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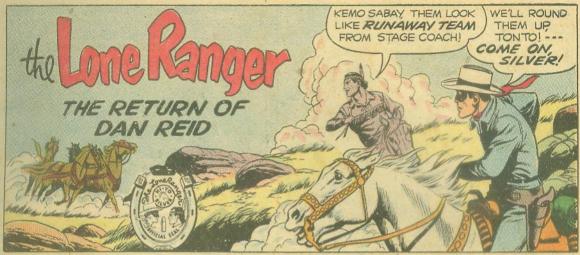
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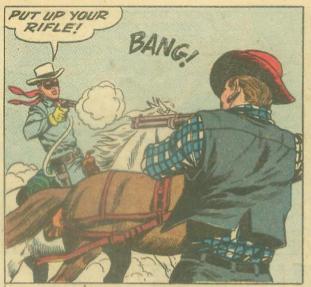
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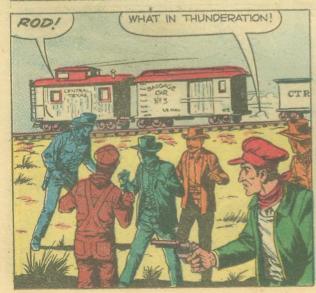




























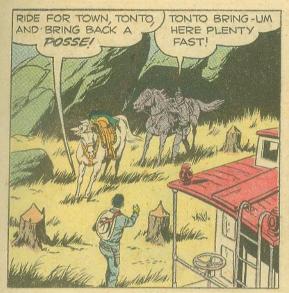






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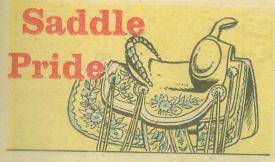












"Did you get it, Emory?" asked Larry Jackson as the buckboard returned from town to the ranch.

"Sure did," sang Emory Holt excitedly, heaving the bulky bundle from the wagon.

Larry followed to the bunkhouse where Emory eagerly opened the package. A gleaming silver-mounted saddle sparkled in the lamp light, exquisitely tooled. It shone in glory. The glory was reflected in Emory's proud eyes.

"Been saving and scrimping a long time for it," he muttered, "not even joining the other boys in town for any fun. But it was worth it. Isn't she a-a beauty?"

Emory ran his fingers over every inch of the saddle. This was a special job from Pop Squires, the finest saddle maker in a dozen counties.

"The boss said I could keep it in the tack room at the barn. No room here in the bunkhouse. I'm going to ride it into town next week for the first time."

"You'll be plenty proud," said Larry admiringly.

As he lugged it to the barn and hung it up, Emory glowed within. He pictured himself prancing into town on this splendid seat, attracting all eyes. All his sacrifices were justified. No cowhand's possession could be more prized than his saddle. It was far more than any fancy chaps, boots, spurs; or even any pearl-handled gun.

Each evening that week, Emory inspected and polished the silver saddle. He became the butt of bunkhouse jokes. "You'll wear it out!" they chuckled. Emory didn't mind the good-natured jibes. Behind it was their deep respect. Any ranny riding a silver saddle was looked up to. Even the ranch boss, Andy Moore, admired it and offered his best horse for Emory to ride into town the first time.

Emory could hardly wait for the big day. The night before, in the middle of the night, the barn caught on fire. With everybody asleep, the fire got a good start before smoke woke someone up.

"Save the horses!" yelled the foreman, rousing all the hands. "No chance to save the barn!"

Emory worked with the rest, blindfolding the frightened animals, leading them out.

But his silver saddle! He had to save that too. The blazing inferno, whipped by a raw wind, would burn the leather, make the silver trimmings melt and run like water. After the last horse was out, Emory ran toward the tack room, still unburned.

With a wet bandanna at his face, he staggered blindly through the smoke. Was it still safe? He saw the silver gleam.

Thankfully, he reached for the precious saddle. He stopped. A terrorized whinny sounded from the stalls nearby.

One horse was still in the barn!

Emory stood frozen. It would take two hands to lug out the saddle. Or to lead away the frightened beast. The saddle? The horse? He couldn't save both. There was not enough time to put the saddle on the horse—not on a wild bucking horse.

"The boss has plenty of horses," Emory thought desperately, "I have only one silver saddle."

Emory grabbed the saddle. He took a long look at it, trying to shut out the screams of the terror-stricken animal. . . .

When Emory staggered out of the smoke, Larry Jackson ran up, peering behind him. "Gosh, Emory," he said pityingly. "You saved the horse but... but you won't ride into town on a silver saddle..."

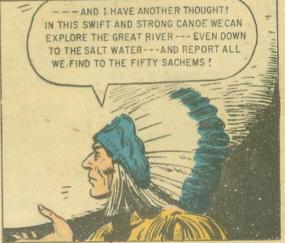
"Yes he will," boomed another voice. Andy Moore came up with his young daughter, who gave a glad cry. "Melinda's favorite horse. You saved her from being heartbroken. Tell Pop Squires to make another saddle, exactly the same, at my expense."

Emory hardly heard. He was watching the girl hugging her horse, sobbing in joy. Emory felt another pride, better than saddle pride.

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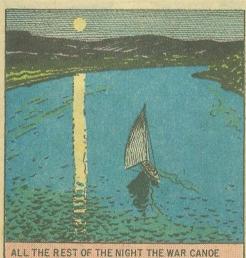






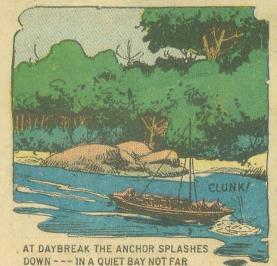






ALL THE REST OF THE NIGHT THE WAR CANOE SWEEPS DOWNSTREAM, BORNE ALONG BY WIND AND CURRENT.





FROM SHORE.















BUT AN INSTANT LATER LITTLE BROTHER, THE SMALL HAWK, BRINGS DOWN THE OTHER GROUSE.







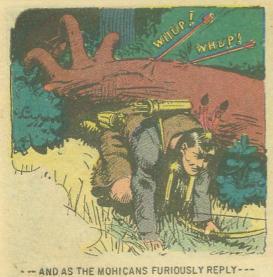






















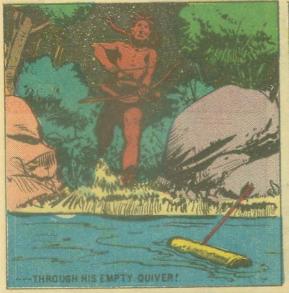


JUST IN TIME, HE DIVES AGAIN!

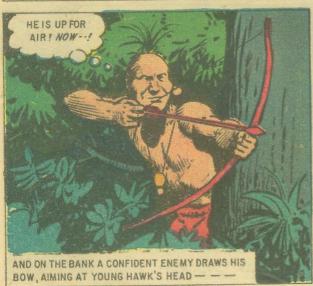














--- BUT AT THAT INSTANT, A SMALL FEATHERED CHAMPION ATTACKS --- WITH A SHARP BEAK AND NEEDLE LIKE TALONS!







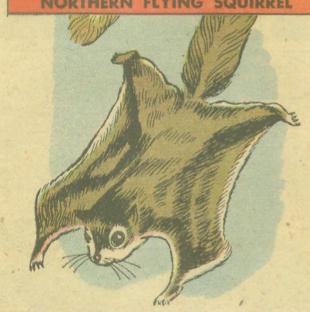












Way up in a great tree, as high as 50 or more feet from the ground, the Northern Flying Squirrel brings its feet together, and with a spring, leaps off into space. Instantly, all four legs are spread out at right angles to its body. This causes the "wings," folds of loose skin covered with fine fur, to be stretched out. This loose skin, which supports the body of the flying squirrel as it glides from tree to tree, extends from the hind to front legs on each side of his body. Although he cannot be said to fly as birds do, the flying squirrel is still an expert glider.

The young are born in the spring of the year, and there may be from two to six in a litter. At about 3 months old, they get their coats of thick glossy fur, olive brown on top, underneath hairs white at the tips only, dark at the roots.

Nuts and seeds, especially those of firs, pines, hickories, beech and white oak make up most of the diet of this little creature. When full grown, his head and body are from 5½ to 6 inches, and his tail from 4½ to 5½ inches.

The Northern Flying Squirrel is found in Canada, Nova Scotia and southern Labrador as well as in western Wyoming and southern California.

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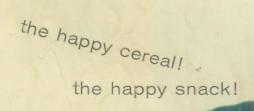


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