

TEX RITTER

A Fawcett Publication

WESTERN

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NO. 2

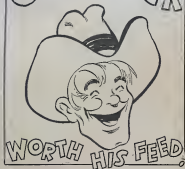


In this action-packed issue:

**THE VANISHING
VARMINTS!**

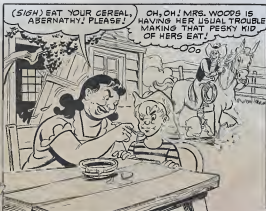


OLD SLICK



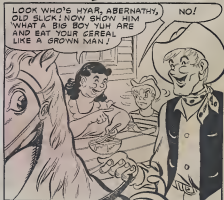
(SIGH) EAT YOUR CEREAL, ABERNATHY! PLEASE!

OH, OH! MRS. WOODS IS HAVING HER USUAL TROUBLE MAKING THAT PESKY KID OF HERS EAT!



LOOK WHO'S HYAR, ABERNATHY, OLD SLICK! NOW SHOW HIM 'WHAT A BIG BOY YUH ARE AND EAT YOUR CEREAL LIKE A GROWN MAN!

NO!



(SIGH) WHAT AM I GOING TUH DO, SLICK? HE JEST REFUSES TUH OPEN HIS MOUTH WHEN I TRY TUH FEED HIM!

DON'T WORRY, MRS. WOODS! I OPINE I KNOW HOW TO GET AROUND THAT SITUATION!



YUH OPINE YUH CAN MAKE HIM OPEN HIS MOUTH AND EAT?

YUP! JEST WATCH ME! I'LL SHOW YUH HOW! FIRST, TAKE THE SPOON OF CEREAL...



...THEN STEP ON STUBBORN ABERNATHY'S TOES AND...

...WHEN HE YELLS OUT, SHOVE THE FOOD IN HIS OPEN MOUTH!

HA! HA! THAT'S BRILLIANT, OLD SLICK! I RECKON I WON'T HAVE ANY MORE TROUBLE!



OUCH! --HUH? (GULP)



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Every effort is made to insure that these comic magazines contain the highest quality of wholesome entertainment.

W. A. Fawcett, Jr., President

Tex Ritter

and THE

VANISHING VARMINTS

When trouble sounds across the Western hills, **TEX RITTER**, the Prairie Ranger, takes after it! But this time he travels a strange path through the sentimental words of an old song to find the answer to the **VANISHING VARMINTS!**

Tex Ritter, the Prairie Ranger, is called into Ranger Headquarters one day, and —

I'VE A REPORT HERE, TEX, OF A SMALL TOWN THAT'S TOO NEW TO HAVE ITS OWN SHERIFF YET! SEEMS THEY'VE BEEN HAVING TROUBLE WITH A BAND OF VARMINTS WHO STRIKE AND THEN DISAPPEAR!

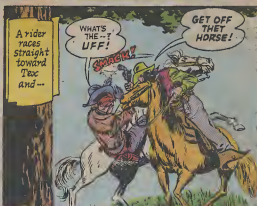
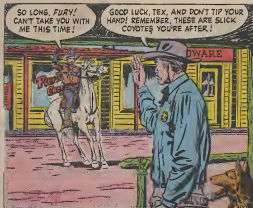
I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO, CHIEF!



RIGHT! GO THERE AND SCOUT AROUND! SEE WHAT YOU CAN LEARN! KEEP YOUR IDENTITY SECRET! I'LL HELP YOU IN GETTING A LINE ON THE VARMINTS!

I'LL TAKE MY GUITAR AND GO AS A TRAVELING TROUBADOUR WHO PLAYS AT DANCES! THAT OUGHT TO KEEP THEM OFF-GUARD!





Tex quickly clears his head and --

THEY'RE GONE! BUT WHERE?... I WAS DIZZY FOR ONLY A FEW MOMENTS! THEY'VE JUST VANISHED!



THERE'S NOT A THING AROUND NOW BUT THESE ROCKS AND THAT OLD BENT PINE TREE! I CAN'T EVEN HEAR THEIR HORSES GALLOPING AWAY!



BUT I DIDN'T IMAGINE THEM! THEY WERE HERE! THEIR TRACKS ARE IN THE GROUND! THIS GROUND UP, HERE IS COVERED WITH A WHITE CLAY MIXTURE! I'LL SURE REMEMBER THIS SPOT!



Just then --

WHOA, THERE! THERE'S ONE OF THEM! GRAB THE COYOTE!

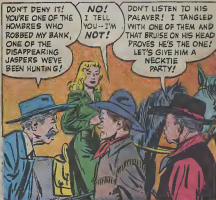
NOW WHAT?



DON'T DENY IT! YOU'RE ONE OF THE HOMBRES WHO ROBBED MY BANK, ONE OF THE DISAPPEARING JASPERS WE'VE BEEN HUNTING!

NO! I TELL YOU-- I'M NOT!

DON'T LISTEN TO HIS PALAVER! I TANGLED WITH ONE OF THEM AND THAT BRUISE ON HIS HEAD PROVES HE'S THE ONE! LET'S GIVE HIM A NECKTIE PARTY!



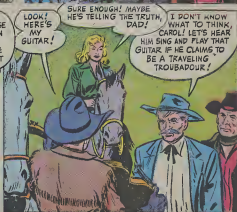
WAIT! GIVE THE MAN A CHANCE TO SPEAK HIS PIECE, TREMAINE!

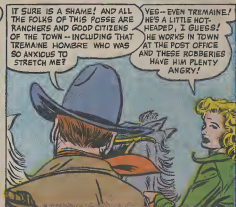
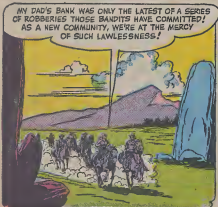
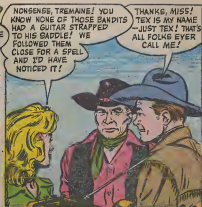
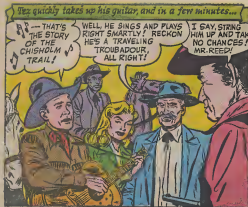
THANK YOU, MISS! I'M NOT ONE OF THOSE GALOOTS! I CAME UPON THEM, THEY JUMPED ME AND GAVE ME THIS BRUISE ON MY HEAD! I'M JUST A ROAMING GUITAR PLAYER!

LOOK! HERE'S MY GUITAR!

SURE ENOUGH! MAYBE HE'S TELLING THE TRUTH, DAD!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK, CAROL! LET'S HEAR HIM SING AND PLAY THAT GUITAR IF HE CLAIMS TO BE A TRAVELING TROUBADOUR!





But soon, Tex reaches the Reed ranch bunkhouse, and—

DAD WILL TELL YOU YOUR DUTIES TOMORROW, TEX, AND I'LL SEE YOU ABOUT THE TOWN DANCE IN A FEW DAYS! THERE'S A SPECIAL SONG I WANT YOU TO SING!

SURE THING, CAROL—AND THANKS FOR EVERYTHING!



A few nights later, as Tex walks through town—

SO FAR, I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FIND A SINGLE LEAD ON THOSE DRYGULCHERS!



Suddenly!

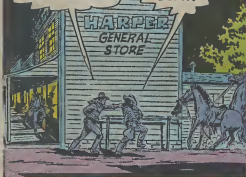
THE GENERAL STORE--AND IT'S THOSE SIDEWINDERS!

BANG!
BANG!



NOT SO FAST, YOU ORNERY BROOMTAILS!

LOOK OUT---
UUFH!



MOUNT UP! I'LL TAKE THE WIND OUT OF THIS CAVUSE!

I---
OOOH!



NOW, LET'S GIT!

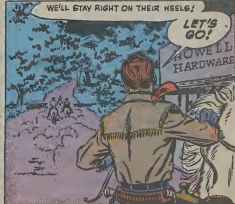
COME ON, WHITE FLASH! WE CAN'T LET THEM GET AWAY AGAIN!

GIDDAP, THERE!



WE'LL STAY RIGHT ON THEIR HEELS!

LET'S GO!



Into the hills, Tex chases after the fleeing bandits

KEEP AFTER THEM, WHITE FLASH! THEY JUST WENT AROUND THAT BEND IN THE TRAIL!



But an instant later, when Tex rounds the bend...

HOLD IT, BOY! THEY'VE DISAPPEARED! VANISHED COMPLETELY!



AND THIS IS THE SPOT WHERE I MET THEM, WHERE THEY SLUGGED ME AND VANISHED JUST AS SUDDENLY! THERE'S THAT OLD, BENT PINE!



AND THE WHITE CLAY OF THE EARTH AROUND HERE! THIS IS THE SAME SPOT, ALL RIGHT! I SURE DON'T FIGURE THIS AT ALL!



THEY REACH THIS SPOT AND SUDDENLY VANISH! I MIGHT AS WELL GO BACK TO THE RANCH AND TRY TO PUZZLE THIS OUT THERE! I'VE GOT TO GET AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS SOMEHOW!



A few days later, at the ranch house...

YOU SENT WORD YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, CAROL?

YES, TEX! THE DANCE IS ONLY A FEW DAYS OFF AND I'D LIKE YOU TO LEARN AND SING A SPECIAL SONG! IT HAS A SENTIMENTAL MEANING TO ME AND I'VE WANTED TO HEAR IT AGAIN FOR YEARS!



IT'S IN AN OLD TRUNK IN THE ATTIC! IT'S A SONG MY GRAND-DAD USED TO SING TO MY GRAND-MOTHER! HE PLAYED THE GUITAR, TOO!

I'LL BE GLAD TO DIG THE MUSIC OUT OF THAT TRUNK AND LEARN IT!



THE SONG HAS A STORY BEHIND IT, YOU SEE! IT MEANT SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL TO MY GRANDPARENTS! GRANDMOTHER'S FOLKS TRIED TO STOP HER FROM MARRYING GRANDDAD!

THEY EVEN POSTED GUARDS TO STOP GRANDDAD WHEN HE CAME TO SEE GRANDMOTHER! BUT IT NEVER WORKED! THAT OLD SONG HAD A PRIVATE CODE IN IT AND GRANDMOTHER ALWAYS KNEW WHERE TO MEET GRANDDAD WHEN HE'D SEND HER THE WORDS, OR SING IT TO HER FROM A DISTANCE!

HERE'S THE ATTIC -- AND THERE'S THE OLD TRUNK! THINK YOU CAN FIND IT, TEX?

AFTER A WONDERFUL STORY LIKE THAT, I SUKE WILL FIND IT!



Later that day in the bunkhouse, Tex looks over the music ---

HMMMM! THIS IS AN OLD FOLK MELODY, BUT THE OLD BOY SANG SPECIAL WORDS TO IT, ALL RIGHT! NEVER HEARD THEM BEFORE! WELL, LET'S TRY IT OUT!



♪♪ THOUGH OTHERS STAND TO KEEP US APART, WHERE THE GROUND IS WHITE. WE'LL MEET, AGAIN, BY THE OLD BENT PINE WHEN THE MOON STRIKES TEN, THROUGH THE TUNNEL IN THE HILLS I'LL RIDE, TILL I'M STANDING BY YOUR SIDE... ♪♪



HOLD EVERYTHING! THOSE WORDS SURE DO MEAN SOMETHING SPECIAL! "BY THE OLD BENT PINE --- WHERE THE GROUND IS WHITE --- THROUGH THE TUNNEL IN THE HILLS" --!



THOSE WORDS SHOW THE OLD BOY KNEW OF SOME SECRET TUNNEL IN THE HILLS WHICH OPENS AT THAT SPOT WHERE THE OLD BENT PINE STANDS AND THE EARTH IS THAT WHITE CLAY MIXTURE!



THAT'S HOW HE'D MEET CAROL'S GRAND-MOTHER WITHOUT BEING CAUGHT! UNLESS I MISS MY GUESS, THESE ORNERY VARMINTS HAVE DISCOVERED THAT OLD TUNNEL! I'LL JUST HAVE A BETTER LOOK AT THAT SPOT WHERE THEY VANISH!



Later that night, in the hills behind the bent pine ---

I'LL KICK AND PRESS EVERY SQUARE INCH OF THESE ROCKS TILL I FIND THAT TUNNEL ENTRANCE! IT'S GOT TO BE AROUND HERE, SOMEPLACE!

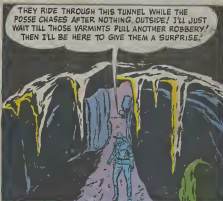


A half-hour later, as Tex kicks the side of one rock, suddenly ---

THAT'S IT! I'VE FOUND IT!



THEY RIDE THROUGH THIS TUNNEL WHILE THE POSSE CHASES AFTER NOTHING, OUTSIDE! I'LL JUST WAIT TILL THOSE VARMINTS PULL ANOTHER ROBBERY! THEN I'LL BE HERE TO GIVE THEM A SURPRISE!



Tex doesn't have long to wait, for the next night in town---

THOSE LIZARDS HAVE STRUCK AGAIN! THE HOTEL, THIS TIME! JUST A MINUTE AGO! YOU CAN STILL CATCH UP WITH THE POSSE, MAYBE!

WHAT--?
THANKS, PARTNER!



THEY WON'T TAKE A DIRECT ROUTE TO THE TUNNEL WITH THE POSSE ON THEIR HEELS! THEY'LL NEED TO GAIN A LITTLE DISTANCE THROUGH THE HILLS, AND THAT'LL GIVE ME TIME TO REACH THE TUNNEL BEFORE THEY DO!



Later, as the outlaws reach the secret tunnel ---

HERE THEY COME!
BUT THIS TIME I'LL DO THE SURPRISING!





SURPRISE, YOU POLECATS!
 DROP THOSE SHOOTING IRONS--
FAST!

OOOWOO!
 MY HAND!

OOOWW!

BAM!
BLAM!



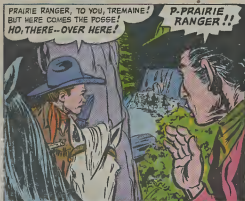
THAT'S RIGHT--
 REACH FOR THE
 SKY! WELL--IF
 IT ISN'T
 TREMAINE!

YEP--IT'S
 ME!



NOW I SEE WHY YOU WERE SO
 ANXIOUS TO TAG ME AS ONE OF
 THESE YARMINTS! YOU FIGURED
 CATCHING ONE OF THEM
 MIGHT APPEASE THE
 POSSE, MIGHT EVEN
 MAKE THE NEXT
 ROBBERY EASIER!

PRETTY
 SMART,
 AREN'T YOU,
 GUITAR
 PLAYER?



PRAIRIE RANGER, TO YOU, TREMAINE!
 BUT HERE COMES THE POSSE!
HO, THERE--OVER HERE!

**P.PRAIRIE
 RANGER!!**



WELL, I'LL BE SWAGGERED!
 YOU'VE CAUGHT THE
 WHOLE PACK OF
 THEM!

RIGHT! JUST TIE
 THEM UP GOOD AND
 TIGHT AND WE'LL TAKE
 THEM BACK TO TOWN--
 INCLUDING
 MR. TREMAINE!



**YOU'RE NOT
 BRINGING
 ME IN!**

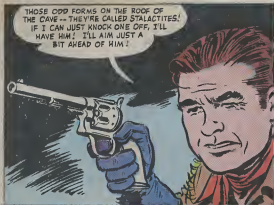
OWW!

SOX!

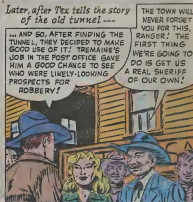


**HE'S GETTING
 AWAY! BRING
 HIM DOWN!**

I'VE ALREADY SHOT HIS GUN
 AWAY FROM HIM! I CAN'T SHOOT
 AN UNARMED MAN--EVEN ONE
 LIKE HIM! BUT MAYBE
 I CAN STOP HIM!



Taking careful aim - Tex's six-gun reverberates through the tunnel and---



THOSE ODD FORMS ON THE ROOF OF THE CAVE -- THEY'RE CALLED STALACTITES! IF I CAN JUST KNOCK ONE OFF, I'LL HAVE HIM! I'LL AIM JUST A BIT AHEAD OF HIM!

Later, after Tex tells the story of the old tunnel ---

THE TOWN WILL NEVER FORGET YOU FOR THIS, RANGER! THE FIRST THING WE'RE GOING TO DO IS GET US A REAL SHERIFF OF OUR OWN!

CRASH!
OOOOHH!

THAT'S GOT HIM!

... AND SO, AFTER FINDING THE TUNNEL, THEY DECIDED TO MAKE GOOD USE OF IT! TREMAINE'S JOB IN THE POST OFFICE GAVE HIM A GOOD CHANCE TO SEE WHO WERE LIKELY-LOOKING PROSPECTS FOR ROBBERY!

AND ALL THIS TIME WE THOUGHT YOU WERE ONLY A SINGING TROUBADOUR!

YES, AND I SUPPOSE SINGING AND PLAYING AT THE TOWN DANCE IS ALL OVER WITH NOW!

NOTHING DOING! I'LL BE THERE WITH MY GUITAR! DON'T YOU WORRY!

And so, a few nights later ---

THANK YOU SO MUCH, TEX! YOU SANG GRANDDAD'S OLD SONG BEAUTIFULLY!

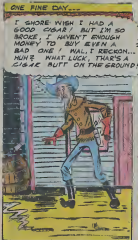
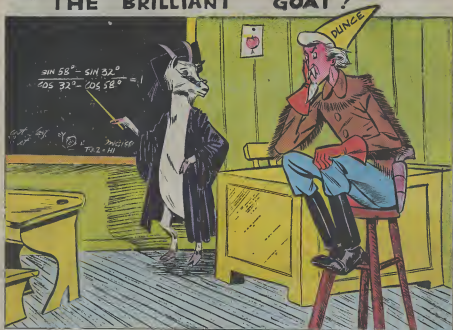
TEX CAN SING AS WELL AS HE CAN CATCH VARMINTS!

IT'S A GRAND SONG! ONCE IT BROUGHT HAPPINESS TO TWO PEOPLE AND NOW IT'S DONE THE SAME FOR A WHOLE TOWN! I'VE GOT TO MOVE ON NOW, BUT I'LL REMEMBER IT ALWAYS!



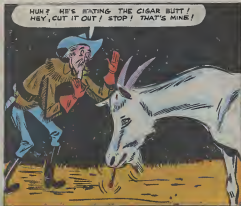
BUFFALO BULL

" THE BRILLIANT GOAT ! "





GROAN!
I GOT A BUTT...
BUT THE WRONG
KIND!



HUH? HE'S EATING THE CIGAR BUTT!
HEY, CUT IT OUT! STOP! THAT'S MINE!



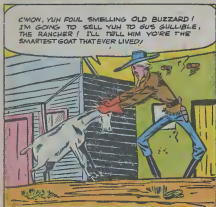
GROAN!
IT'S TOO LATE! HE
SWALLOWED IT ALREADY!



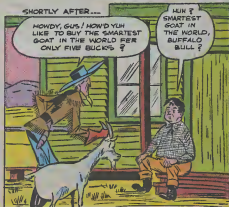
GRRR! FUST YUH BUTT ME AND
THEN YUH CHEW UP MUH CIGARE
BUTT! I OUGHT TO TWIST YERE
NECK, YUH ORNERY NO-GOOD,
MANGY OLD GOAT!



WAIT! I JEST GOT AN
IDEA! I KNOW HOW I
CAN MAKE SOME MONEY
WITH THIS OLD RASCAL!



C'MON, YUH FOUL SMELLING OLD BUZZARD!
I'M GOING TO SELL YUH TO GUS SULLIBLE,
THE RANCHER! I'LL TELL HIM YO'RE THE
SMARTEST GOAT THAT EVER LIVED!



SHORTLY AFTER...

HOWDY, GUS! HOW'D YUH
LIKE TO BUY THE SMARTEST
GOAT IN THE WORLD FER
ONLY FIVE BUCKS?

HUH? SMARTEST
GOAT IN THE WORLD,
BUFFALO
BULL?



THAT'S RIGHT!
HE'S
BRILLIANT!

HMMPH, HE
LOOKS JUST
LIKE AN
ORDINARY DUMB
GOAT
TO ME!



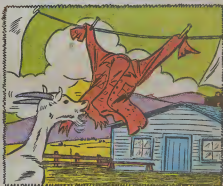
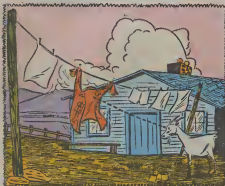
ORDINARY? DUMB? YUH WOULDN'T
SAY THAT IF YUH KNEW HOW
SMART HE IS! I'LL TELL
YUH WHAT HE ONCE DID AND
YUH'LL SEE HOW BRILLIANT
HE IS!



HE ONCE BELONGED TO A MEAN
OLD HOMBRE WHO HAD A
FAVORITE RED SHIRT! WAL, ONE
DAY HIS WIFE WASHED THAT
SHIRT AND HUNG IT UP TO DRY!

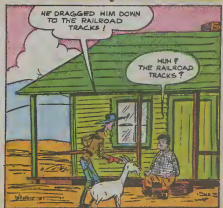
*WHILE IT WAS HANGING ON THE CLOTHES LINE,
THIS GOAT SAW IT---

*THE GOAT WAS FEELING A LITTLE HUNGRY
SO HE ATE THE SHIRT---



WHEN THE OLD HOMBRE FOUND OUT THIS GOAT
ATE UP HIS FAVORITE RED SHIRT, HE TURNED
PURPLE WITH RAGE AND ALMOST BLEW HIS
GASKET!

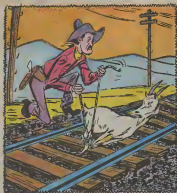
GOSH,
WHAT DID HE
DO?



HE DRAGGED HIM DOWN
TO THE RAILROAD
TRACKS!

HIM?
THE RAILROAD
TRACKS?

"YUP! AND HE TIED HIM TO THE TRACKS..."



"TSK, TSK! HE TIED THE POOR GOAT TO THE RAILROAD TRACKS?"

"YUP! SO THAT THE NEXT TRAIN COMING BY WOULD RUN OVER HIM AND KILL HIM!"

"TSK, TSK, THAT WUZ TERRIBLE!"

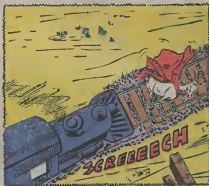
"YUH SAID IT! THE GOAT WUZ IN AN AWFUL PREDICAMENT! BUT I TOLD YUH HE WUZ BRILLIANT!"



"WHEN THE GOAT SAW THE TRAIN BEARING DOWN ON HIM..."



"HE COUGHED UP THE RED SHIRT HE HAD EATEN AND WAVED THE TRAIN DOWN TO A STOP."



"THE GOAT COUGHED UP THE RED SHIRT AND WAVED THE TRAIN DOWN WITH IT! HA, HA! THAT'S THE BEST YARN I'VE HEARD IN A LONG TIME!"



"HA, HA, I DON'T BELIEVE THE GOAT'S SO SMART, BUT YUH SHORE ARE! HWAR'S A CIGAR FER GIVING ME A GOOD LAUGH!"

"A CIGAR! YIPSE! I OWE IT TO YUH, GOAT OLD GNUM! YUH'LL NEVER GET MY GOAT AGAIN! YIPSEEE!"



RIDING THE RANGE

WITH

TEX RITTER

9172 SUNSET BOULEVARD,
HOLLYWOOD 46, CALIFORNIA



Howdy Folks,

It's mighty nice to be riding your way once again. It's always plumb pleasurable to pass the time of day with good friends.

I've just returned from a week in the hills with some hard-riding cowboys on a wild horse roundup. After we reached the Timberline Range, where we knew a large herd of wild horses roamed, we sort of split up, and I went on to scout ahead.

It wasn't long before I saw a magnificent white stallion on a ledge. A few minutes later, he was joined by a beautiful light tan horse. Properly speaking,

a tan horse is called a Palomino, but most Westerners call them buckskins. I followed the two horses down into a small valley and there I saw a whole herd of wild mustangs.

There were some more white horses and buckskins, a lot of fine black stallions, dapple-grays, brown mares and a sprinkling of strawberry roans. The young colts played together and frisked about while the others grazed or trotted along side by side. As I watched them, I couldn't help thinking how they didn't refuse to play together because they were different colors, or because some had long, straight manes and others curly ones. No, they got along like real amigos, and after we finally rounded the herd into a corral, that thought stuck with me.

I'm going to keep remembering it, too -- and I reckon you all will do the same. We two-legged critters can learn a powerful lot, even from a herd of wild horses, about getting along together!

Well, I'll be moseying along now, partners -- but I'll be reining-up this way again real soon.

Your pard,

Tex Ritter



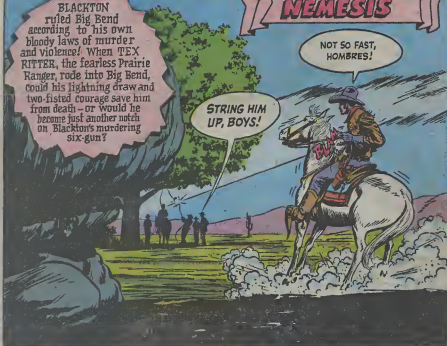
Tex Ritter

in OWLHOOT'S NEMESIS

BLACKTON ruled Big Bend according to his own bloody laws of murder and violence! When **TEX RITTER**, the fearless Prairie Ranger, rode into Big Bend, could his lightning draw and two-fisted courage save him from death - or would he become just another notch on Blackton's murdering six-gun?

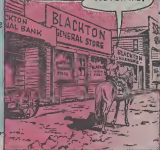
NOT SO FAST, HOMBRES!

STRING HIM UP, BOYS!



Tex has been sent to investigate the disappearance of Curly Walker, sheriff of Big Bend. And as he rides into the town...

IT SURE SEEMS LIKE A QUIET PLACE, EH, WHITE FLASH? TOO QUIET, IF YOU ASK ME!



THIS BLACKTON SEEMS TO OWN JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING IN TOWN! RECKON WE'LL TRY THE SALOON AND SEE IF ANYBODY SAW CURLY LATELY!

BLACKTON SALOON



I'M LOOKING FOR CURLY WALKER! GOT ANY IDEAS WHERE I CAN FIND HIM?

THAT AIN'T A HEALTHY QUESTION TO ASK AROUND HERE, HOMBRE!



WHY NOT?

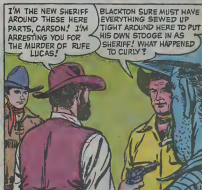
JUMPING COYOTES!
IT -- IT'S
JIM CARSON!



Instantly, everyone feels the tenseness in the room - as if waiting for something to happen!

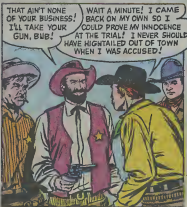
TAKE A GOOD LOOK! I'VE COME BACK TO GIVE MYSELF UP! WHERE'S CURLY WALKER?

PSST! THAT YARMINT IS WANTED FOR MURDER!



I'M THE NEW SHERIFF AROUND THESE HERE PARTS, CARSON! I'M ARRESTING YOU FOR THE MURDER OF RUFÉ LUCAS!

BLACKTON SURE MUST HAVE EVERYTHING SEWED UP TIGHT AROUND HERE TO PUT HIS OWN STOODGE IN AS SHERIFF! WHAT HAPPENED TO CURLY?



THAT AIN'T NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS! I'LL TAKE YOUR GUN, BUB!

WAIT A MINUTE! I CAME BACK ON MY OWN SO I COULD PROVE MY INNOCENCE AT THE TRIAL! I NEVER SHOULD HAVE HIGHTAILED OUT OF TOWN WHEN I WAS ACCUSED!



AIN'T GOING TO BE NO TRIAL, CARSON! WE GOT A NECKTIE PARTY PLANNED FOR YOU!

YOU MEAN--!



EASY, HOMBRE --OR THERE WON'T EVEN BE TIME FOR A NECKTIE PARTY! YOU AIN'T GOT A CHANCE!



WAIT A MINUTE!
THE LAW SAYS
EVERY MAN IS
ENTITLED TO A
FAIR TRIAL!

KEEP YOUR NOSE OUT
OF THIS, STRANGER
OR THERE'LL BE A
DOUBLE NECKTIE
PARTY!



WELL--I'M CALLING THE PARTY
OFF! **GET BACK,
CARSON!**

RIGHT!

WHY, YOU --!

OWW!

BANG!

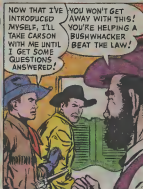


YEOW! I--I AIN'T GOIN'
FOR MY GUN, MISTER!



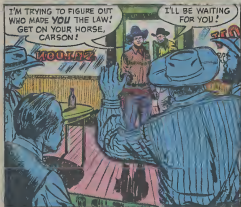
I'M TEX RITTER--AND
I STILL SAY THE MAN IS
ENTITLED TO A FAIR
TRIAL!

**THE
PRAIRIE
RANGER!**



NOW THAT I'VE
INTRODUCED
MYSELF, I'LL
TAKE CARSON
WITH ME UNTIL
I GET SOME
QUESTIONS
ANSWERED!

YOU WON'T GET
AWAY WITH THIS!
YOU'RE HELPING A
BUSHWHACKER
BEAT THE LAW!



I'M TRYING TO FIGURE OUT
WHO MADE YOU THE LAW!
GET ON YOUR HORSE,
CARSON!

I'LL BE WAITING
FOR YOU!



THOSE VARMINTS WILL
BE COMING AFTER US,
PRONTO! **MAKE TRACKS,
WHITE FLASH!**

WE'LL HEAD FOR MY
RANCH! IT'S ONLY A
FEW MILES NORTH
OF HERE!

Shortly afterwards...
 I RECKON IT LOOKS PRETTY RUN-DOWN NOW, BUT IT ONCE WAS THE BEST-LOOKING SPREAD AROUND -- UNTIL BLACKTON GOT IDEAS ABOUT OWNING IT!



WHO IS THIS BLACKTON HOMBRE? SEEMS AS IF HE'S CALLING THE TURN ON A LOT OF THINGS AROUND HERE!

HE JUST ABOUT OWNS THE TOWN! ANY RANCHER WHO WON'T PLAY BALL WITH HIM GENERALLY WINDS UP WITH A BULLET IN HIS BACK! THAT'S HOW THEY KILLED MY FATHER!

BUT WHY IS HE SO DETERMINED TO GET THIS OUTFIT?



WE HAVE WATER RIGHTS WHICH BLACKTON IS AFTER! DAD WAS RALLYING THE RANCH OWNERS AGAINST HIM -- AND -- AND I GUESS THAT'S WHY HE GOT IT! WHEN I HEARD ABOUT IT, I DECIDED TO COME BACK AND FIGHT!



I RECKON YOU'RE GOING TO NEED HELP! LISTEN! SOMEONE'S COMING!

THEY'RE NOT TAKING ME ALIVE -- NOT TO SWING AT THE END OF A ROPE!



JIM! I -- I HEARD YOU WERE BACK!

JEAN!



OH, JIM -- I KNEW YOU DIDN'T KILL RIFE LUGAS! WHY DID YOU RUN AWAY? I MISSED YOU SO!

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, JEAN -- MIGHTY GOOD!

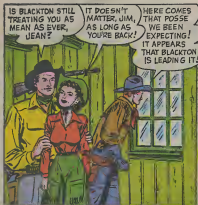
AHEM!



JEAN, THIS HERE IS TEX RITTER -- THE PRAIRIE RANGER! JEAN IS BLACKTON'S STEP-DAUGHTER -- BUT THEY DON'T HAVE MUCH IN COMMON!

TEX RITTER! WHY -- I'VE HEARD A LOT OF GOOD THINGS ABOUT YOU! I SURE AM GLAD YOU'VE COME TO THESE PARTS!





IS BLACKTON STILL TREATING YOU AS MEAN AS EVER, JEAN?

IT DOESN'T MATTER, JIM, AS LONG AS YOU'RE BACK!

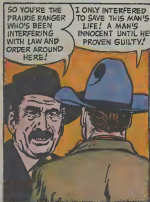
HERE COMES THAT POSSE WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING! IT APPEARS THAT BLACKTON IS LEADING IT!



With their hands lashed over their gun butts, Tex Ritter and Jim Carson step outside...

GET AWAY FROM THAT KILLER, JEAN!

BEFORE YOU GO BRANDING HIM A KILLER, BLACKTON--HE'S ENTITLED TO HIS TRIAL!



SO YOU'RE THE PRAIRIE RANGER WHO'S BEEN INTERFERING WITH LAW AND ORDER AROUND HERE!

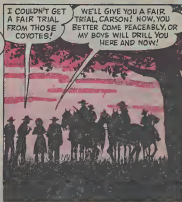
I ONLY INTERFERED TO SAVE THIS MAN'S LIFE! A MAN'S INNOCENT UNTIL HE'S PROVEN GUILTY!



ALL RIGHT, RANGER--WE'LL GIVE HIM HIS TRIAL!

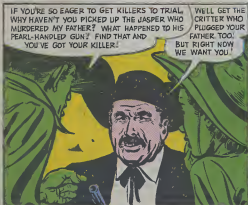
MAYBE THE SHERIFF WAS A MITE HOT-HEADED!

AND WHEN I SAY TRIAL, I MEAN A FAIR TRIAL!



I COULDN'T GET A FAIR TRIAL FROM THOSE COYOTES!

WE'LL GIVE YOU A FAIR TRIAL, CARSON! NOW, YOU BETTER COME PEACEABLY, OR MY BOYS WILL DRILL YOU HERE AND NOW!



IF YOU'RE SO EAGER TO GET KILLERS TO TRIAL, WHY HAVEN'T YOU PICKED UP THE JASPER WHO MURDERED MY FATHER? WHAT HAPPENED TO HIS PEARL-HANDLED GUN? FIND THAT AND YOU'VE GOT YOUR KILLER!

WE'LL GET THE CRITTER WHO PLUGGED YOUR FATHER TOO! BUT RIGHT NOW WE WANT YOU!



GO ALONG WITH THEM, CARSON! IF YOU'RE INNOCENT, YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR!

ALL RIGHT, TEX-- IF YOU SAY SO!

As the posse gallops off toward town with the prisoner...

THAT PEARL-HANDLED GUN THAT JIM MENTIONED! I BELIEVE I SAW MY STEP-FATHER WITH ONE! DO YOU SUPPOSE—?

ARE YOU SURE? THAT GUN IS SOMETHING I SURE WOULD LIKE TO SEE!

BLACKTON HAS ALWAYS BEEN A GUN FANCIER— BUT THERE ISN'T A CHANCE THAT HE WOULD SHOW IT TO YOU!

DO YOU SUPPOSE YOU COULD GET ME INTO THE RANCH AND SHOW ME WHERE HE KEEPS IT? I COULD BE THERE ABOUT TEN O'CLOCK TONIGHT!

That night, at Blackton's ranch...

HE WENT INTO TOWN A FEW HOURS AGO AND ISN'T BACK YET!

GOOD! THAT'LL GIVE ME A CHANCE TO MOSEY AROUND FOR THAT GUN!

HE KEEPS IT INSIDE OF THAT DESK, BUT IT'S LOCKED!

ANYTHING THAT'S BEEN LOCKED CAN BE OPENED!

A Bowie knife soon forces the lock and...

IT'S GOT THE CARSON BRAND ON IT! THIS IS THE GUN THAT JIM MENTIONED, ALL RIGHT! BLACKTON KNOWS SOMETHING ABOUT THAT MURDER!

HE'S COMING— HE'S COMING! AND HE HAS THE SHERIFF WITH HIM! WHAT WILL WE DO?

NO CHANCE TO GET OUT WITHOUT BEING SEEN! WE'D BETTER STAY BEHIND THIS CURTAIN!

HE'LL KILL US IF HE FINDS OUT!

THE BOYS ARE GOING TO PULL CARSON OUT OF JAIL TONIGHT AND STRING HIM UP. WE CAN'T TAKE CHANCES ON A TRIAL, EH?

NOT AFTER YOU PLUGGED RIFE YOURSELF! TOO BAD WE HAD TO GET RID OF A GOOD MAN, BUT IT'LL BE WORTH IT TO GET RID OF THAT CARSON KID!

AFTER WE STRING HIM UP, WE CAN PIN HIS OLD MAN'S MURDER ON HIM, TOO! I RECKON YOU GOT YOURSELF A PRIZE GUN BY PLUGGING THE OLD COOT!

QUIET! DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING -- BEHIND THOSE CURTAINS?

OH!!

Blackton's revelation had brought a gasp from the girl...

I KNEW I HEARD SOMETHING! COME OUT OF THERE, RITTER! I HAVE THE DROP ON YOU!

YOU MURDERER! YOU SHOT JIM'S FATHER--! AND YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE HIM LYNCHED FOR WHAT YOU DID!

I'LL ATTEND TO YOU LATER! SURE I KILLED HIM, BUT NOBODY ELSE IS EVER GOING TO KNOW ABOUT IT! I'M SENDING YOU TWO TO BOOT HILL!

I CAN GUESS WHAT HAPPENED TO CURLY WALKER, TOO!

CURLY WOULDN'T COOPERATE WITH ME -- THAT'S WHY I PUT MY OWN MAN IN OFFICE!

THAT DOESN'T MAKE THAT POLK-CAT A SHERIFF! HE'S AN IMPOSTER!

I WOULDN'T BE GETTING RILED ABOUT ME BEING A REAL SHERIFF OR NOT, RITTER! IT AIN'T GOING TO MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO YOU SOON!

THE SIDE-WINDERS FIGURE ON SHOOTING ME IN THE BACK! I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING--AND PRONTO!

The fearless Ranger suddenly drops to the floor as the killers blast away!

PLUG HIM!

BAM!

BAM!

THEY GUNNED EACH OTHER!

I RECKON THEY WERE A MITE CARELESS!

AGHHH!

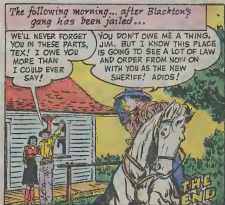
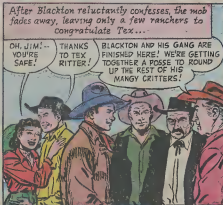
I'LL FIX--
OOOF!

IT'S YOUR TURN TO BE A TARGET NOW--FOR THIS!

POW!

STOP! THAT'S ENOUGH! STOP! I-I QUIT!

JUST ONE MORE--SNAKE!





ROARING RIVER

By Westbrook Wilson

RAIN came, drenching torrents of rain. Kansas Walker was soaked to the skin. Water showered from his hat and made the brim soggy. His big horse, Black Devil, glistened as the water covered his broad back. In the distance, above the black mountains, lightning darted crazily through the sky, and from far off came the muffled rumble of thunder.

Instead of cursing the downpour, Kansas was singing. It was kind of a crazy-worded, off-tune song, but it was singing because it came from the gladness in the heart. Kansas was glad of the big rain. Water! What a precious thing! In previous drives he had pushed longhorns through biting, stinging, choking dust. He had known how terrible it was to try to move cattle when the grass had become parched and dry, when water holes were scarce. In such drouth, it was possible to lose cattle by the hundreds. And so he was grateful for the rain. He sang on.

Another man rode up beside Kansas. The pair looked strikingly alike, except that the newcomer was a little younger, there was still a bit of baby in his face. And, whereas Kansas' strong, handsome countenance bore a look of serene thanksgiving, the newcomer appeared worried. He voiced his worry: "Hear that roaring up ahead?"

"Yeh, Herbie. I hear it," replied Kansas. "Reckon the old Missegoola River is on a rampage."

"It's flooded, that's what it is!" asserted Herbie, a note of desperation in his voice. "We'll never be able to get five thousand head of cattle across it."

"Don't cross your creeks till you come to them, brother," suggested Kansas. "Let's you and me ride on ahead and have a look at the old Missegoola."

He spurred Black Devil and cut wide to the side of the moving mass of cattle. Herbie followed. Soon they were a quarter mile ahead of the herd and standing on the bank of the rain-swollen river. "It's a flood!" cried Herbie. "It's awful!"

"It ain't exactly ideal," admitted Kansas, "but

it'll get worse afore it gets better."

"You're not aiming to try to cross?" There was alarm in Herbie's voice.

"We've got to if we can," responded Kansas, flatly. "Come on, we'll see how bad it is." He urged Black Devil forward, into the swirling, foaming stream. The horse walked in, pushing through the strong current. Man and horse sank lower and lower into the water until they reached the deep midchannel where both bobbed out of sight for a second. When they popped up again, Kansas had slipped from the saddle and was holding the pommel, swimming beside the horse. "No use," he thought, "to give the old 'boy unnecessary burden in this mess." As soon as the steed had regained his footing and was mounting the sloping bank on the other side, Kansas mounted again. He sat for a moment, looking at the roaring river, noting the rainfall, calculating. Then he and Black Devil made the return trip.

He looked quizzically at Herbie but said nothing about the latter's failure to follow him. "We can make it," he declared. "Just gotta keep them longhorns headed right. They won't have too much swimming."

"Wouldn't it be safer to wait?" suggested Herbie.

"Wait?" exclaimed Kansas. "Why our only chance to get these critters to market is to cross now. Come on."

He rode toward the approaching herd, quickly gave instructions to his drovers. Herbie followed, looking sick. Kansas circled the cattle and rode alongside the chuck wagon, driven by Cookie. "Cookie," he said, "we can get the critters across all right, without losing more than maybe a few head. What I'm worried about is this here wagon. That river's too deep to ford. We'll have to float her across, and I just hope she don't turn turtle."

"If she turns turtle you won't have to worry none," responded Cookie, puffing his inverted pipe. "A turtle wouldn't have no trouble getting across any river!" Cookie laughed heartily. As usual, he was the only one who enjoyed his jokes, but he didn't mind.

The wagon was halted. Kansas ordered Cookie and Herbie to lash logs to the wheels of the wagon to serve as pontoons. The other men were already in the stream, howling and whipping at the milling longhorns, keeping the leaders headed straight. Despite their bawling protests, the cattle plunged forward across the flooded stream, and the leaders already were clambering up the opposite bank. Kansas had time for a glance of satisfaction at his men's work. "We'll get 'em to market on time!" he grunted.

Cookie's wagon was now ready. "Get going, Cookie," ordered Kansas. "Me and Herbie will side you to see that our grub doesn't go to the fishes." Creaking and sliding, the wagon rolled forward toward the stream. "Come on, Herbie," said Kansas.

"I'm not going! You can't make me! It's suicide!" cried Herbie. There was a touch of hysteria in his voice.

Anger flashed in Kansas' gray eyes as he whipped a Colt from its waterproof holster. He leveled it at the younger man and said, "I'm trail boss. You do what I say!"

"No, no, - I won't! I'm scared to death of water!" Herbie's voice was screaming. The lashing rain mingled with tears on his cheeks.

"Then I'll shoot you down like a yellow-livered coyote!" snapped Kansas. But he hesitated. He didn't shoot. "I can't shoot my own brother," he breathed at last. "But that's for this time. From now on, you're no brother of mine. Just keep out of my sight! That's a warning!"

He turned his horse away. Already the chuck wagon was heading for the deep, midstream channel as Black Devil plunged in. The wagon team was swimming. The swift current caught the wagon and tipped it sharply. It was tipping, careening, ready to flop over and be dashed to pieces. Kansas leaped from Black Devil and clutched one of the wagon wheels on the high side. His weight served as ballast, righting the wagon. The wagon team had now got a foot-

hold and was tugging up the inclined bank. But the sudden twist of the current, the lurching of the wagon, loosened Kansas Walker's grip on the slippery wheel. He fell, the iron tire struck his head, and he sank, unconscious, into the foaming cauldron.

Cookie, driving the wagon, had his hands full with the struggling team. He had no way of knowing about the tragedy behind him. None of the drovers saw it, either, for they were busy urging the longhorns forward.

Only Herbie Walker saw what had happened to his brother. His eyes were filled with fear. His hands shook. But with only a second's hesitation, he spurred his horse forward, into the raging torrent. He aimed for downstream, past the wagon, his eyes searching desperately in the foaming flood. At first, he saw nothing, then, five feet way, his brother's head cut the surface, a red streak above the eyes where the iron wagon tire had struck. Herbie slipped his feet from the stirrups, planted them on the saddle, and made a crouching dive toward the bobbing head.

"I c-can't swim," he was saying, "but maybe I can save him, somehow."

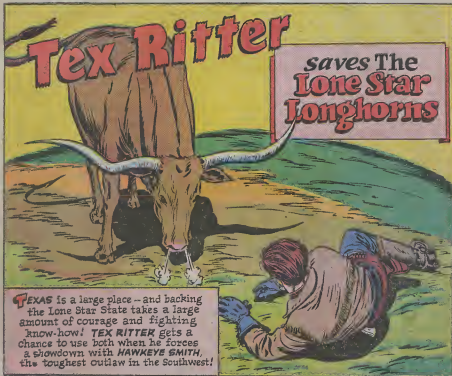
He clutched at his brother's collar, then managed to cry out, "Help!"

Cookie heard. He leaped from the wagon seat. Soon a lariat loop was flashing toward the two figures being swept downstream. Herbie grabbed it with his free hand, and Cookie pulled the two of them ashore.

COOKE had just finished bandaging Kansas Walker's wound when the latter opened his eyes. There was astonishment in them as he looked up to see Herbie. "The kid saved your life, Kansas," said Cookie. "And you should remember this. If a man goes ahead and does the right thing when he's scared half to death, then he's the bravest man of all!"

Kansas seemed to understand. He reached up, grasped Herbie's hand, and said, "Brother!"

THE END



Tex Ritter

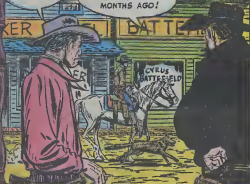
saves The
**Lone Star
Longhorns**

TEXAS is a large place — and backing the Lone Star State takes a large amount of courage and fighting know-how! **TEX RITTER** gets a chance to use both when he forces a showdown with **HAWKEYE SMITH**, the toughest outlaw in the Southwest!

In a small West Texas town —

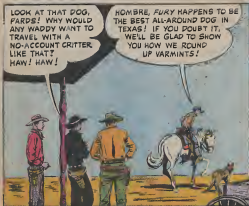
LOOK THERE,
HAWKEYE!
REMEMBER
HIM?

TEX RITTER! HE'S THE
PRAIRIE RANGER WHO BROKE
UP OUR GANG OF MASKED
RUSTLERS SEVERAL
MONTHS AGO!



WE WON'T BE ABLE TO OPERATE
ANYWHERE IN THIS STATE WHILE
TEX RITTER IS AROUND! SUPPOSE
WE PICK A FIGHT AND FIX THINGS
SO WE CAN PLUG HIM IN
SELF DEFENSE?





LOOK AT THAT DOG, FARMS! WHY WOULD ANY WADDY WANT TO TRAVEL WITH A NO-ACCOUNT CRITTER LIKE THAT? HAW! HAW!

HOMBRE, FURY HAPPENS TO BE THE BEST ALL-AROUND DOG IN TEXAS! IF YOU DOUBT IT, WE'LL BE GLAD TO SHOW YOU HOW WE ROUND UP VARMINTS!



CALL US VARMINTS, WILL YOU?

GRRR



With a lightning leap, Fury bites clean through the waddy's gun belt!

MY SIX-GUNS! PLUG THAT CRITTER!

GARRGH



YOU NO-GOODS SEEM MIGHTY ANXIOUS FOR GUNPLAY, AND YOU'RE GETTING IT!

SOMEONE SHOULD HAVE WARNED YOU ABOUT SWAPPING LEAD WITH HAWKEYE SMITH, STRANGER!

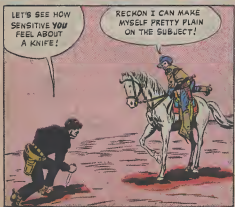
BANG!



WHITE FLASH IS MIGHTY SENSITIVE ABOUT BEING RUSHED WITH A GUN, HAWKEYE!

OOF...!

WHINEEE

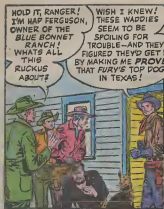


LET'S SEE HOW SENSITIVE YOU FEEL ABOUT A KNIFE!

RECKON I CAN MAKE MYSELF PRETTY PLAIN ON THE SUBJECT!



POW



HOLD IT, RANGER! I'M HAP FERGUSON, OWNER OF THE BLUE BONNET RANCH! WHAT'S ALL THIS RUCKUS ABOUT?

WISH I KNEW! THESE WADDIES SEEM TO BE SPOILING FOR TROUBLE--AND THEY FIGURED THEY'D GET IT BY MAKING ME PROVE THAT FURY'S TOP DOG IN TEXAS!



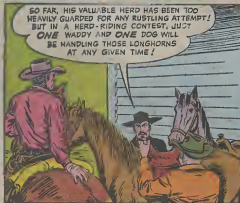
AROUND HERE A DOG'S JUDGED BY THE WAY HE HANDLES CATTLE! PLENTY OF OUR COMPUNCHERS FEEL THE SAME WAY ABOUT THEIR DOGS AS YOU DO ABOUT FURY! LET'S SETTLE THE ARGUMENT BY HAVING A CONTEST AT MY RANCH TOMORROW!

THAT SOUNDS FIRST-RATE TO ME!

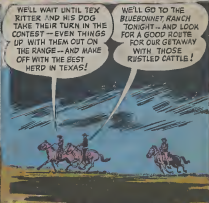


GREAT! I'LL HUSTLE AROUND TOWN AND NOTIFY THE OTHER DOG OWNERS!

A CONTEST, EH? THIS IS A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO RUSTLE FERGUSON'S HERD OF PRIZE LONGHORNS!

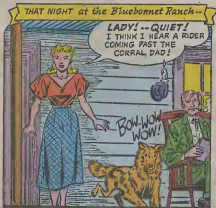


SO FAR, HIS VALUABLE HERD HAS BEEN TOO HEAVILY GUARDED FOR ANY RUSTLING ATTEMPT! BUT IN A HERD-RIDING CONTEST, JUST ONE WADDY AND ONE DOG WILL BE HANDLING THOSE LONGHORNS AT ANY GIVEN TIME!



WE'LL WAIT UNTIL TEX RITTER AND HIS DOG TAKE THEIR TURN IN THE CONTEST--EVEN THINGS UP WITH THEM OUT ON THE RANGE--AND MAKE OFF WITH THE BEST HERD IN TEXAS!

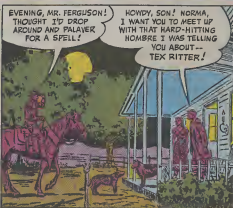
WE'LL GO TO THE BLUEBONNET RANCH TONIGHT--AND LOOK FOR A GOOD ROUTE FOR OUR GETAWAY WITH THOSE RUSTLED CATTLE!



THAT NIGHT at the Bluebonnet Ranch--

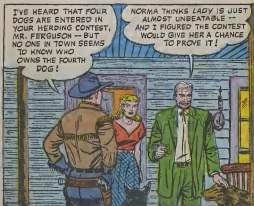
LADY! --QUIET! I THINK I HEAR A RIDER COMING PAST THE CORRAL, DAD!

BOW-WOW WOW!



EVENING, MR. FERGUSON! THOUGHT I'D DROP AROUND AND PALAVER FOR A SPELL!

HOWDY, SON! NORMA, I WANT YOU TO MEET UP WITH THAT HARD-HITTING HOMBRE I WAS TELLING YOU ABOUT-- TEX RITTER!



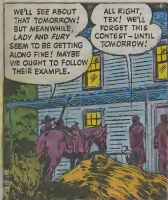
I'VE HEARD THAT FOUR DOGS ARE ENTERED IN YOUR HERDING CONTEST, MR. FERGUSON -- BUT NO ONE IN TOWN SEEMS TO KNOW WHO OWNS THE FOURTH DOG!

NORMA THINKS LADY IS JUST ALMOST UNBEATABLE -- AND I FIGURED THE CONTEST WOULD GIVE HER A CHANCE TO PROVE IT!



HOWDY, NORMA!

CONSIDERING THAT YOUR DOG IS GOING TO BE COMPETING AGAINST LADY--MAYBE YOU SHOULD HAVE SPENT THIS EVENING GIVING HIM SOME LAST-MINUTE TRAINING!



WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT TOMORROW! BUT MEANWHILE, LADY AND FURY SEEM TO BE GETTING ALONG FINE! MAYBE WE OUGHT TO FOLLOW THEIR EXAMPLE.

ALL RIGHT, TEX! WE'LL FORGET THIS CONTEST--UNTIL TOMORROW!



FROM THE CHEROKEE STRIP TO THE RIO GRANDE THE LONE STAR IS THE COWBOY'S LAND...



suddenly!

TEX! THERE ARE THREE RIDERS COMING AND THEY'RE MASKED!

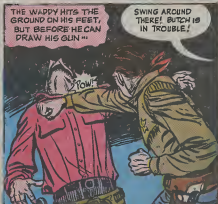
KEEP YOUR HEAD! JUST DUCK BEHIND HERE AND LET ME DO THE REST!



Seconds later --

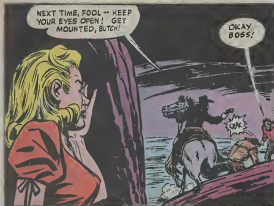
ANY WADDY WHO PUTS HIS FACE BEHIND A MASK GENERALLY WINDS UP WITH IT BEHIND BARS!

MM-FFF!



THE WADDY HITS THE GROUND ON HIS FEET, BUT BEFORE HE CAN DRAW HIS GUN --

SWING AROUND THERE! BUTCH IS IN TROUBLE!



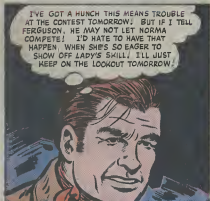
NEXT TIME, FOOL -- KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN! GET MOUNTED, BUTCH!

OKAY BOSS!

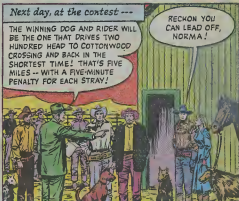


ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, TEX? WHY ARE THOSE MEN HERE ON OUR RANGE?

SURE WISH I KNEW, NORMA! BUT THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANY CHANCE OF FINDING OUT NOW!



I'VE GOT A HUNCH THIS MEANS TROUBLE AT THE CONTEST TOMORROW! BUT IF I TELL FERGUSON, HE MAY NOT LET NORMA COMPETE! I'D HATE TO HAVE THAT HAPPEN! WHEN SHE'S SO EAGER TO SHOW OFF LADY'S SKILL, I'LL JUST KEEP ON THE LOOKOUT TOMORROW!



Next day, at the contest ---

THE WINNING DOG AND RIDER WILL BE THE ONE THAT DRIVES TWO HUNDRED HEAD TO COTTONWOOD CROSSING AND BACK IN THE SHORTEST TIME! THAT'S FIVE MILES -- WITH A FIVE-MINUTE PENALTY FOR EACH STRAY!

RECKON YOU CAN LEAD OFF, NORMA!



WHEW! THE SUN'S BLAZING LIKE A FURNACE AND I FORGOT MY SOMBRERO!

HERE, NORMA -- HAVE A LOAN OF MINE!



I CAN'T RIDE ALONG WITH NORMA WITHOUT DISQUALIFYING HER -- BUT I CAN'T LET HER GO UNPROTECTED EITHER! THAT MEANS I'LL HAVE TO TAG ALONG THE HARD WAY!



I'LL BE BACK, FURY! WAIT HERE!

YAHOO! GET READY, NORMA! THE HERD'S ON THE MOVE!

Miles from the ranch, the waiting outlaws can make out only one thing in the dust around the longhorns -- the sombrero Norma borrowed from Tex!

THERE'S NO MISTAKING THE SHAPE OF THAT HAT -- IT'S TEX RITTER, HAWKEYE!

SADDLE UP -- I AIM TO PUMP A HEAP OF LEAD INTO HIM!

RUSTLERS! BUT THEY SEEM MORE INTERESTED IN SHOOTING ME THAN TAKING DAD'S CATTLE!

BAM BAM
RING! ZING!

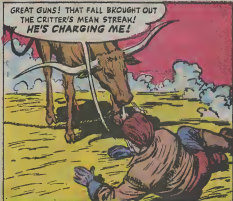
Suddenly!

GUESS I TOOK A STEER IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION! REACH, YOU BUZZARDS!

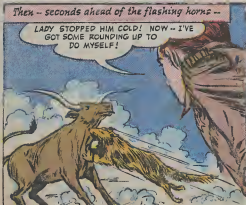
TEX RITTER! HAWKEYE, HE'S OVER HERE!



HOMBRE, YOU'RE GOING TO NEED MORE THAN A ROPEO STUNT TO OUTSMART HAWKEYE SMITH!



GREAT GUNS! THAT FALL BROUGHT OUT THE CRITTER'S MEAN STREAK! HE'S CHARGING ME!



Then -- seconds ahead of the flashing horns --

LADY STOPPED HIM COLD! NOW -- I'VE GOT SOME ROUNDING UP TO DO MYSELF!



HERE'S ANOTHER ROPEO STUNT YOU YARMINTS MAY BE INTERESTED IN!

BANG BANG
HEY!

Back at the ranch, as Fury hears the distant shots--



Minutes later --

RECKON THAT SLOWS YOU DOWN, HOMBRE! MY NEXT SHOT'S SLOWING YOU DOWN FOR GOD!

YOU CAN'T! NOT IN COLD BLOOD!



DON'T WORRY, NORMA -- HE WON'T!

TOO BAD YOU NEED YOUR DOG TO HELP OUT IN A RUCKUS, RITTER-- BECAUSE I'VE GOT A BULLET FOR HIM, TOO!

IN THAT CASE, HAWKEYE, WE'D BETTER KEEP THIS STRICTLY BETWEEN OURSELVES--

OW!



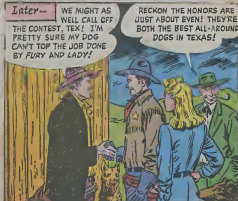
--LIKE THIS!



Later--

WE MIGHT AS WELL CALL OFF THE CONTEST, TEX! I'M PRETTY SURE MY DOG CAN'T TOP THE JOB DONE BY FURY AND LADY!

RECKON THE HONORS ARE JUST ABOUT EVEN! THEY'RE BOTH THE BEST ALL-AROUND DOGS IN TEXAS!



That evening --

DO YOU THINK YOU'LL BE PASSING THIS WAY AGAIN, TEX?

THE ONE THING THAT WOULD BRING US BACK FRONTO IS TROUBLE, AND I DON'T THINK YOU'LL BE HAVING ANY HERE AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO HAWKEYE!



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TEX RITTER

**GUN-SLINGING
COWBOY MOVIE HERO**

