

# Rod Cameron

## western

A Fawcett Publication

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**10¢**  
NO. 3



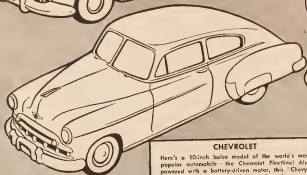
IN THIS ISSUE:  
**THE MYSTERY  
OF THE  
SEVEN CITIES  
OF CIBOLA**



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ELECTRIC MOTOR POWERED  
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# Rod CAMERON in The Golden Pueblos of Cibola

CHAPTER ONE: The Map of Mystery



**The Fabulous Golden Cities of Marco DeNiza!!** Did they really exist? Or were they only mirages in the thirst-maddened minds of the battle-weary Spaniards who fought their way across the hot sands of our western deserts?

But they appear again, like spectres of doom from out of the past, and threaten the life of every settler west of the Rio Grande, until **ROD CAMERON**, devil-may-care Knight of the Saddle, leaps into the maelstrom of death and destruction, to spike the strange legend of

**The Golden Pueblos of Cibola!**

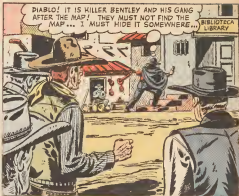
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**I**n a Mexican border town, **KILLER BENTLEY**, renegade gunman, speaks to his henchmen!



THERE HE GOES! COME ON!

HE'S SPOTTED US AND IS HEADING FOR THAT LIBRARY BUILDING!



DIABLO! IT IS KILLER BENTLEY AND HIS GANG AFTER THE MAP! THEY MUST NOT FIND THE MAP... I MUST HIDE IT SOMEWHERE...

BIBLIOTECA LIBRARY



HAN! PERHAPS I CAN HIDE THE MAP IN THE BOOK OF THAT FELLOW UNTIL THE DANGER IS OVER!



EXCUSE ME, SEÑOR! HAVE WE NOT MET BEFORE?

ER, I DON'T BELIEVE WE HAVE, SIR! I'M PROFESSOR WEEMS!



WE'VE GOT YOU CORRALLED AT LAST, SANCHEZ! THOUGHT YOU COULD GIVE US THE SLIP AND GET AWAY WITH THE MAP, EH?

NO! NO! DON'T SHOOT! I HAVE NO MAP!



YOU'RE NOT CRAWLING OUT OF THIS SPOT! GET THE MAP, BOYS!

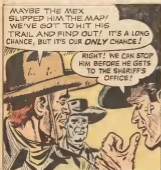
NO! WAIT! I'LL... ARRGH!



LOOKS AS IF HE WASN'T LYING, BOSS! HE HASN'T GOT THE MAP ON HIM!

WHAT? SEARCH HIM AGAIN! HE'S GOT TO HAVE IT ON HIM!

*As the Professor's attention is diverted the map is deftly slipped unnoticed between the pages of his book!*





MY GUN! HE SHOT IT OUT OF MY HAND!

BANG! BANG! HALT!

MAKE TRACKS! DON'T TRY A SHOWDOWN WITH ROD CAMERON!



THEY RAN DOWN THIS STREET, BUT I DON'T SEE A SIGN OF THEM. MUST HAVE DUCKED INTO ONE OF THE HOUSES AND DISAPPEARED!

MANY THANKS FOR SAVING MY LIFE, MR. CAMERON! THOSE MEN WOULD HAVE KILLED ME AS THEY DID THAT OTHER POOR FELLOW, IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR YOU!

WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT?



I'M PROFESSOR WEEMS! THOSE MEN ENTERED THE LIBRARY READING ROOM WHERE I WAS STUDYING AND KILLED A FELLOW BEFORE MY VERY EYES. THEN THEY TOOK AFTER ME. THEY WANTED MY BOOK FOR SOME REASON THAT I CAN'T FATHOM!



MAY I TAKE A LOOK AT THAT BOOK?

CERTAINLY! HERE!



DOPS! WHAT'S THAT? LOOKS LIKE A PIECE OF PARCHMENT!

I DON'T KNOW HOW IT GOT INTO MY BOOK! I NEVER SAW IT BEFORE!



IT LOOKS LIKE A MAP OF SOME SORT, AND A MIGHTY OLD ONE AT THAT! --IT'S WRITTEN IN SPANISH!

HMMM! VERY INTERESTING! LET ME SEE IT!

HMMM! IT SAYS SOMETHING ABOUT PUEBLOS OF GOLD... AND HERE'S A NAME SCRRAWLED ON IT WHICH LOOKS LIKE MARCO DE NIZA, AS NEAR AS I CAN MAKE OUT! I HAVE A FRIEND IN SAN ANTONIO WHO MIGHT KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT IT!



RIGHT! THEY'RE HEADING FOR THE BORDER! RECKON WE'LL HAVE TO ACT FAST IF WE'RE GOING TO GET THAT MAP, BOSS!

THAT ROD CAMERON IS A DANGEROUS HOMBRE TO BUCK, BUT HE WON'T STAND A CHANCE **THIS** TIME!



GET GOING, HORSE! WHEN ROD CAMERON AND THAT JASPER GET TO GILA PASS, WE'RE GOING TO BE THERE—LOOKING AT HIM THROUGH THE SIGHTS OF OUR SIX-GUNS!

Hours later...

THERE'S GILA PASS AHEAD! WE MADE IT IN TIME!

A BUSYWACKING, EH?

YEAH! NOT A SIGN OF THEIR TRACKS ANYWHERE!



Meanwhile, lying unnoticed on an overlooking roof...

IN THAT CASE, I RECKON I'LL RIDE ALONG WITH YOU TO MAKE SURE YOU GET ACROSS THE BORDER SAFE AND SOUND. I'M HEADING BACK THAT WAY MYSELF!

HEAR THAT?



THANK YOU! MY HORSE IS HITCHED AROUND THE CORNER!

WE'VE GOT TO DO SOME HARD RIDING TO BEAT THEM TO GILA PASS! I AIM TO GET THAT MAP AND COOK ROD CAMERON'S GOOSE AT THE SAME TIME!



WE'LL GET BEHIND SOME OF THESE BOULDERPERS AND WAIT FOR ROD CAMERON TO COME RIDING TO HIS FUNERAL! HA, HA!

MIGHTY DOGGONED SUCK, KILLER! NOTHING LIKE BAGGING TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE, EH?





RIGHT! AND AS SOON AS ROD CAMERON GETS IN RANGE, I'LL DRILL HIM THROUGH THE HEAD!



GOT HIM!  
COVER THE OTHER JASPER, BOYS!

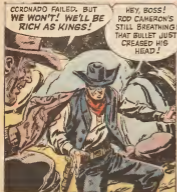


HAND OVER THAT MAP, MISTER, BEFORE I KILL YOU LIKE I DID ROD CAMERON!

DON'T SHOOT! I'LL GIVE YOU THE MAP! HERE!



HAH! AT LAST! THE MAP TO THE FABULOUS GOLDEN PUEBLOS OF CIROLA! THE SEVEN GOLDEN CITIES THAT CORDONADO AND HIS CONQUISTADORES TRIED TO FIND IN 1539! THE MAP IS MINE AT LAST!



CORDONADO FAILED, BUT WE WON'T! WE'LL BE RICH AS KINGS!

HEY, BOSS! ROD CAMERON'S STILL BREATHING! THAT BULLET JUST CREASED HIS HEAD!



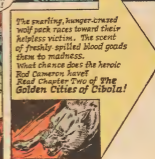
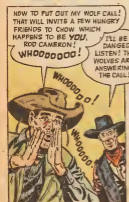
I RECKON THAT'S TOO BAD-- FOR ROD CAMERON! TIE HIM UP! I'VE GOT A BETTER WAY OF GETTING RID OF HIM!



THERE YOU ARE, BOSS! HE'LL NEVER GET OUT OF THESE KNOTS!

THAT'S FINE! PROP HIM UP AGAINST THAT BOULDER SO HE CAN SEE WHAT'S SOON GOING TO COME UP THE PASS! HA, HA! WILL HE BE SURPRISED!





The snarling, hunger-crazed wolf pack races toward their helpless victim. The scent of freshly spilled blood goads them to madness. What chance does the heroic Rod Cameron have? Read Chapter Two of *The Golden Cities of Cibola!*

# Rod CAMERON *in The Golden Pueblos of Cibola*

CHAPTER TWO:  
**The Drums  
of War**

STEADY, WAR PAINT,  
OLD PARD! WE'VE BEEN  
THROUGH TIGHT SPOTS  
TOGETHER BEFORE AND  
WE'LL GET THROUGH THIS  
ONE--OR DIE FIGHTING  
TOGETHER!

WHOOOOOOO!

GRR-BRR!

GRR-RR!



With the fury of a tornado the mighty stallion War Paint plunges to the attack in defense of his helpless master!

ATTABOY, WAR PAINT, OLD PARD!  
FIGHT THE VARMINTS OFF UNTIL I GET  
THESE ROPES OFF MY ANKLES!



THAT'S IT, WAR PAINT! I'LL  
HAVE THESE ROPES OFF MY  
ANKLES IN A FEW  
MORE SECONDS!

BOB!



I'VE GOT MY ANKLES FREE!  
NOW TO MEET THIS VARMINT'S  
ATTACK AND GET MY HANDS  
FREE AT THE SAME  
TIME!

GRRRR!



HERE, YOU SNAGGLE-TOOTHED VARMINT! IF  
YOU WANT TO SLASH SOMETHING UP SO BAD  
SLASH THROUGH  
THESE ROPES!

GRRRR!



IT  
WORKED!

SNAP!



NOW TO GET MY HANDS ON THAT  
BUZZARD CARCASS BEFORE  
THESE VARMINTS GET THEIR  
FANGS INTO ME! THIS WAY,  
WAR PAINT, OLD SCOUT!

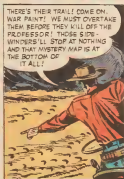
GRRRR!

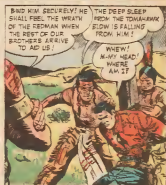


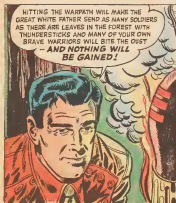
HERE! HAVE SOME  
BUZZARD!

GRRRR!

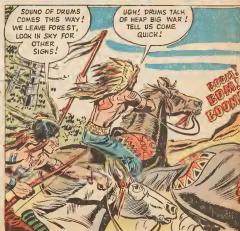
GRRRR!

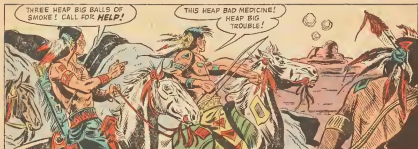






*As the war drums throb in a menacing rumble, the war dance begins and the blood-curdling chants pierce the air!*





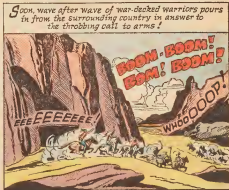
THREE HEAP BIG BALLS OF SMOKE! CALL FOR **HELP!**

THIS HEAP BAD MEDICINE! HEAP BIG TROUBLE!



COME! WE GO TO HELP OUR BROTHERS ON WARPATH!

LEAD! WE FOLLOW!



SOON, wave after wave of war-decked warriors pours in from the surrounding country in answer to the throbbing call to arms!

**BOOM-BOOM!**  
**BOOM!**

EEEEEEEEEE!

**WHOOOOP!**



**WELCOME, BROTHER WARRIORS!**

HOW! WE COME FROM AFAR IN ANSWER TO THE BECKONINGS OF YOUR WAR DRUMS, O CHIEF!



LISTEN TO ME, O WARRIORS! LONG HAVE THE PALEFACED ONES ROBBED US OF OUR LAND AND DRIVEN THE GAME FROM OUR HUNTING GROUNDS WHILE WE HAVE HELD OUR PEACE!

HE SPEAKS WITH THE TONGUE OF TRUTH!



WE HAVE BEEN HERDED OFF OUR RANGES BY THE GREAT WHITE FATHER AND TOLD TO STAY UPON THE RESERVATIONS AND ROAM THE PLAINS NO MORE! THIS, TOO, WE PERMITTED AND HELD OUR PEACE!



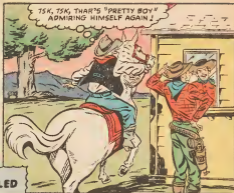
*As the great tomahawk cleaves the air in a mighty arc of doom, ROD CAMERON gazes with calm, fearless composure INTO THE EYES OF CERTAIN DEATH! Can this be the end of gallant Rod Cameron? Turn to Chapter Three of The Golden Cities of Cibola!*



# OLD SLICK



IS  
UNRIVALED



TSK, TSK, THAR'S "PRETTY BOY" ADMIRING HIMSELF AGAIN!



GET AWAY FROM THE MIRROR! YUH'VE BEEN LOOKING AT YORESELF FER FIVE HOURS STRAIGHT! AREN'T YUH TIRED YET?

NO! WHY SHOULD I BE? THAR'S NOTHING ELSE ROUND HYAR THAT LOOKS AS GOOD!



YUH MUST BE THE HAPPIEST HOMBRE IN THE WORLD!

HUH?



I SAID YUH MUST BE THE HAPPIEST HOMBRE IN THE WORLD!

WHUT MAKES YUH THINK SO?



BECAUZ YO'RE IN LOVE WITH YORESELF ---



---AND YUH HAVEN'T GOT A RIVAL IN THE WORLD!

# Rod CAMERON *in The Golden Pueblos of Cibola*

## CHAPTER THREE: *The End of The Trail*



As the menacing tomahawk falls, Rod Cameron faces death bravely! But suddenly...

**CRACK!**

**RED EAGLE!**



YOU NO KILL! THIS MAN FRIEND OF INDIAN! **THIS ROD CAMERON!** HE ONCE SAVE MY LIFE!

THANKS, RED EAGLE, OLD FRIEND! I RECKON IF YOU HADN'T BEEN HERE I SURE WOULD HAVE BEEN A GONER!

THIS PALEFACE NO FRIEND! HE LIE LIKE ALL PALEFACES! HE KILL HIM WITH KNIFE!



YOU LIE, O CHIEF! I CHALLENGE YOU TO HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT TO PROVE WHICH OF US IS RIGHT! DRAW YOUR KNIFE! ROD CAMERON NEEDS NO KNIFE! I USE MY FISTS!

UGH! PALEFACE HEAP BRAVE MAN!



*A great cheer rises from the throats of the warriors as they acclaim Rod Cameron's bravery and sportsmanship!*

**AAEEEEE!!!!** ROD CAMERON HEAP BRAVE WARRIOR! FRIEND OF REDMAN!

THANKS, FRIENDS! IF SOME RENEGADES HAVE DRIVEN YOU FROM YOUR PUEBLO, YOUR VILLAGE, I'LL HELP YOU ROUND THEM UP AND TURN THEM OVER TO THE LAM!

WHERE YOU LEAD, WE FOLLOW!



WHAT DID THESE JASPERS LOOK LIKE, CHIEF?

ONE HAS HAIR LIKE FIRE! HE IS HOLDING OUR WOMEN AND CHILDREN CAPTIVE IN OUR PUEBLO!



HAIR LIKE FIRE? HE MEANS ONE OF THEM IS RED-HEADED!

SOUNDS AS IF KILLER BENTLEY IS AT THE BOTTOM OF ALL THIS!



FORK YOUR BRONCS, MEN, AND LET'S RIDE! COME ON, WAR PAINT, OLD PARD! WE'VE GOT SOME TALL RAMBLING TO DO!



**FOLLOW ME, WARRIORS!** WE'LL ROUND UP THESE MAVERICKS IN MIGHTY SHORT ORDER!

WE FOLLOW YOU, ROD CAMERON, WHEREVER YOU LEAD!



*The indomitable ROD CAMERON races at the head of the wild warriors toward the captive pueblo!*

THAT'S THEM! THEY'RE FIRING FROM BEHIND THE COVER OF THAT ADOBE WALL! PULL UP YOUR BRONCS JUST OUTSIDE OF GUNSHOT RANGE! WE'RE NOT RIDING IN ON THEM ... YET!

UGH!

BANG! BANG!





THOSE JASPERS ARE HOLD IN MIGHTY SNUG! THEY CAN HOLD OFF AN ARMY FROM BEHIND THAT COVER!

WE NOT CARE! THEY HOLD OUR WOMEN AND CHILDREN PRISONER! WE RIDE IN AND KILL THEM!



WE COULD RIDE IN AND SMOKE THEM OUT, BUT I RECKON IT WOULD TAKE TWO MANY LIVES! I'M GOING IN AFTER THEM ALONE!

I GO WITH YOU, MY FRIEND!



NO, CHIEF! IF I FAIL, YOU AND YOUR BRAVE WARRIORS CAN RIDE IN AFTER ME! I'VE GOT A LITTLE STUNT IN MIND THAT I THINK'LL WORK!

IT SHALL BE AS YOU WANT IT!



KEEP FIRING VOLLEYS OF ARROWS AT THEM TO KEEP THEM BUSY WHILE I MAKE MY MOVE!

GOOD LUCK, ROD CAMERON!



COME ON, WAR PAINT, OLD SCOUT! I'M COUNTING ON YOU TO MAKE THIS STUNT WORK! JUST KEEP GOING PARD, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS!



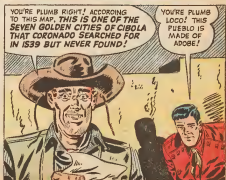
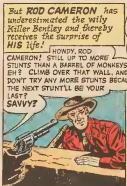
LOOK! IT'S ROD CAMERON'S GHOST RIDING BACK FROM THE GRAVE FOR A SHOWDOWN!

GHOST NOTHING! THAT RANNY'S GOT MORE LIVES THAN A CROSS-EYED POLECAT, BUT I AIM TO MAKE A GHOST OUT OF HIM THIS TIME!



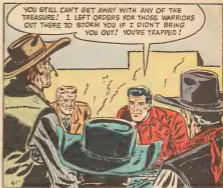
GOT HIM!

BANG!





HA, HA! YOU MEAN IT LOOKS LIKE ADOBE, BUT IT'S SOLID GOLD UNDER THE ADOBE! THE ADOBE WAS GLAPPED OVER THE GOLO TO HIDE IT FROM THE SPANIARDS UNDER CORDONADO! IT FOOLED THEM BUT NOT ME!

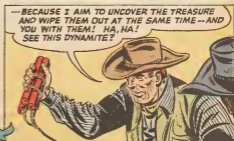


YOU STILL CAN'T GET AWAY WITH ANY OF THE TREASURE! I LEFT ORDERS FOR THOSE WARRIORS OUT THERE TO STORM YOU IF I DIDN'T BRING YOU OUT! YOU'RE TRAPPED!

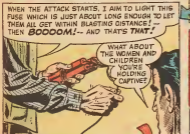


THEY'LL COME SWARMING OVER THESE WALLS, ONCE THEY START THEIR ATTACK AND THAT ATTACK WILL COME ANY MINUTE NOW!

THAT'S MIGHTY GOOD NEWS!



-- BECAUSE I AIM TO UNCOVER THE TREASURE AND WIPE THEM OUT AT THE SAME TIME -- AND YOU WITH THEM! HA, HA! SEE THIS DYNAMITE?

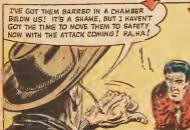


WHEN THE ATTACK STARTS, I AIM TO LIGHT THIS FUSE WHICH IS JUST ABOUT LONG ENOUGH TO LET THEM ALL GET WITHIN BLASTING DISTANCE! -- THEN BOOOOM!-- AND THAT'S THAT!

WHAT ABOUT THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN YOU'RE HOLDING CAPTIVE?



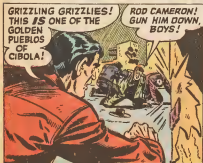
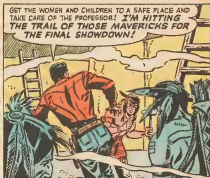
LOOK! THE INDIANS ARE GETTING READY TO ATTACK!



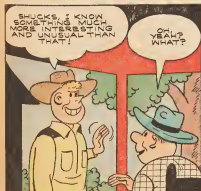
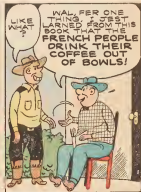
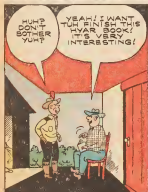
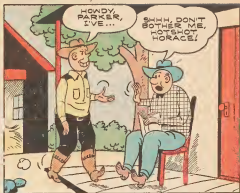
I'VE GOT THEM BARRED IN A CHAMBER BEHIND US! IT'S A SHAME, BUT I HAVEN'T GOT THE TIME TO MOVE THEM TO SAFETY, NOW WITH THE ATTACK COMING! RA, HA!











# FINISH FIGHT

By JOSEPH MILLARD



THE sun beat down like fire in the narrow pass, but Dan Savage, bent over his easel, hardly felt the heat. Delicately he touched his brush to the palette and transferred a bit of color to the canvas before him. His painting of the canyon wall seemed to leap into life with that touch, reflecting the light and shadow and the vivid color of the rocks.

"I've caught it," Dan said with satisfaction. "It's a darn good picture of the canyon wall, if I do say so myself."

He was so absorbed that he failed to hear the thud of hoofs, the muffled snort, and the metallic click of a gun-hammer drawn to cock. His first inkling that he was not alone came when the canyon rocked to gun thunder. A screaming slug tore one leg from the easel and sent the painting, its oils still wet, face down into the sand.

Dan whirled. Blackie Gow, big and tough and mean-fated, sat his horse in the narrow pass and laughed as he lowered his smoking six-gun. "I'm sorry," Blackie said nastily. "I reckon I just had the sun in my eyes and I didn't recognize you, boss." He emphasized the word with a sneer.

Trembling with fury, Dan Savage picked up his spoiled painting. Sand clung to the fresh paint, ruining it. "Blackie, if you'd put that gun down for five minutes, I'd make you lick that sand off with your filthy tongue."

Blackie laughed raucously. "Out here in the West, sonny, men settle things with a six-gun. If you got any complaints, strap on a shooting iron and meet me man to man. Or else fire me."

Dan trembled with the rage that filled him. Ever since he had come west to take over his Uncle's ranch, he had met the sneers and laughter of the cowhands. Slowly, one by one, he had won over the most of them. Only Blackie remained hostile and mean. His fury stemmed from the fact that he had signed a year's contract to work for the Rocker L. When Dan refused to release him from that contract after his Uncle's death, Blackie had tried every possible way to goad Dan into meeting him with guns.

"You know I'm not a gun-hawk," Dan said. "Call it yellow if you want to, but I say you're

yellow because you're afraid to fight it out with fists. You outweigh me by a good eighty pounds, and still you're afraid."

"I don't trade face-slaps with kids," Blackie snorted as he swung his black stallion. "Either fire me or face me. Otherwise I'll make you sorry you were born, boss or no boss. Old Dave Savage was a man, and I signed to work for him. I didn't sign to play nursemaid to a tenderfoot painter."

As he rode off, Dan slowly packed away his painting equipment. He knew how these rugged westerners felt about a grown man who spent his free time painting pictures. Yet the love of beauty was too deep in Dan to let him stop. But against that was a stubbornness that would not permit him to accept defeat. If he let Blackie go, he would be admitting his failure and the other hands would quickly drift away. Dan was determined to run his Uncle's ranch, and equally determined to stand on his two feet before the men without giving up his painting. It was not his fault, he reflected, that he was raised in an eastern city and trained for art, not cattle-raising. A man could be a man and still love beauty.

THEN suddenly Dan Savage laughed. His strong young face lost its haggard tension. His problem was simple, really, when he had reduced it to its elements. All he had to do was prove that he had the courage to stand up and hold his ground and the hands would begin to respect him as a man. His queer liking for pictures would be forgotten then, relegated to the background. In the code of the West, every man had a right to his personal peculiarities—once he had proven that he was a man.

Chuckling, Dan Savage unpacked his paints again and began to mix fresh colors on his palette. If he was good enough as an artist now, he had his chance to be good enough as a ranch owner.

That night, in the bunkhouse, Dan faced the cowhands as they lounged at ease. "I'll be up in North Canyon again tomorrow if I'm needed for anything important. I was almost through with my painting, but I—er—had an accident. I want to make one more try at

capturing those colors in the rocks."

He saw the blaze of evil purpose light up Blackie Gow's eyes, and it was hard for him to mask his grin as he turned away. He had cast his bait and the fish had nibbled. Nothing remained now but to land his quarry solidly.

Early the next morning Dan Savage set up his easel and a fresh canvas in the neck of North Canyon and began to paint. He seemed absorbed in his work once more, but his ears were alert. He heard the first soft shuffle of hoofs in sand and he turned, smiling, to face the grim figure of Blackie Gow.

"You don't take a hint, do you, tenderfoot?" Blackie snarled. He sat on his horse like a grim figure of doom, his right hand resting on the butt of his black gun, his thick lips twisted in an evil smirk. "I warned you, and now I'm through with warnings. You can take what you've got coming, or run like the baby you are."

DAN laughed. "You're the one who wasn't smart this time, Blackie. I dropped some bait last night in the bunkhouse, and you swallowed it whole. Take a look up the wall."

He gestured and Blackie looked up sharply. His big figure froze to immobility. Up there, the rim of a Stetson showed behind a rock and a cocked six-gun pointed down, rock-steady and aimed straight at the intruder. Dan pointed again and Blackie's head turned. His eyes took in a similar figure behind a rock on the opposite side.

"A trap," Blackie said hoarsely, and cursed savagely.

"Exactly," Dan said, smiling. "And you walked right into it. The boys have orders to shoot you down if you try for that gun. Unbuckle it carefully and toss it over here."

Snarling choked curses, Blackie obeyed. When the holstered gun lay at Dan's feet, he gestered again and Blackie dismounted. "I'll get you for this," he snarled. "You won't live to laugh about tricking Blackie Gow."

"You'll have to prove that with action," Dan said quietly. "Put up your fists, Blackie. Were settling this right here and now, with my choice of weapons instead of yours. You talk a brave fight. Let's see if there's any action behind the wind."

With a roar, Blackie charged with both massive fists swinging. He grunted from the force of a vicious blow that whistled harmlessly through empty air. Darting lightly aside, Dan's fists lashed out twice. There were sharp smacks and Blackie went down like a poleaxed steer.

The big man rolled swiftly, expecting to be kicked, but Dan only danced back, waiting, taunting Blackie with his mocking smile. Again, Blackie charged and again he was knocked flat without ever landing a blow of his own. He was groggy when he reared up to his feet.

Dan whirled in and struck and leaped back. Blood spurted from Blackie's nose. Again and again Dan attacked, and each blow left a mark for all to see. A front tooth vanished. Both eyes began to swell with dark welts around them. The big man's breath whistled noisily through his battered nose.

Still Dan struck and danced away and struck again, and never once did he take a blow himself. The fight ended abruptly when the bully fell face down in the sand and could not rise again. He lay helpless, moaning, cringing away from further punishment.

"I guess that does it," Dan said quietly. "Take off your pants, Blackie. Quick!"

Fumbling, dazed, the big man stripped off his levis and stood trembling in his underwear. Dan scooped up the clothes and hung Blackie's gun belt over his arm. He eyed the big man narrowly.

"I hope you've learned a lesson, Blackie. You're going to stay on the Rocker L and work for me. You're going to obey orders and play no tricks and say 'yes, sir' when you're spoken to. Is that clear?"

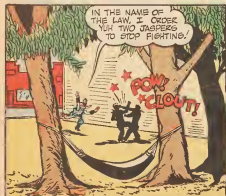
Blackie mumbled a wordless answer.

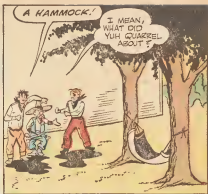
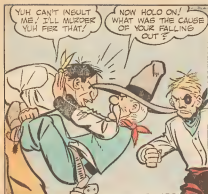
"If you try to pull stakes and run, Blackie, I'll telegraph word to every ranch in the State that'll make you the laughing stock of the West."

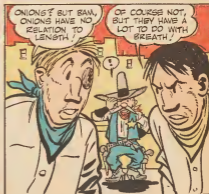
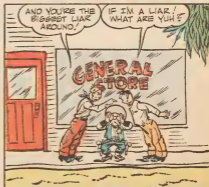
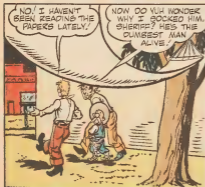
HE mounted his horse. "When I take your pants and gun back, I don't think I'll have any more trouble making the hands believe I'm man enough to boss a spread like this. And when you come in looking the way you do, they'll know it for sure."

He turned his horse's head to ride away and then paused. "Before you start back, Blackie, you might climb the rocks and take a close look at those pals of mine up there. I painted pictures of hats and guns on the rock. They were good enough to fool you into thinking you were covered. You might even decide to give me credit for being a pretty good artist, too."

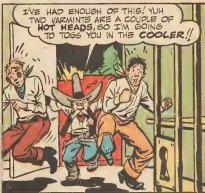
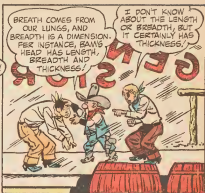
THE END











# RIDING TRAIL WITH Rod CAMERON

**ROD CAMERON**

9172 SUNSET BOULEVARD  
HOLLYWOOD 46, CALIFORNIA

My Dear Fans,

It sure feels mighty good to slink out of the saddle and stroll with you into my own special page and to tell you how much I enjoy reading all those fine letters that have been coming my way from all parts of the country. It makes me feel just as cozy like me feel plain as here as matter what part of the stage I'm working through, and I'm mighty thankful that I have *Pat* everywhere.

Thinking this way about friends sets me to thinking about a bit of timberland for *Pat* and I were walking through out in the woods. The night that set up open but me like a hunter. It wasn't long however but getting plain serious with his fire and had set the whole depressed forest ablaze, leaving nothing but charred skeletons in place of the big, beautiful trees I remembered seeing on my way over that trail before. It sure as hell as if I was in a cemetery among the dead. The air hung still and heavy-like with not the sound of a single crowner.

I reckon the Forest Fire must have been caused by some timberfoot because as you who's timberwise ever gets involved with anything so dangerous as fire, he ain't. I've got a heap of riders on the trail and just among the cheerful they are with their fires in a rare sign as to how timberwise they are. A good cowboy always knows how his matches are set, and he breaks up his law and leaves the woods with dirt before moving on. You see, timberwise folks know how a timberfoot looks and he ain't, heat and fire alike. They know good and well that a fire can sweep across the country and wipe out a whole forest full of trees and fall along with them, too.

Trees, I reckon, are God's best friends. Their roots conserve water and keep rivers from going on a flood rampage when the heavy snows start melting. In the heat of summer they provide cool shade and in the cold of winter they give us firewood to keep our stoves with and keep warm. They also provide timber for shelter. They give us fruit and nuts and make the air we breathe good and clean. And then there's where they stand being good either. They provide homes for songbirds and squirrels. I don't reckon you see fire a better friend anywhere than a tree, so when you're reading through *Timberland*, ride along hard on your trail-wood and be plain sure that once as they gets involved with his fire and you'll be doing everybody a mighty good turn.

It'll be riding to you, so till I write you again, be good...to each other.

Your Pard,

*Rod Cameron*

P.S. My latest picture is *Dealin' D'*. Look for it at your local movie theatre!

RC



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