEW INTO RED MESA HE HAD A FANCY WARDROBE, GRAND MANNERS AN' A MIGHTY HUSKY BANKROLL.

BEG PARDON, DRIVER, BUT WOULD YOU DIRECT ME TO THE BEST HOTEL?

AIN'T BUT ONE! THE MANSION HOUSE... 'CROSS THE WAY!

A MONTH LATER ALL HE HAD LEFT WAS HIS WARDROBE AN' MANNERS.



MUCH AS I REGRET IT, GENTLEMEN, THAT LAST HAND CLEANED ME!... HOWEVER, IF ONE OF YOU WOULD CARE TO ACCEPT MY I.O.U....

NOT ME!

NOR ME! THE WAY YOUR LUCKS BEEN RUNNIN' YOU COULDN'T REDEEM IT IN FIFTY YEARS!

"BY NOW, ROBBINS HAD THE GAMBLIN' FEVER. HE SOLD HIS DUDE DUOS... PIECE BY PIECE..."

TOO BAD YOU HAVE TO SELL THESE THINGS, ROBBINS! THEY'RE SWELL CUSTOM-MADES!

THEY WERE MADE BY THE BEST TAILOR IN PHILADELPHIA!



"A N' HE LOST EVERY CENT AT ACE TOOMEY'S POKER TABLE."



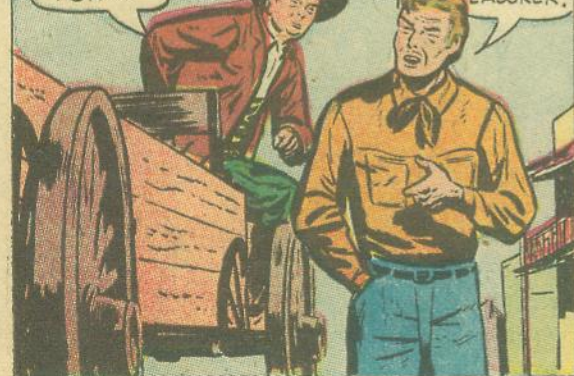
THE POOR FOOL! TRYIN' TO BUCK ACE TOOMEY... THE SLICKEST POKER PLAYER WEST OF DODGE CITY!

MAYBE IT'LL TEACH HIM A LESSON!

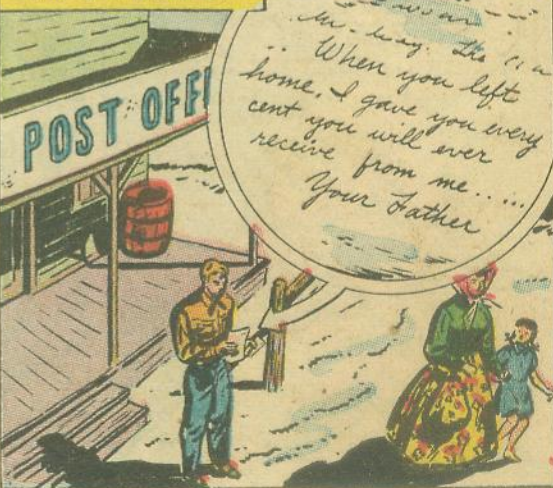
"BUT IT DIDN'T! IT ONLY MADE ROBBINS SORE AT THE WORLD."

MORNIN' ROBBINS! I'M BUILDIN' A NEW ROAD OUT AT THE BAR-X! HOW'D YOU LIKE TO GO TO WORK FOR...

I WOULDN'T! I'M A GENTLEMAN! NOT A DAY LABORER!

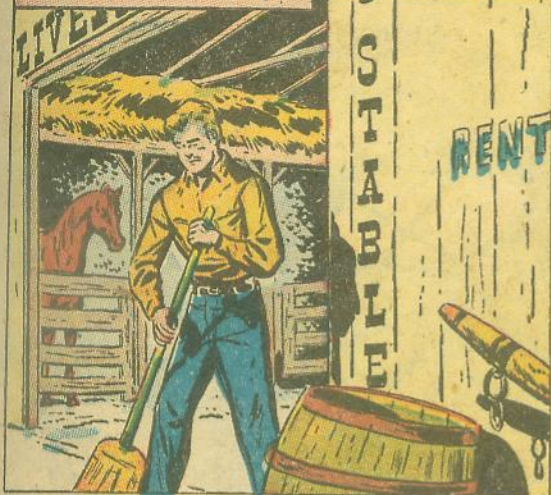


"A MONTH WENT BY. ROBBINS WAS AT THE END O' HIS ROPE."

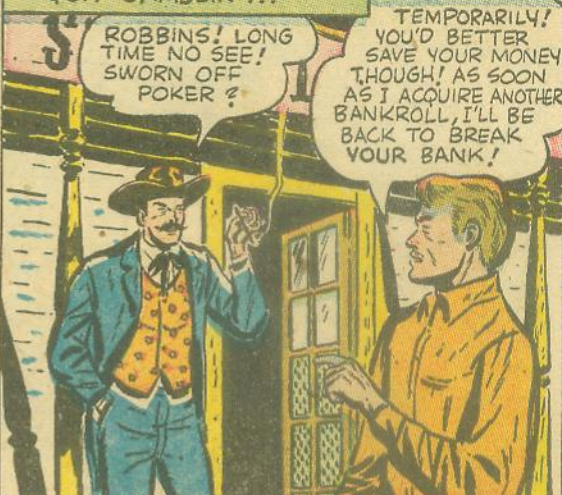


When you left home, I gave you every cent you will ever receive from me...
Your Father

"SO AT LAST, HE HAD TO TAKE THE ONLY JOB HE COULD GET."



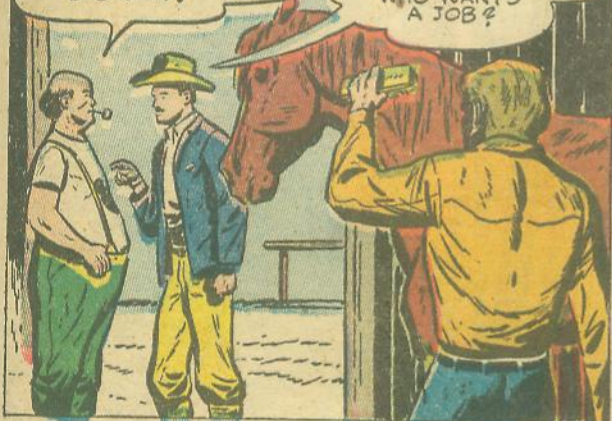
"THE PAY WAS SO SMALL, HE HAD TO QUIT GAMBLIN'..."



"THEN ONE DAY..."

SAY, WELDON, SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE GOIN' IN FOR MININ' IN A PRETTY BIG WAY!

RIGHT! I'M PLANNIN' ON A CREW OF TWENTY OR MORE TO START! I'M GONNA PAY TOP WAGES, TOO! KNOW ANYBODY WHO WANTS A JOB?



"WHEN ROBBINS HEERED THAT, HE STEPPED FOR'ARD..."

I'D LIKE ONE, MISTER WELDON! I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT MININ' BUT...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO! I'LL PUT YOU ON AS HELPER! BE READY TO LEAVE TOMORROW AT SUNUP!



"ROBBINS WAS SMART AN' LEARNED FAST."

YOU'LL FIND A LITTLE EXTRA CASH IN THAT PAY ENVELOPE, ROBBINS! YOU'RE DOIN' FINE!

THANK YOU, MISTER WELDON!



"T'WARNT' LONG AFORE HE WAS HANDLIN' DYNAMITE LIKE AN EXPERT."



ALTHOUGH HE WAS REAL SAVIN' HIS BANKROLL, DIDN'T BUILD UP FAST ENOUGH TO SUIT HIM."

AT THIS RATE, I'LL BE AN OLD MAN BEFORE I CAN AFFORD TO CHALLENGE ACE TOOMEY AGAIN!



HE TOOK TO LYIN' AWAKE NIGHTS TRYIN' TO FIGURE HOW TO RAISE MORE CASH IN A HURRY!"

BLAST IT! IF I COULD ONLY THINK OF SOME WAY TO MAKE THE OLD MAN LOOSEN HIS PURSE STRINGS!



ONE NIGHT, AN IDEE HIT HIM. A COUPLA NIGHTS LATER, HE WENT TO WORK ON IT!"

LUCKY FOR ME, WELDON DOESN'T BELIEVE IN NIGHT SHIFTS!



HE PLANTED A SECRET CHARGE NEAR THE BACK O' THE MINE...



AND RAN A LONG FUSE OUT THROUGH A ROCK CREVICE INTO THE BRUSH ABOVE THE TUNNEL."

THIS FUSE SHOULD BE LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO MAKE A SAFE GETAWAY AFTER LIGHTING IT!

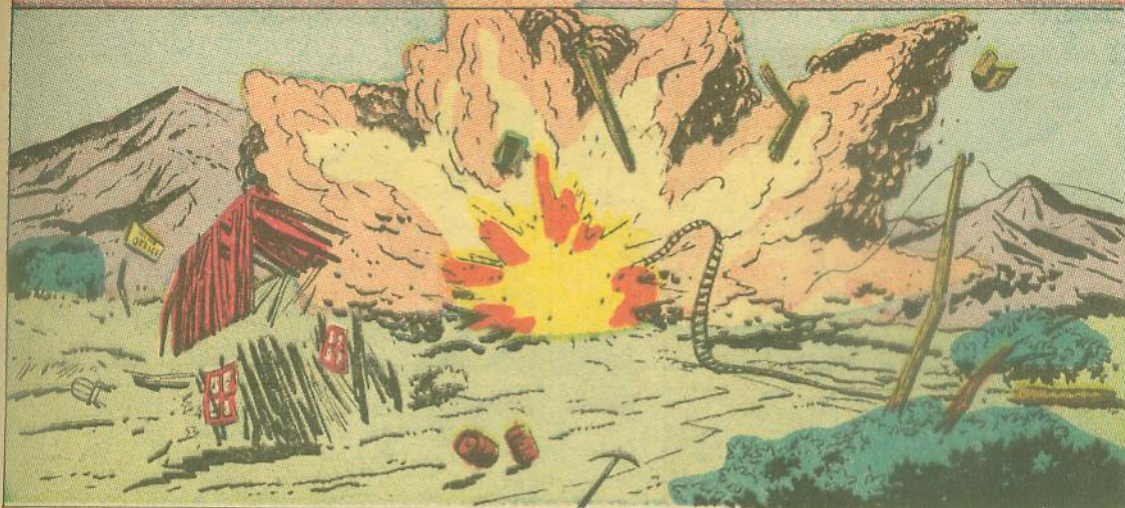


THEN HE WAITED FOR JEST THE RIGHT MINNIT..."

EVERYBODY'S INSIDE NOW! I'LL NEVER HAVE A BETTER CHANCE!



TEN MINNITS LATER, THE MINE AN' EVER'BODY IN IT WENT UP WITH A BANG!



BY THEN, ROBBINS'D REACHED THE HOSS HE'D HID IN THE WOODS.



HE MADE FOR RUNNIN' WATER, THE COUNTY SEAT, WHERE NOBODY KNEW HIM.



AN' SENT A TELEGRAM TO HIS PA BACK EAST.



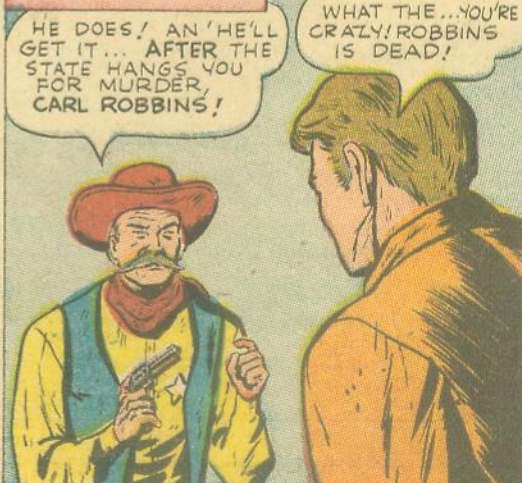
HE HID OUT IN THE HILLS FOR THREE DAYS, AN' THEN CALLED FOR HIS ANSWER.



SORRY, MISTER STANDISH! NO WIRE'S COME FROM ANY MISTER ROBBINS YET!

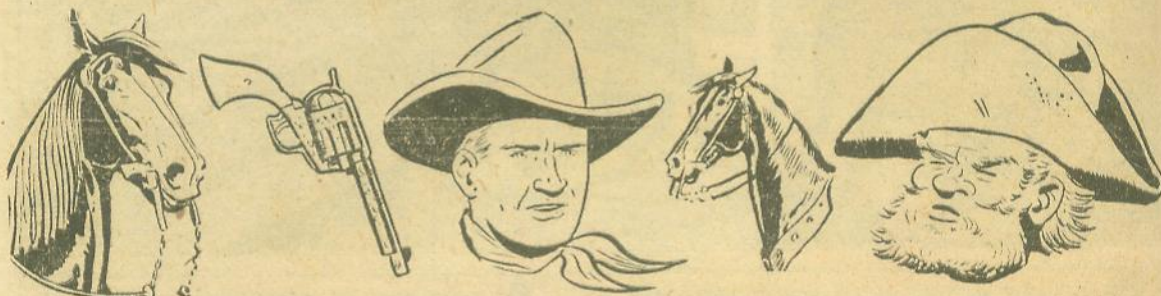
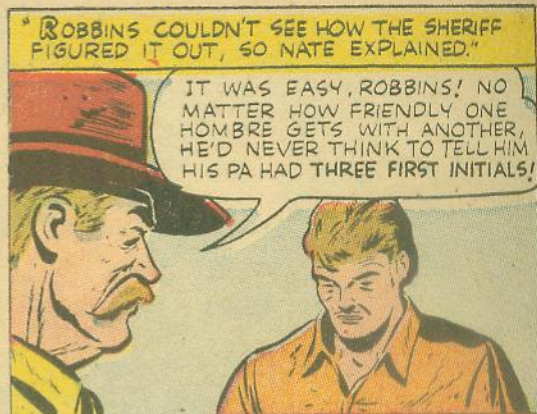
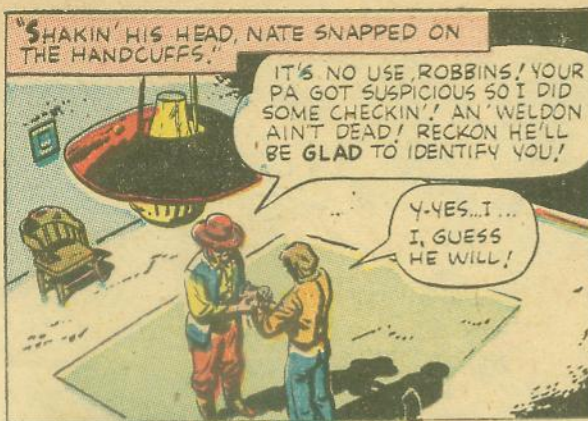
BUT SURELY HE ISN'T SO CALLOUSED HE DOESN'T WANT HIS SON'S BODY...

AT THAT MINNIT, SHERIFF NATE PETERS STEPPED UP.



HE DOES! AN' HE'LL GET IT... AFTER THE STATE HANGS YOU FOR MURDER, CARL ROBBINS!

WHAT THE...YOU'RE CRAZY! ROBBINS IS DEAD!



The End

-----Cut-----here-----

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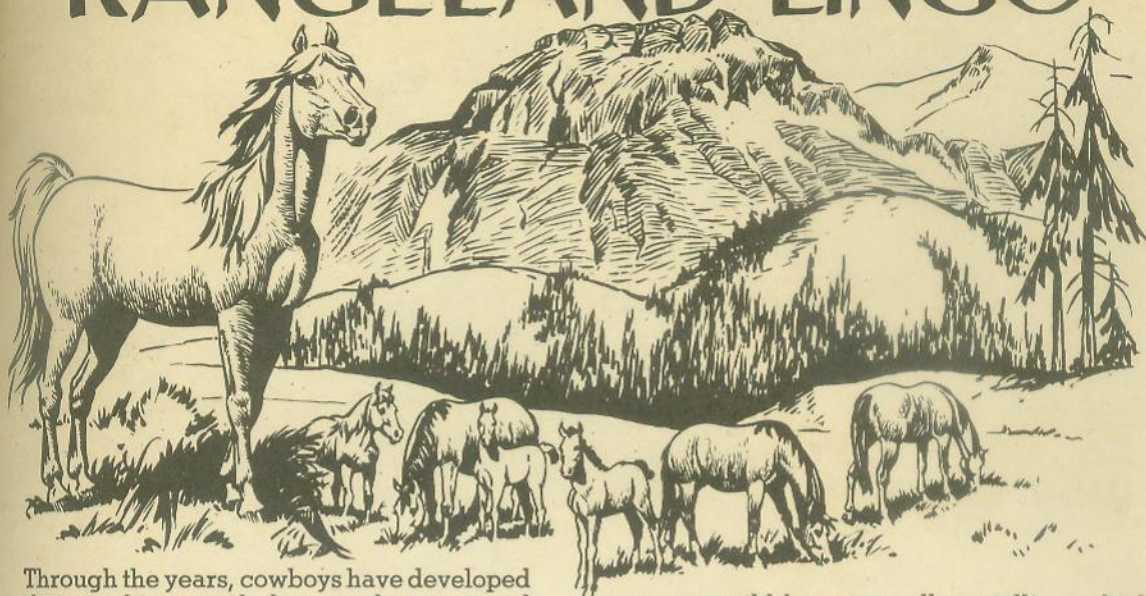
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