



BUSTER CRABBE

ENTERTAINMENT



NO. 3

YOUR TELEVISION ALL-AMERICAN COWBOY

10¢

MAR.



This is a
FAMOUS
FUNNIES
Publication

BUSTER Crabbe AND THE MANKILLER

A JANGLE CAT AT LARGE... A BODY KIDNAP AND MANGLED... RANG IN THE STREETS... ALL ADD UP TO GIVE BUSTER CRABBE AND HIS SOBBER WHISKERS A TOUGH ASSIGNMENT AS THEY TRACK DOWN THE MANKILLER!!!

WELL, IF IT ISN'T JIM WINTERS? I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A DOG'S AGE!

WHO'S TH' DOGE TENDERFOOT, BGGEDD?

BUSTER? BUSTER CRABBE?



THAT DOGE TENDERFOOT COULD TEACH YOU SOME TRICKS, WHISKERS? JIM WINTERS IS A T-MAN!

A TEA MANG-

WHAT BRINGS YOU TO FOOLSOLD, JIM?

BUSINESS. THE BANK HERE WAS ROBBED LAST WEEK!







WUMBLE, WUMBLE,
WILD ANIMAL ACT,
WUMBLE...

WELL, I'LL
SEE YOU GENTLE-
MEN IN THE
MORNING.

RIGHT,
JIM?



A WHOLE DOLLAR JUST
TO SEE A FAT, LAZY, TAME
OL' TIGER JUMP THROUGH
A HOOP...

WILL YOU
SHUT UP, YOU
OLD GOAT,
AND GET TO
BED!



DOWN...

[TAMM] WELL, OFF TO
ANOTHER HINTEALAND OUT-
POST... ANOTHER DAY...
ANOTHER DOLLAR...



IT ISN'T MUCH OF A LIVING
WE MAKE OUT, FUSS, OLD FAN,
BUT AT LEAST WE EAT... I
WISH YOU'D TRY TO LOOK A
LITTLE
PIERCER,
THOUGH...



EVERY TIME YOU START A SHAKL,
YOU WIND UP TAWNING! YOU... FUSS!
FUSS, WHERE ARE YOU? HEAVEN
HELP ME... I FORGOT TO LOCK
THE CASE!



PUSS! PUSS!
HERE, PUSS!

STOP THAT INFERRAL
RACKET! HOW YEN
'SPECT A BODY TO
SLEEP?



BUT MY TIGER'S LOOSE!
I GOT TO FIND HIM!

WHAT??



A few seconds later

EER!

HELP!

THE TIGER'S
AT LARGE!

WHUT 'T'
SING-SONG
BLASS-?



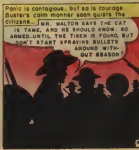
AWW YOURSELVES!
WE'VE GOT TO GET
THAT BLOOD-
THIRSTY YARNINT'
AFORE IT GETS
US!

PLEASE! CALM
YOURSELVES! DON'T
HURT MY TIGER! HE'S
AS BERTLE AS A
BITTER, AND BESIDES
HE'S MY LIVELIHOOD!



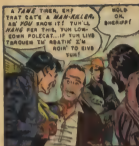
WHAT'S THE
TROUBLE HERS?
WHAT'S ALL
THE SHOUTING
ABOUT?

EVERYBODY'S BORN
CRAZY JUST BECAUSE MY
TIGER GOT LOOSE! ALL
THIS HULLABALOO WILL
SCARE THE POOR
ANIMAL INTO THE NEXT
COUNTY AND I'LL
NEVER FIND HIM!



Panic is contagious, but so is courage.
Buster's calm manner soon quiets the
CITIZENS... MR. WALTON SAYS THE CAT
IS TAME, AND HE SHOULD KNOW. SO
ARMED UNTIL THE TIGER IS FOUND, BUT
DON'T START SPRAYING BULLETS
AROUND WITH-
OUT REASON!





A *FAKE* THREE, SHT
 THAT CATS A *MAN-KILLER*,
 AN' YOU KNOW IT! YOU'LL
WALK PER THIS, TUN LOW-
 DOWN POLECAT... IF YOU LIVE
 THROUGH TH' BEATIN' I'M
 GOIN' TO GIVE
 YOU!

WELL,
 ON,
 SHERIFF!



YOU'RE A LITTLE OUT OF
 ORDER. IT'S YOUR DUTY TO
 UPHOLD THE LAW, NOT
BREAK IT!

WHO ARE
 YOU? A FEDERAL
 MAN
 LIKE YOUR
 DEAR FRIEND
 HERE?



NO, I'M JUST A
 PRIVATE CITIZEN.
 MY NAME'S
 BUSTER
 CRABBE.

BUSTER CRABBE?
 WEL, ER, I'M SURE
 CLEAR FINE IN TOWN...
 WHAT WITH THIS WERE
CYNICAL SITUA-
 TION, AN' ALL.



YOU CAN HELP ME
 ORGANIZE A FORCE TO
 GO AFTER THAT BE
 TIGER? TH' MAN WANT
 NOT BE SO SCARY
 KNOWN *BUSTER*
 CRABBE WILL
 WITH 'EM!

I'VE GOT ANOTHER
 JOB TO DO *FIRST*,
 SHERIFF. THE JOB
 AN' SISTERS WANT
 LIVE TO FISHIN'.



I'M SHERIFF HERE,
 BUSTER! I'M INVESTI-
 GATING TH' BARR ROB-
 BERTY, AN' I DON'T
 RECOLLECT DEFINITELY
 YOU!

NO, BUT
 JM SISTERS
 DID!



A few minutes later.
 IF YOU CAN FORGET
 ABOUT THAT ESCAPER
 TIGER FOR A WHILE,
 MR. BARR PRESIDENT,
 I'D LIKE A WORD
 WITH YOU.

OH, ALL
 RIGHT. WHAT
 IS IT?





AN' JUST WHAT DID YUH MEAN BY THAT CRACK?

I MEANT EXACTLY WHAT I SAID, AND I THINK YUH UNDERSTAND ME VERY WELL, DON'T YUH, SHERIFF?



E. OH, ALL I UNDERSTAND IS THAT YUH MUST BE SCARED TO COME WITH US 'SUIT YERSELF. COME ON, MEN!



BUSTER, YUH *KNOW* SOMETHIN' AIN'T RIGHT TO KEEP SECRETS FROM YORE OL' SICKICK.

I'M JUST PLAY-ING A HUNCH, WHISKERS. I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING... *YET*!



Many hours later... DID YUH CATCH THE CRITTER?

COULDN'T EVEN FIND A PAW-PRINT!

WE'LL POST GUARDS TONIGHT, AN' SO OUT AGAIN TOMORROW!



I TOOK THE LIBERTY TO BORROW YOUR BLOODHOUND, SHERIFF. FOLLOW US AND YOU'LL SEE SOMETHING INTERESTING.



I CAN SMELL THAT TIGER DOOR MYSELF, BUT YOUR HOUND CAN'T SEEM TO FIND ANY TIGER TRAIL AWAY FROM THE CASE.

UH, SHORE HE KIN, BUT THAT DOB JUST GOT TOO MUCH *SENSE* TO GO TRACKIN' A TIGER!





A little later...

CITIZENS, HERE ARE YOUR BANK ROBBERIES AND KILLERS! ALL TIED UP IN A NEAT PACKAGE!

WELL, I'LL BE...

HERE'S THE STOLEN MONEY... AND THE "TIGER" THAT KILLED JIM WINTERS! WALTON'S TIGER DON'T ESCAPE... IT WAS LOADED INTO A TRUCK AND ABDUCTED!



Then...

THEY MURDERED JIM WINTERS MAKING IT LOOK LIKE THE TIGER HAD KILLED HIM! WITH THE TIGER AT LARGE! THEY WOULD BE SAFE TO MURDER OTHERS WITHOUT SUSPICION.

JUMP! JACKRABBITS! WATCH OUT!

THE TIGER!



POSS? WOW, AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU! WE'D BETTER GET OUT OF TOWN FAST! PEOPLE THINK YOU KILLED A MAN!

WAIT A MINUTE, WALTON! I WANT TO BUY THAT CAT OF YOURS! A GOOD DINNER FOR NOT TAKING A BITE AT ME WHEN IT HAD THE CHANCE!

HOW DO YOU HEAR EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT?



THE END

THE GRE



A NIGHTMARE? OR HORRIBLE REALITY? IS THE ANCIENT INDIAN LEGEND OF "KASSAK" A MYTH OR IS IT TRUE??? MUSTER CRASSE AND HIS MEN RISK THEIR LIVES TO FIND THE ANSWER AS THEY INVADE THE LAIR OF THE GRE!!!

LET'S HAVE ANOTHER DRINK! NIGHTS GET COLD UP HERE IN THE MOUNTAINS!



WE'D BETTER TURN IN, TOMORROW'S OPENING DAY, WE GOT TO GET UP BRIGHT AND EARLY—HEY, WHAT'S THAT?

Then suddenly—



URK!!

yeeeeeeeee!!

SHHH! WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S GOING FORWARD! YOU MUST BE A SHIFTER! GET READY TO SHOOT!

WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO SHOOT UNTIL TOMORROW! WE'LL PLEAD SELF-DEFENSE IF THE GAME WARDEN CATCHES US!



HELP!



WHERE'S THE SHERIFF (PUFF) GOT TO SET UP A POSSE? (PUFF,PUFF) GOT TO ARM TO THE TEETH!

WHAT'S WRONG? YOU HOMERES LOOK LIKE YOU'VE BEEN A SHOST!



I WISH IT WAS ONLY A SHOST!

IT CHARGED UP DOWN THE MOUNTAIN TAIN! (PUFF) A RUSS, HORRIBLE MONSTER! AN OOPS! A THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD!



HA! A MONSTER! HA! HA! HA!

YOU TENDERFOOT EASTERHERES PROBABLY SAW TONS OWN SHADDS! HA! HA! HA!



YOU MEN MAY HAVE BEEN A BIG BRIZZLE REARING UP ON HIS HIRD LESS IN FRONT OF YOU... THAT WOULD SCARE ANYBODY OUT OF HIS WITS.

HA HA HA

IT WASN'T A BEAR!
IT LOOKED ALMOST
HUMAN, AND IT
CARRIED A CLUB!



WEN SEE KAGASK, KAGASK EYE
SPIRIT OF FORBIDDEN MOUNTAIN, MOON
AND. NEVER, NOT EVER BEFORE
WHITE MAN COME, DID INDIAN TRU-
PASS ON KAGASK MOUNTING
GROUND.



I'VE NEVER HEARD THAT ONE BEFORE.
IS THIS MYTH ON THE LEVEL, WHITE
WING?

WHITE WING TELL TRUTH
KAGASK NO MYTH, KAGASK
REAL.



SEE THERE!
WE DID SEE A
MONSTER!



YOU MEN CHECK IN AT THE HOTEL. CLEAR
UP AND GET SOME SLEEP. WE'LL LOOK INTO
THIS MATTER IN
THE MORNING.

THANKS, MISTER
BLAD. *SOMEBODY*
BELIEVES US!



I'M GOING TO INVESTIGATE THIS
BUSINESS, GENTLEMEN. DO I HEAR ANY
FUZZY REMARKS?

SURE OH, NO
'COUSE NOT,
SUSTEN!



The next morning...

SAY, TUN AIN'T SERIOUS 'BOUT US
AGON PROSPECTIN' FOR EVIL
SPIRITS, ARE YUH?

SURE,
WHY NOT?



WELL, BUSTER, THERE AIN'T NO SUCH CRITTERS AS
SPOOKS OR BOOGIES NEAR TUN AIN'T AGIN' TO BELIEVE
A SUPERSTITIOUS INJUN AN' A COUPLE OF NEAR-
SIGHTED EASTERNERS, ARE YUH?

WHERE THERE'S SMOKE,
THERE'S FIRE, WHISKEY.



A little later...

WE WOULDN'T GO
BACK UP THAT
MOUNTAINSIDE FOR
A MILLION DOLLARS!

BRIEF US ON THE LOCATION OF
YOUR CAMP AND WE'LL BRING
YOUR RIFLES AND EQUIPMENT
BACK—IF IT'S STILL THERE.



And so...

OFF ON A
DAD-BLASTED
WILD BOOGIE CHASE? AN
YOU SAID WE WUZ AGIN'
TO REST UP A FEW DAYS

WELL, WHAT BETTER PLACE
TO REST UP THAN IN THE
MOUNTAINS, FAR FROM THE
NOISE AND DUST OF THE
TOWN?



I SHORE MUST BE GETTIN'
ADOLE-KRAINED IN MY OL'
AGE! I SHOULD'VE SWORN
TUN WUZ ONLY PROSEIN' 'BOUT
THEM SPOOKS! WERE OFF
ON A *BOOGIE*!



Later on the mountain...

HEHN—THIS AIR-MAITRESS IS
SOFT AS A CLOUD... AN'
THERE'S TH' LIFE!

THEY MUST HAVE BEEN
SCARED, TO LEAVE A GOOD
CUSTOM-BUILT RIFLE LIKE
THIS BEHIND!









YOU FELLOWS SHOULDN'T PLAY SO ROUGH... SOMEONE MIGHT GET HURT!

THEY'RE AFRAID OF SUN-FIRE! COME ON, WHISKERS! LET'S GET OUT OF THIS DARE DEN



Later...
WE BRING BACK YOUR STUFF, GENTLEMEN WHAT YOU SAW WAS A BIG, HALF-CREET HENRY HE DOESN'T LIKE PEOPLE BRING, SO HE SCARED YOU OFF.



Back at the camp

I STILL DON'T BELIEVE IT!

GOOD LET'S DENY IT AS HALLUCINATION! THOSE PREHISTORIC APE-MEN AREN'T BOTHERING ANYONE IF WE REPORT THIS, THEY'LL WINE UP IN CHAIRS, LIKE WILD ANIMALS. THEY'RE BETTER OFF THE WAY THEY ARE



WELL, HE SURE DID A GOOD JOB!

THE END

Whiskers ^{and the} Ghoul Gang

AN' THEN THERE WUZ THE TIME WHEN ME AN BUSTER TRACKED DOWN TH' FIVE FRANKLIN BOYS -- THEM FIVE BROTHERS WERE TH' SACDEST BADMEN TO EVER TERRORIZE TH' WEST! BUT I CORNERED TH' BUNCH OF 'EM, AN' -- *BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG* -- STORE YOH COULD BLINK AN EYE... JUF OF THEM FIVE FRANKLIN BOYS WUZ STORE-COLD DEAD!

YOH SKOWWHISKERS, IT'S A DOWNRIGHT COMFORT TO ME THAT *HOAY* IS TOWN... SEEM BE HOW THE *SMOKE BANG'S* ON THE WAMPAGE, AGIN'!



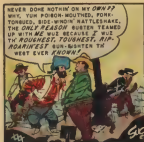
WH... A YE WHO BANG?

THE WHOLE GANG YOU'VE WEARD OF *THEM* WINT NO *REAL* WESTERNER WHO AINT *IS* THERE?

HUNT NO COURSE NOT! TH' *SHON, BANG'S* SHON, *EVERYBODY* KNOWS OF *THEM*! WINTY SMO BUNCH OF *WARRIORS*? YES, INDEED.

COURSE I'D FEEL EVEN *BETTER* IF *BUSTER CRAB* WUZ IN TOWN YOU AINT *NEVER* DONE *NOTHIN'* ON YER OWN.







A few hours later, after the Sheriff's disclosure...

IF ONLY BUSTER COULD SEE ME NOW! HERE I AM, PROTECTIN' SINGLE-HANDED, A BIG COMMUNITY OF HELPLESS CITIZENS



Then, suddenly...

WHISKERS? WHAT YUH GOIN' SETTIN' IN HERE WHILE TH' SHOULD BANG'S BOBBIN' TH' BANG? BIT OUT THERE AN' ARREST THEM MURDEROUS VARNINTS!

RUM? WHAT? HANG HOWS THAT?



I GOT TO CALL LOBBY OSTANCE? I GOT TO BIT BUSTER? JUMPIN' JACK RABBITS, TH' SHOULD BANG!

AIN'T NO TIME FER THAT? YUH GOT TO SHOOT IT OUT WITH 'EM NOW? IT'S UP TO YOU, WHISKERS, TO SAVE US!



NOW WAIT A MINUTE, PELLERS. GIVE ME A CHANCE TO P-PLAN A SOME STRATEGY... D DONT R RUSH ME

YORE A DEAD-SHOT? YOU KIN BIT 'EM ALL BETWEEN TH' EYEL PASTER? ANY ONE O' 'EM A KIN EVER DRAW? CAN'T TUMP



WHY, UR, SHORE I KIN, BUT...

BUT WHAT?

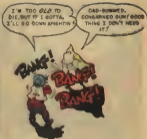
HECK, THERE'S ONLY SIX O' THEM? WHAT'S THAT TO A BUN-FIGHTER LIKE YOU? NOTHING, THAT'S WHAT?



UH, I'S GOT TH' D. DROP OR YUH IF Y... YUH KNOW WHAT'S S S GOOD P FER YUH, S GIVE UP

LISSEN TO HIM, WILL YUH? DONT HE KNOW US SHOULD S INVISIBLE?

NOT INVISIBLE, STUPID INVINCIBLE!







Several minutes later.

SOMEBODY'S UP ON THE ROOF!

RECKON WHISKERS IS POSTIN' A SHIPER UP THERE TO COVER US AS HE OPENS THE DOOR.



HE'S KNOCKED A HOLE IN THE ROOF! WHAT'S HE UP TO ANYWAY?

SHHWW!



Then

SHYIN' BRAMMAS, DYNAMITE! HE'S SOIN' TER SLOW US ALL TO KINBOOM COME!!

WHISKERS! WHISKERS!



WHISKERS! LET US OUT! IT WUZ ALL A JOKE! IT'S US, YORE FRIENDS!

YOU KNOW MY VOICE, WHISKERS! IT'S ME, THE SHERIFF! LEMME OUT!

A'RIGHT, BUT YUN BETTER COME OUT WITH YORE HANDS UP HIGH! MY SIX-GUN AN'T LOADED WITH BLANKS THIS TIME!



And so...

THAT DYNAMITE SHOULDA SONE OFF LONG ABO!

YOE KIN POOL ME WITH BLANK BULLETS. I KIN POOL YOU WITH BLANK DYNAMITE-STICKS!



WHISKERS, COSS YORE HIDE, LET US OUT! A JOKE'S A JOKE, BUT THIS IS SOIN' TOO FAR!

IF THE SHOUL BARR'S A HOAX AN' YORE INNO-CENT, TH' STATE POLICE WILL CLEAR YUN . . . AFTER I SIT AROUND TO FILE A REPORT WHICH MIGHT NOT BE FER WEEKS, OR EVEN MONTHS . . .

THE END

HOMER

ON THE RANGE

THEY WARNED ME AT THE ALAMO CAFE THAT I DIDN'T RATE ONE CHANCE IN A HUNDRETH OF CROSSIN' THIS STRETCH O' DESERT AFTER NOON UP AN' STAYIN' IN ONE PIECE 'TIL SUNRISE!



... 'CAUSE OF DESERT RATT' BUSTERS, MAIL ROBBERS, ETC. BUT ME, HA-HA BROTHER, I FEARS NEITHER MAN NOR BEAST... I'M A-CROSSIN'!



...WHAT'S COOKIN' UP AHEAD? - A WHOLESALE STICKUP I'D SAY!



WELL, SONNY BOY, I'M A-LAYIN' LOW RIGHT HERE IN THIS LIL' OL' HIDE-OUT 'TIL I CAN FOCUS MY SIGHTS ON THE HOLDER-UPPERS!



AND, WHEREWITH, OUR HERO (?) INSTANTLY FALLS INTO A SOONING SIESTA (SLEEP, AS WE SAY DOWN MEXICO WAY)...



FINALLY COMES THE DAWN, AND HOMER AWAKENS TO...

NOTHIN' BUT OL' CACTUS IN TH' MOONLIGHT! T'WANT NO STICKUP A-TALL! WILL I KEEP MY BIG MOUTH SHUT ABOUT THIS AROUND THE ALAMO CAFE!



The STORY of RAWHIDE IN THE WEST

AS WE KNOW HIS SKIN REMAINS SHINY, HIDES OF THE ANIMALS WERE ONE OF OUR GREATEST ASSETS. . .



HIDES WERE USED NOT ONLY FOR MAKING CLOTHING BUT STRIPS OF IT CAME IN HANDY WHEN MAKING BOOTS, CHAIRS, ETC.



ROPE WIRE GALLS WERE SCARCE IN THE EARLY DAYS, BUT RAWHIDE WAS NOT. . . IT MADE A GOOD SUBSTITUTE. . .



BEFORE THE GREAT CATTLE DRIVES BEGAN, HIDES WERE MORE VALUABLE THAN THE STEERS THEMSELVES. . .



THE CATTLE RUSTLERS WEREN'T INTERESTED IN BEEF. . . IT WAS THE HIDES OF THE ANIMALS THEY WANTED. . . AND THEY'D RISK THEIR OWN HIDES TO GET THEM.



The Showdown

A TRUE STORY OF
THE OLD WEST...

YOU'VE PROBABLY NEVER HEARD OF COMMODORE P. OWENS,
OR THE EXTRAORDINARY SHOWDOWN BETWEEN THE BULL
AND THE SIX-GUN THAT TOOK PLACE IN HOLBROOK, ARIZONA,
SEPTEMBER 4, 1882. THIS IS THE STORY OF AN AMAZING WAR
AND AN AMAZING INCIDENT...



But first, let's consider firearms and
their effect on our frontier history. Before
the Civil War, the long rifle pushed the
American frontier to the Mississippi
and beyond...



BUT AFTER THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES, THE SHORT
GUN—THE REVOLVER, TOOK OVER THE JOB OF CLEARING
THE WESTERN PLAINS AND MOUNTAINS. THE SIXGUN
DID ITS SHARE IN DEFEATING THE INDIANS.

But, unlike the unwieldy rifle, the handy
little revolver did little to civilize the
West—in fact it did *more* in keeping it
wild...



Back in the 1850's, Holbrook, Arizona, was one of the most uncivilized and lawless western towns. It was a shipping point for a number of cattle ranches--and "feuding" was its main diversion.



The Blevens clan--There was a family? There had been six of them until recently, all of them deadly gunfighters, but the father and one son had been eliminated in the feud with Tewksbury.



On September 4, 1867, a strange sight rode into Holbrook--the brand-new Sheriff of Apache County--a man named Commodore P. Owens! He had been spotted after Commodore Perry, hero of the naval battle of Lake Erie.

In 1867 any cow-country citizen could get to a barbershop, and long hair was considered an affectation. To make matters worse, Owens carried his sash on his left side where he had to reach across his own body to draw.





CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE THE BLEVENS FAMILY LIVES?

THAT'S THEIR HOUSE OVER THERE, NEXT TO THE BLACKSMITH SHOP, THAT'S ANDY BLEVENS IN FRONT, SADDLING HIS HORSE.

THANKS.

UH... SHERIFF, YOU AIN'T AINNY TO ARREST THEM BOYS, ARE YUH YUH... BE COMMITTIN' SUICIDE IF YOU TRY.



MY JOB IS TO ENFORCE THE LAW. I INTEND TO DO JUST THAT.

WELL, YOU CAN'T SAY I DON'T WARN YUH...

THE STUPID IDIOT.



A LAW OFFICER!

Like all killers, Andy Blevens had eyes in back of his head—a man with a gun-fighting reputation had to be constantly on the alert...

ANDY-BLEVENS, I HAVE A WARRANT FOR YOUR ARREST! COME OUT HERE, OR I'LL COME IN AFTER YOU!

Andy Blevens quickly went inside the house. Sheriff Owens must have known what a tight spot he was in... but he didn't stop...



There wasn't just one Blavass in the house... All four of the deadly gunmen were inside. . .



Now Andy's brother John managed to miss the Sheriff at such close range is incredible, but he did miss, and before he could squeeze off a second shot---



Even as he fired at his would-be assassin, Quins had caught a glimpse of moving figures through the window; he left the porch in a hurry!



And not a moment too soon! A third brother, dashing out the back door, came around to the front of the house to ambush the Sheriff, but---



Sam Houston Stevens, the youngest member of the clan, sprang out upon the porch, but before he could pull the trigger—

And that was the end of the notorious Stevens boys. In less than a minute, four deadly experts with a six-gun had been vanquished by one man with a rifle— and that man hadn't suffered as much as a powder-burn!



The stunned and speechless residents of Hollbrook knew now that the law had come to stay in Apache County!

HE KILLED THE FOUR OF 'EM—JUST LIKE THAT...THE FOUR OF 'EM...

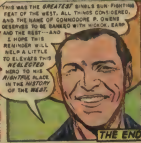
AN' WITH A RIFLE...

IT JUST AIN'T POSSIBLE... BUT HE DID IT...



YES, COMMODORE P. OWENS, THE SHERIFF WITH THE SOLID LOOK, TAMED THE TOWNEST TOWN IN THE WEST, AND SAW THAT IT STAYED TAME!

THIS WAS THE GREATEST SINGLE MAN-FIGHTING FEAT OF THE WEST. ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, AND THE NAME OF COMMODORE P. OWENS DESERVED TO BE BARRAGED WITH HONOR, EMB AND THE BEST—AND I HOPE THIS REMINDER WILL HELP A LITTLE TO ELEVATE THIS NEGLECTED HERO TO HIS RIGHTEOUS PLACE IN THE HISTORY OF THE WEST.



THE END

(Continued from Inside Front Cover)

that he neither smoked or drank. In that region, this alone would make a man look suspicious, but the landlady's own age daughter also observed that the sleeve of his coat had been ripped, and very crudely mended with white thread. A man so impeccably attired would hardly tolerate such a blemish. And furthermore what was a man dressed like that doing in so remote a settlement?

A stagecoach had been robbed the day before, and a detective scouring the surrounding territory in a search for Black Bart, stopped off at this boarding house to learn if any strangers had been about. The girl described the blue-eyed, fair-haired gentleman of about 30, and at last the officers of the law had a description of the man they sought.

They had the description, but not the man. And they might never have caught up with the hands of Black Bart hadn't dropped a handkerchief.

He had just finished obtaining another strong-box from a stagecoach driver, when the driver, evidently made of sterner stuff than his predecessors, decided that he'd acted in a cowardly manner by giving up the box without an argument. To redeem himself, he picked up his rifle and started shooting at the blue sack bandit. Black Bart left the scene in a hurry. The driver got back his box and his self respect.

And a detective got the handkerchief Black Bart dropped in his haste to depart. On it was a laundry mark. The fact that a stagecoach robber should be so dandified that he had his handkerchiefs washed by a laundry didn't surprise the detective. Nothing that Black Bart did could any longer surprise anybody—unless, that is, he did something that wasn't surprising. That would be a novelty.

The only nearby town large enough to boast a laundry that had to use laundry marks to keep the wash from getting mixed up, was San Francisco. The detective got there as fast as he could.

There were some 90-odd laundries in that fast-growing metropolis, so it was quite some time before he finally located the laundry which recognized the mark.

"That handkerchief," said the laundry owner, "belongs to Mr. Charles E. Bolton. The bandit you're after must have stolen it from him. Mr. Bolton is a wealthy gentleman."

"He's wealthy all right," observed the detective. "But he's no gentleman."

So, the law reached the end of the long trail, and Black Bart was brought to justice.

As he was escorted into San Quentin prison, he sighed and made a wistfulness which has become a classic. He said, "I've always lived an outdoor life. I'm afraid I'll find this new one a bit confining." Because of his deadpan manner, no one was ever quite sure whether he was kidding or in earnest. It was probably both.

In prison, he wrote a letter to the last stagecoach driver he had robbed so unsuccessfully. This worthy had the unusual name of Bronson McConnell. This letter, perhaps more than anything else, gives us some insight into the peculiar and in a way, delightful, character of Black Bart.

Dear Sir,

You will please pardon me for this long delay in acknowledging your kind 'compliments' so hastily sent me some time back, but you may rest fully assured, my dear sir, that you are remembered and with nothing but the most friendly feelings.

You were a man who did his whole duty to his employer, to yourself and to your community at large. I have often admired your fine qualities as a stagecoach driver, and only regret that I am unable to compliment you on your marksmanship.

You really need more practice, but you'll surely excuse me if I say 'not at all.' I would like to hear from you, however, if this is consistent with your wishes, and, my dear sir, you have my best wishes for an unobscured, prosperous and happy drive through life.

I am, yours in haste,

"Black Bart"

P.S. Yes, I am in haste—but not in as much of a hurry as I was on a certain other occasion.

Black Bart was such a model prisoner that he was released from prison after serving four years and two months. He assured the warden that he fully intended to go straight—but, as mentioned before, no one could determine whether the man was serious or joking.

Having achieved the status of a celebrity, newspaper reporters were on hand to record the event of his release. One of them asked, "Black Bart, have you really changed?"

Black Bart reflected a moment then replied solemnly, "Why, yes, I have. I am four years older."

Another reporter inquired, "Are you going to write any more poetry?"

Another pause for reflection, then, solemnly, "I've already said that I was not going to commit any more crimes."

Although free, the law officers thought they'd better keep an eye on Black Bart for awhile, just in case.

Some days after his release, Black Bart, lugging a heavy valise, checked into a hotel in Visalia, California. He stayed a few days, and then had the valise sent to a detective in San Francisco—the very same detective who had caught up to him in the laundry-mark case. Meanwhile, Black Bart dodged the detectives who were keeping tabs on him, and seemingly vanished into thin air.

As a result of his disappearance, the valise was opened with some expectation. It yielded a weird assortment of scribbled junk—including a bill which Black Bart had been a passenger until the end.

And it was the end. Black Bart, the F.O.B., was never heard of again. Where he went, what he did, and what became of him, remains an unsolved mystery to this day.

It may be that he assumed another alias, settled somewhere and lived out the remainder of his life an honest, respectable man. Or it may be that he resumed his career of crime in some other territory, never again making the mistake of having his handkerchiefs washed by a laundry.

What's New

By MABEL D. SHAY

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