

# The HOODED HORSEMAN

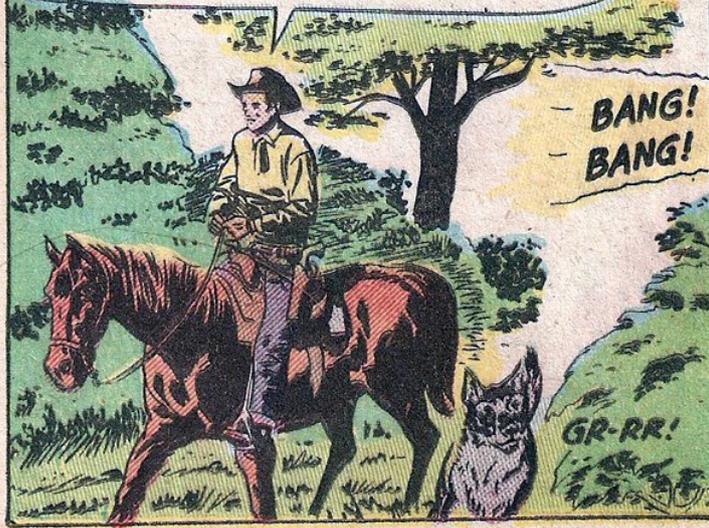
**F**EW BADMEN PAID MUCH ATTENTION TO THE QUIET-MANNERED WRANGLER WHO ROAMED THE RANGE WITH HIS DOG -- AND FEWER STILL ASSOCIATED HIM WITH THE BLACK-GARBED FIGHTER FOR JUSTICE KNOWN AS **THE HOODED HORSEMAN!** BUT BUD FRASER HAD VOWED TO STAMP OUT OUTLAWRY WHEN HIS FATHER, A COW TOWN SHERIFF, WAS TREACHEROUSLY KILLED -- AND IT'S A PLEDGE THAT'S REDEEMED WITH SMASHING FISTS AND DEADLY SIX-GUNS -- AND A DOG NAMED FLASH!



LEONARD STARR

ONE NIGHT -- ON THE TRAIL OUTSIDE MESQUITE CITY --

THAT'S A PASSEL O' LARGE RANCHES ON THE FLAT GRAZIN' LAND OUTSIDE O' TOWN, FLASH -- SO IT **SHOULD** BE A PURTY GOOD PLACE TUH LOOK FER A JOB!



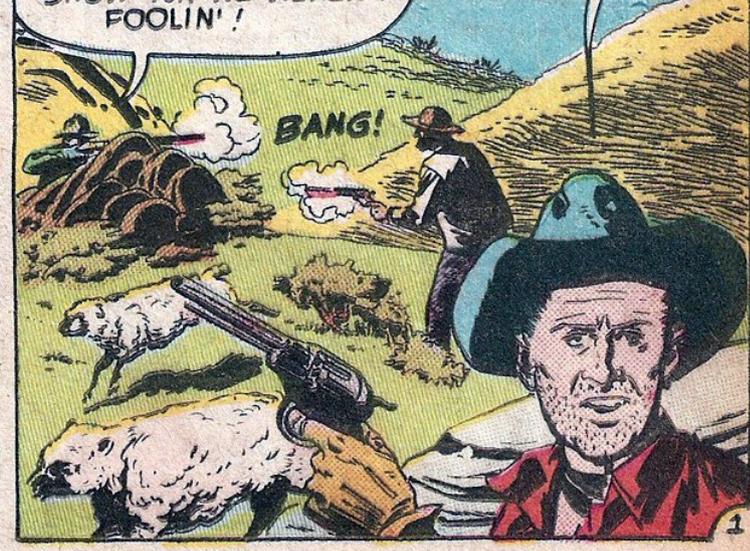
BANG!  
BANG!

GR-RR!

A MOMENT LATER --

WE WARNED YUH **ONCE** TUH GRAZE THEM CRITTERS SOMEWHAR ELSE, YUH OL' COOT -- AN' THIS'LL SHOW YUH WE WEREN'T FOOLIN'!

JUMPIN' BLUE BLAZES -- WATCH OUT!



BANG!

AS THE GANG LEADER SPURS FORWARD --



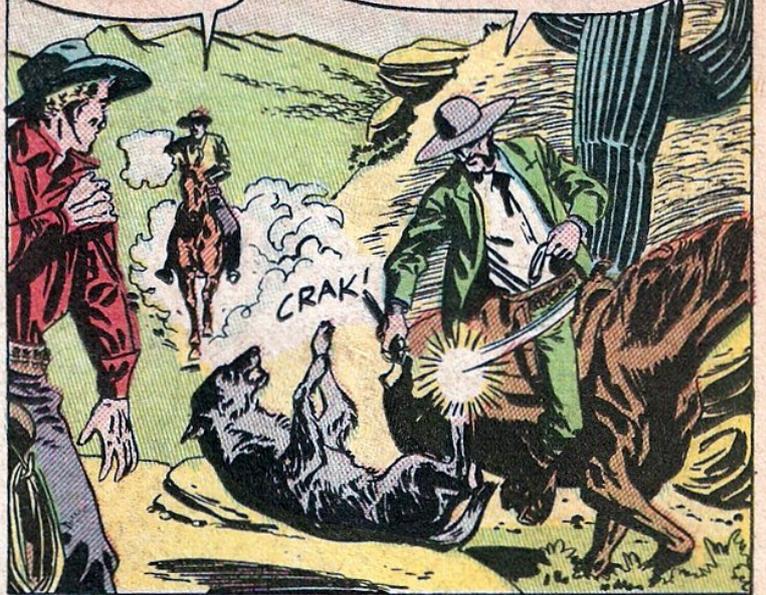
BANG!

RR-RIP!

GRRR!

STICK AROUND, YUH VARMINTS -- THIS RUCKUS ISN'T OVER YET!

VAMOOSSE! NOW THAT WE'VE CRIMPED THINGS -- LET'S GIT MOVIN' WHILE WE HAVE A CHANCE!



CRACK!

ROUSED TO A FIGHTING PITCH -- FLASH STARTS TO PURSUE --

LOOKS LIKE THE CATTLEMEN IN THESE PARTS HAVEN'T GOT MUCH USE FER SHEEP, OL' TIMER!

THAT DOESN'T EXPLAIN THIS HERE RUCKUS, SON! ASK ANYONE IN MESQUITE CITY WHETHER RAWHIDE RILEY'S EVER HAD A DUST-UP WITH STOCKMEN BEFORE -- AN' YOU'LL SEE WHY I'M PLUMB PUZZLED ABOUT WHY THEM BUZZARDS WOULD COME GUNNIN' FER ME!

THIS PIECE O' CLOTH FLASH RIPPED FROM HIS SLEEVE IS ONE WAY TUH IDENTIFY THE VARMINT WHO LED 'EM! IT MAY TAKE TIME -- BUT NOW THAT FLASH HAS SOMETHING TUH KEEP HIS SCENT IN MIND -- HE'LL BE ABLE TUH PICK HIM OUT FROM AMONG A THOUSAND WADDIES!

FLASH -- GIT BACK HERE! THIS RUGGED COUNTRY GIVES THEM SIDEWINDERS PLENTY O' COVER -- AN' TRAILIN' 'EM WOULD JEST MEAN GITTIN' YOURSELF PLUGGED!



BOW-WOW-WOW!

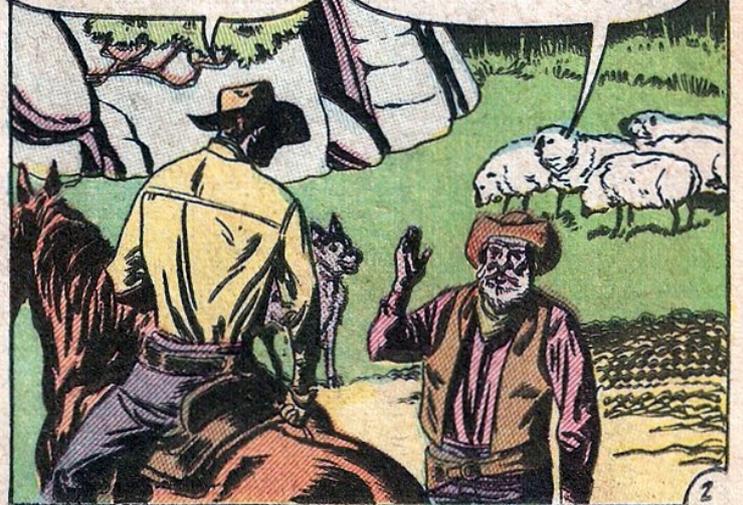
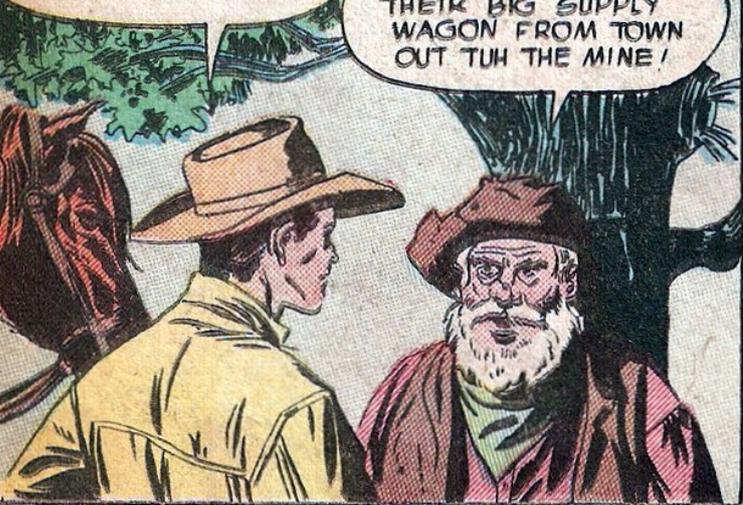


WE'LL BE ON THE LOOKOUT -- BUT MEANWHILE -- I CAME TUH THESE PARTS HUNTIN' WORK AS A WRANGLER! I'D BE PLUMB OBLIGED FER ANY KIND O' LEAD, RAWHIDE!

RECKON THE RANCHERS HAVE JEST ABOUT AS MANY WADDIES AS THEY KIN CARRY! BUT I'VE HEARD THAT THE MININ' COMPANY NEEDS AN HOMBRE TUH DRIVE THEIR BIG SUPPLY WAGON FROM TOWN OUT TUH THE MINE!

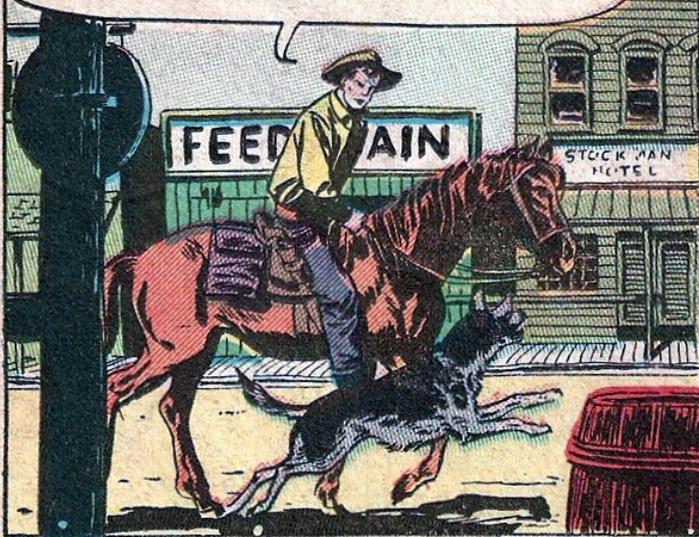
THANKS, PARDNER -- I'LL MOSEY AROUND! AN' IF I WAS YUH -- I WOULDN'T TAKE ANY CHANCES ON GITTIN' JUMPED BY THOSE POLECATS AG'IN!

YUH NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT THAT, SON! I AIM TUH MOVE MUH FLOCK TUH ANOTHER GRAZIN' SECTION -- WHAR THEY WON'T BE ABLE TUH FIND ME!

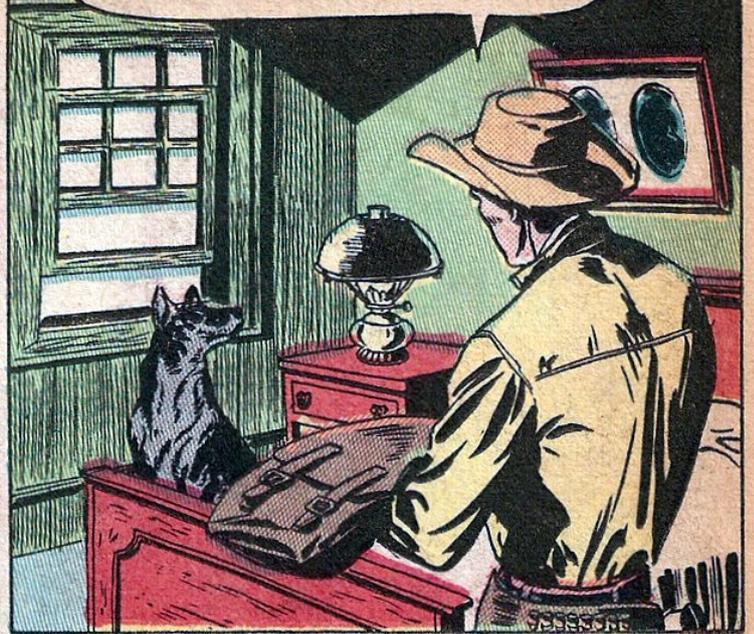


A HALF-HOUR LATER--

RECKON I'LL GIT A ROOM AT THE HOTEL, AN' HAVE FLASH WATCH MUH GEAR -- BEFORE I PALAVER WITH THE SHERIFF ABOUT THE ATTACK ON RAWHIDE RILEY!



I'LL BE BACK IN A MITE, FLASH! KEEP YORE EYE ON MUH THINGS!



SOON AFTERWARD-- AT THE HOUSEGOW...

THE GALOOTS WHO TANGLED WITH RAWHIDE RILEY ARE UP TUH **SOMETHIN'** SHERIFF! YUH SHORE THAR'S BEEN NO RUSTLIN' GOIN' ON?

WE HAVEN'T LOST A SINGLE COW, AMIGO! THE CATTLEMEN AIN'T RISKIN' THE PUREBRED STOCK WE GOT IN **THESE** PARTS-- THEY'RE WATCHIN' THE HERDS DAY AN' NIGHT! NOPE-- I DON'T RECKON **THAT'D** EXPLAIN IT-- AN' BLAMED IF I KIN FIGGER OUT ANY **OTHER** REASON!



THAT LEAVES ME **NOWHAR!** THAR ISN'T MUCH CHANCE I'LL RUN INTUH THE GANG-- BUT IT WON'T HURT NONE TUH SIZE UP THE TOWN BEFORE I SASHAY BACK TUH THE HOTEL!



MEANWHILE-- AT THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN-- FLASH GROWLS RESTLESSLY AS A HATED SCENT TINGLES LIKE A WARNING! HE SNIFFS AT BID'S SADDLEBAG-- BUT NO-- IT ISN'T THE PIECE OF CLOTH!

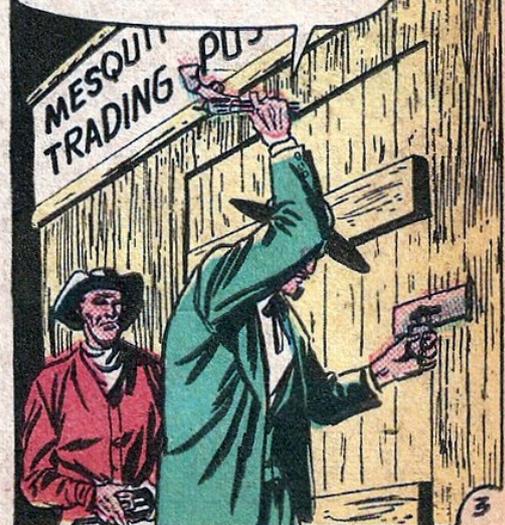


IT'S SOMETHING FURTHER AWAY BUT MUCH MORE VIVID-- **IT'S THE MAN HIMSELF!**



MOMENTS LATER--

THIS'LL BE EASY! A COUPLE O' LICKS WILL BUST THE LOCK-- AN' WE'LL GIT ALL THE DYNAMITE WE NEED!



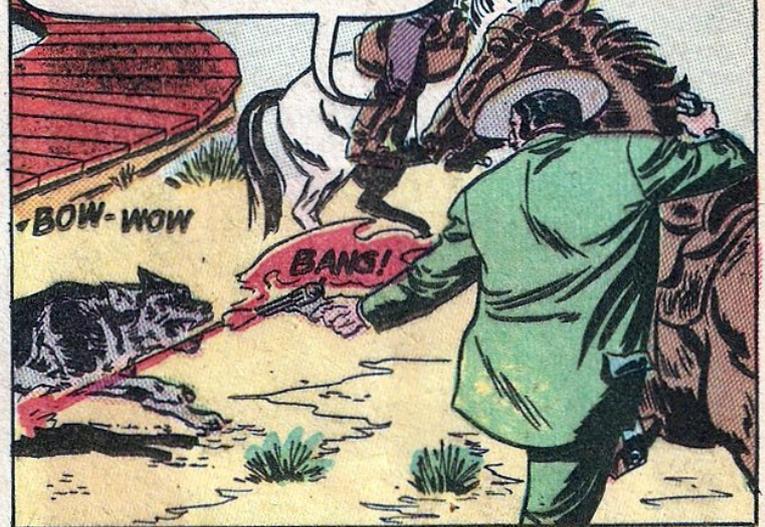
SUDDENLY--

LONGHORN, LOOK! IT'S THE DOG WE TANGLED WITH WHEN WE TRIED TUH PLUG RAWHIDE!



AS FLASH MAKES A SAVAGE RUSH--

THIS MAN-EATER MUST'VE TRAILED US! WE'D BETTER SKEDADDLE-- BEFORE HE GETS BUSY WITH THOSE FANGS!



YUH'RE LUCKY WE CAN'T FIRE AG'IN, YUH WHELP-- IT'D ROUSE UP THE WHOLE TOWN!



AS THE OUTLAW RIDES OFF--

I FIGGERED THAT KICK WOULD SLOW YUH DOWN, MUTT! YUH DIDN'T GIT ANYTHIN' THIS TIME BUT A PEECE O' MUH SADDLE PAD!



THAT DOG REMEMBERS US, LONGHORN-- AN' THAT KIN MEAN TROUBLE! BUT HOW KIN WE PLUG THE CRITTER-- WITHOUT TANGLIN' WITH THE FAST-SHOOTIN' GALOOT WHO OWNS HIM?

THAR'S ANOTHER WAY TUH FIX A BIG DOG THAT'S ALLOWED TUH ROAM AROUND AT NIGHT LIKE THIS'N! NO ONE SAVVIES I'M BOSS O' THIS GANG-- AN' THAT'LL GIVE ME A CHANCE TUH GIT RID O' THAT MUTT THE SMART WAY!



SOON AFTERWARD--

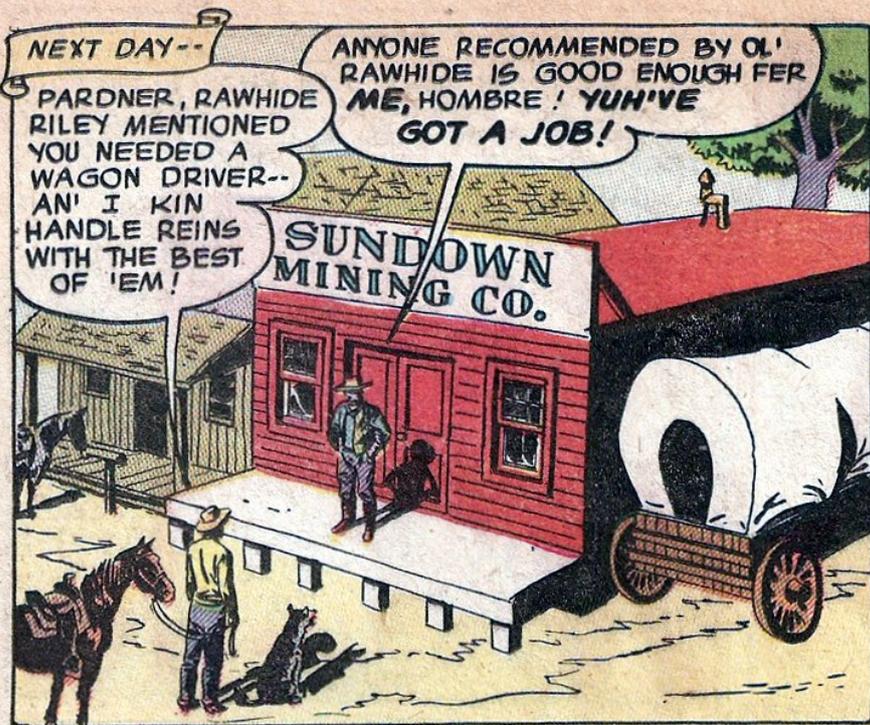
FLASH-- WHAR YUH BEEN? I TOLD YUH TUH HOLE DOWN HERE AN' WATCH THINGS-- AN' THIS IS JEST ABOUT THE FIRST TIME YUH'VE EVER DIS-OBEYED ME



STUNG BY BUD'S REBUKE-- FLASH DOES HIS BEST TO EXPLAIN--

A PEECE O' WOOL, EH! YUH'RE SHORE AS SHOOTIN' TRYIN' TUH TELL ME SOMETHIN', FLASH-- BUT I STILL THINK YUH SHOULD'VE STAYED HERE, SAWY?

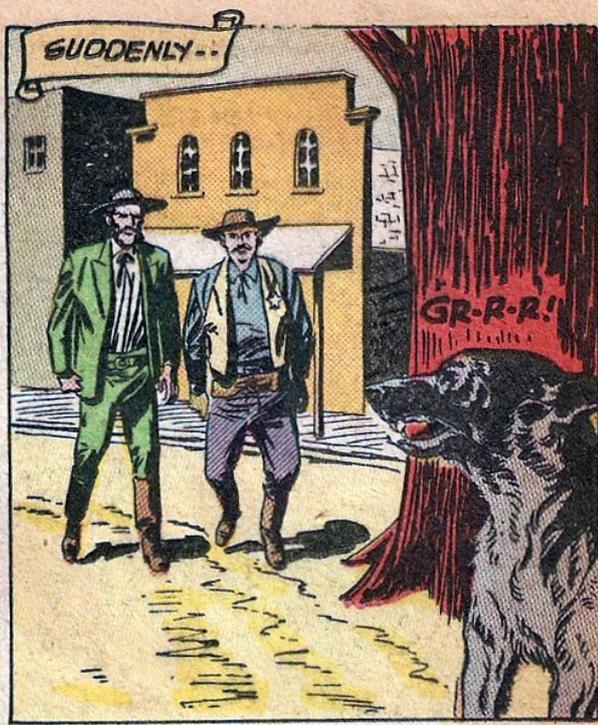




NEXT DAY--

PARDNER, RAWHIDE RILEY MENTIONED YOU NEEDED A WAGON DRIVER-- AN' I KIN HANDLE REINS WITH THE BEST OF 'EM!

ANYONE RECOMMENDED BY OL' RAWHIDE IS GOOD ENOUGH FER ME, HOMBRE! YUH'VE GOT A JOB!



SUDDENLY--



YEP-- I'D KNOW HIM ANYWHAR! THAT'S THE DOG, SHERIFF!

FLASH-- SIMMER DOWN!



SORRY, STRANGER-- BUT FLASH DOESN'T GENERALLY SHOW UGLY WITHOUT REASON!

HE'S GOT PLENTY O' REASON! I CAUGHT THAT NO-GOOD MUTT KILLIN' SHEEP OUT AT BOBTAIL CREEK LAST NIGHT-- AN' DROVE 'IM OFF WITH MUH' QUIRT!



KILLIN' SHEEP!

THAR'S NO USE GITTIN' YORESELF RILED, SON! IT'S PLUM POSSIBLE TUH MISTAKE ONE DOG FER ANOTHER-- AN' IF YUH KIN PROVE YORE PUP WAS WITH YUH LAST NIGHT-- THAT'LL END IT!

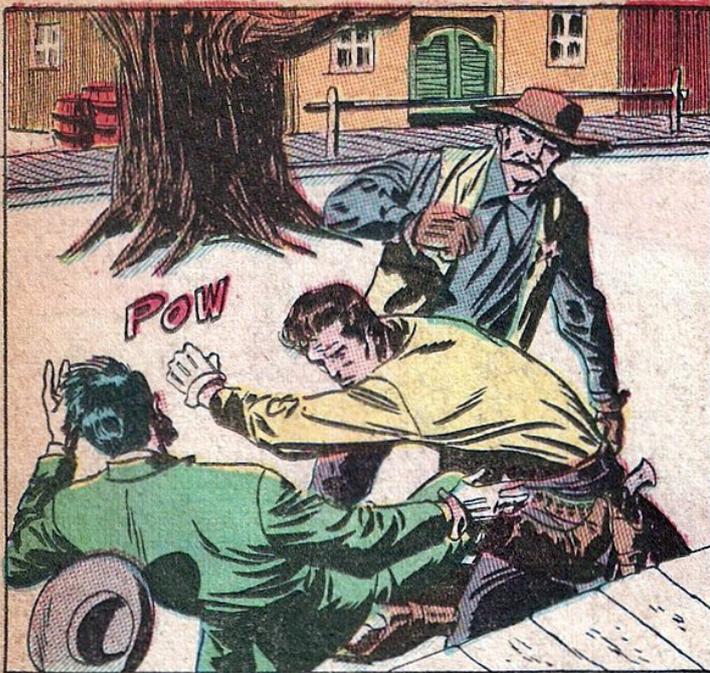


SHERIFF, I KIN HARDLY BELIEVE IT-- BUT THAR'S NO USE PRETENDIN'! FLASH TOTED A PIECE O' WOOL BACK TUH THE HOTEL LAST NIGHT-- SO I RECKON YUH'VE GOT THE RIGHT DOG!

THAR'S ONLY ONE WAY TUH CURE A SHEEP-KILLER-- LET'S GIT IT OVER WITH!



A SPLIT SECOND AFTER LONGHORN'S HAMMER CLICKS BACK--



GIT THIS, HOMBRE-- IF THAR'S GOIN' TUH BE ANY SHOOTIN' IRON POINTED AT FLASH-- IT'LL BE THE LAW'S!

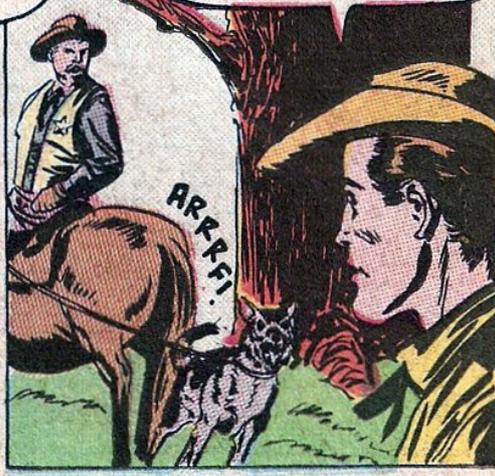
THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FER ME! SHERIFF, I'M COUNTIN' ON YUH TUH DO YORE DUTY!

FLASH, IT'S A TOUGH THING TUH EXPLAIN-- AN' I DON'T SAVVY HOW I'M GONNA DO IT! DON'T THINK I'M TURNIN' AGAINST YUH, PUP-- DON'T THINK I'LL EVER FORGIT ALL WE'VE BEEN THROUGH TOGETHER -- THE RUGGED TIMES WHEN YUH WERE ALL I HAD TUH COUNT ON! BUT YUH'VE DONE JEST ABOUT THE WORST THING A DOG KIN DO, FLASH-- AN' THAT MEANS ADIOS-- BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT TUH PAY THE PRICE!

I'M SHORE SORRY ABOUT THIS, BUD-- BUT YUH NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT MUH SHOOTIN' HIM! I'VE GOT SOME CHLOROFORM OUT AT MUH RANCH, AN' I'LL TAKE FLASH WITH ME WHEN I RIDE HOME AT NOON-- AN' PUT HIM OUT OF THE WAY EASY-LIKE!

A MOMENT LATER--  
COME ON, BOY-- LET'S GIT!  
NOPE-- I'M NOT COMIN' WITH YUH THIS TIME, FLASH! BUT WE'LL BE MEETIN' AGAIN SOMEWHAR WHEN I'VE PLAYED MUH LAST CHIP-- AN' UNTIL THEN-- SO LONG-- PARDNER...

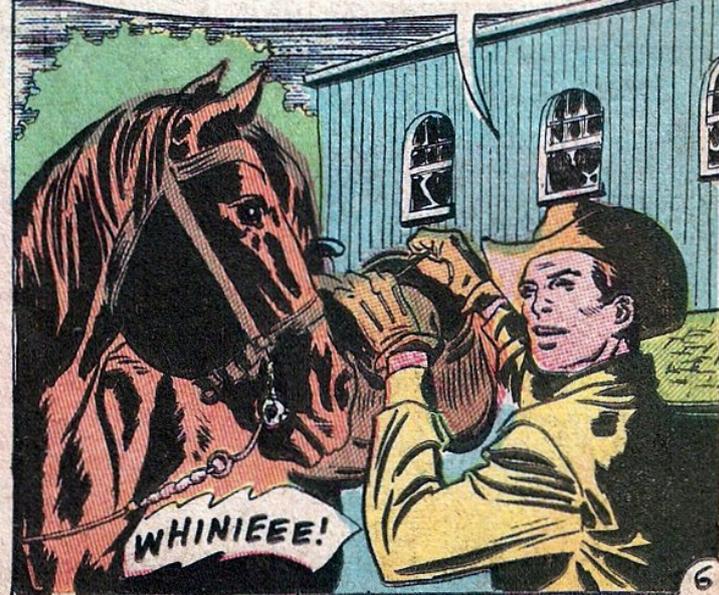
THANKS, SHERIFF! I'LL FEEL A HEAP BETTER ABOUT IT THAT WAY!



IF YUH STILL HANKER FER THAT JOB, HOMBRE-- THE WAGON'S LOADED! MEBBE A DRIVE OUT ON THE RANGE WOULD HELP GIT YORE MIND OFF'N THINGS!

RECKON YUH'RE RIGHT, AMIGO! I'M READY TUH LEAVE!

BUT I'M NOT LEAVIN' YUH, BRONC! NOPE-- I'VE GOTTA HAVE ONE OF MUH BUDDIES WITH ME ON THE TRAIL!



**MINUTES LATER--**

IT WON'T HELP NONE TUH KEEP BROODIN' ABOUT FLASH-- BUT THE MORE I THINK OF IT--THE MORE I KEEP WONDERIN' ABOUT **LONGHORN LONERGAN!** SOMETHIN' TELLS ME I OUGHTA SLIP OUT TO HIS RANCH FER A LOOK-SEE-- **AS THE HOODED HORSEMAN!**

YEP-- HERE'S MUH CHANCE TUH LOOK AROUND FER AN HOUR OR SO! I'LL TETHER THE TEAM IN THAT GULLY YONDER-- WHAR THAR'LL BE NO CHANCE O' ANYONE FINDIN' THE WAGON!

**A MOMENT LATER--** YEP-- AN' THAR'S SHORE TUH BE **DYNAMITE** AMONG THEM MINE SUPPLIES!

THAR'S THE WAGON, LONGHORN! THE DRIVER'S PROBABLY INSIDE-- GRABBIN' HIMSELF A LITTLE SHUT-EYE!

**THEN--**

LOOKS LIKE I'M SAVIN' MUHSELF A RIDE!

CRIMPIN' COYOTES, LONGHORN-- THAT'S THE **HOODED HORSEMAN!**

SOONER OR LATER-- VARMINTS LIKE YUH L'ARN TUH EXPECT ME!

**BANG!**

**BANG!**

**SUDDENLY-- LONGHORN RIDES UP AT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WAGON--**

IT'S **YORE** TOUGH LUCK YUH DIDN'T EXPECT **ME**, HOMBRE!

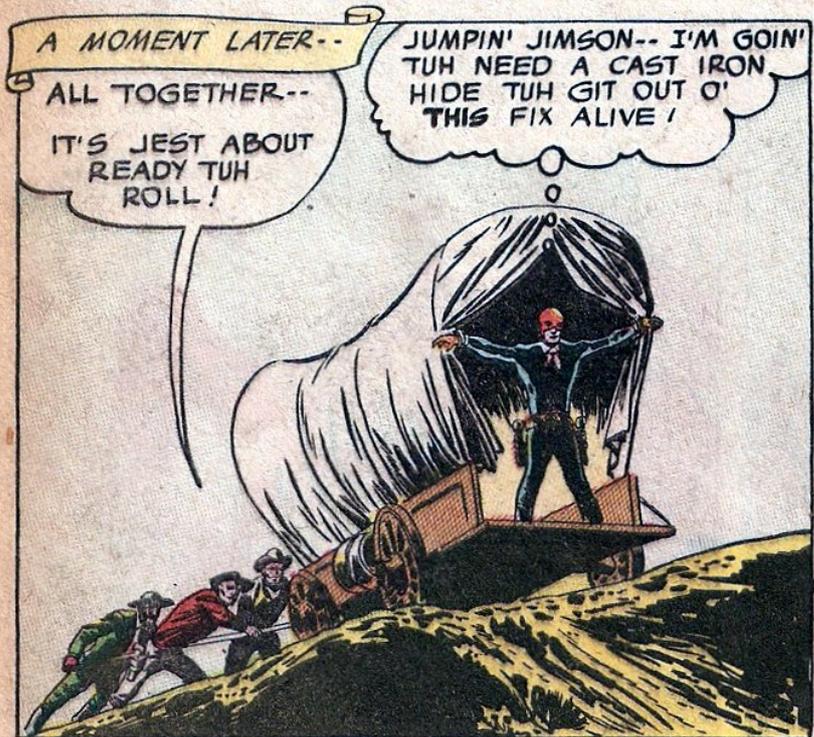
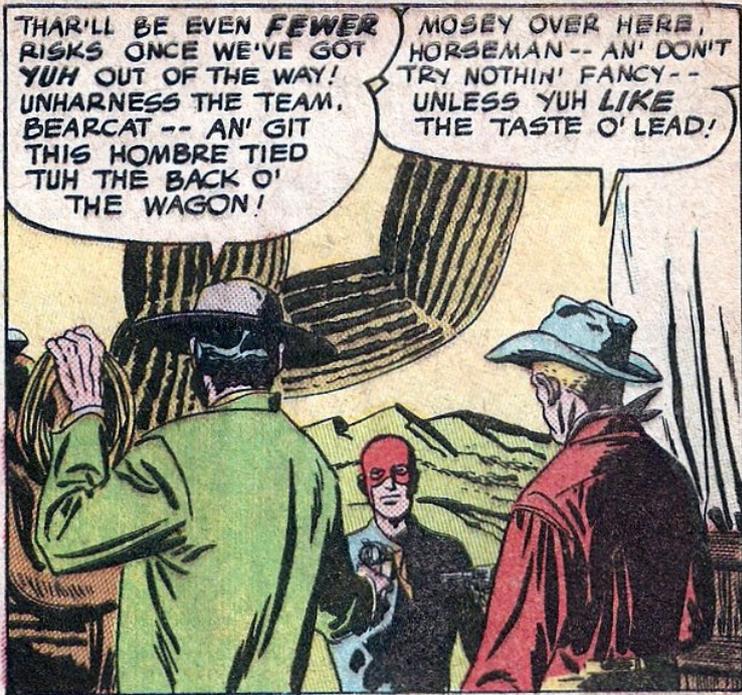
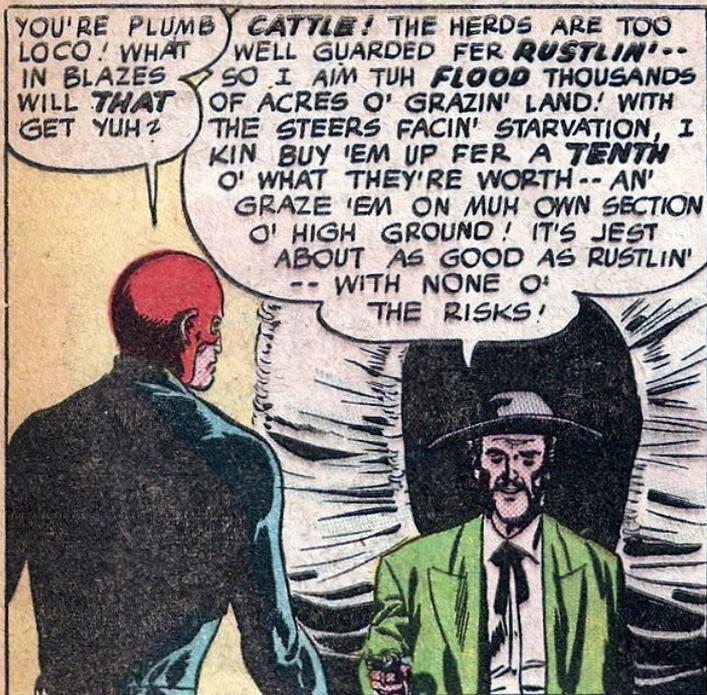
**CRACK!**

**A MOMENT LATER--**

I HAD AN IDEE YOU BUSHWACKERS WERE UP TUH SOMETHIN'-- AFTER BUD FRASER TOLD ME YUH TRIED TUH PLUG RAWHIDE RILEY!

AN' YUH FIGGERED YUH'D LURE US OUT BY DRIVIN' THE SUPPLY WAGON, EH? SHORE, WE TRIED TUH GIT RID O' RAWHIDE-- BECAUSE HE'S MADE A PRACTICE O' DRIVIN' HIS SHEEP ACROSS MUSTANG LAKE DAM-- AN' I DON'T AIM TUH HAVE **WITNESSES** WHEN WE **DYNAMITE** IT!

**DYNAMITE**



THAT BRONC'S A REAL PARD-- BUT THAR'S NO WAY HE KIN HELP ME NOW! THE SLIPPERY ROCK RISES ALMOST SHEER BOTH ABOVE AN' BELOW ME-- I'M TRAPPED!



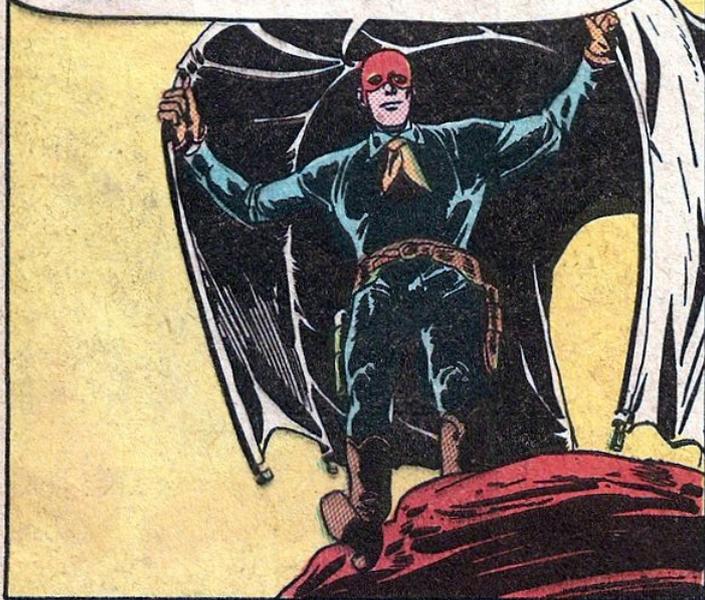
NOPE -- THAR'S NO WAY DOWN! AN' AFTER BEIN' CALLED AN ORNERY BUZZARD DOZENS O' TIMES -- I'D GIVE MUH RIGHT ARM JEST NOW TUH BE ONE!



JUMPIN' JIMSON -- THAT GIVES ME AN IDEE! THAT BUZZARD ISN'T FLYIN' -- IT'S SOARIN' -- AN' THAT'S JEST WHAT I KIN DO WITH THIS HERE CANVAS HOOD!



A SUDDEN GUST O' WIND KIN RIP THE FRAME FROM MUH GRASP AN' SEND ME CRASHIN' TUH THE ROCKS -- BUT I'VE GOT TUH TAKE A CHANCE!



THEN--

WELL-- THIS IS IT!



A MOMENT LATER--

WHINIEEE!



THAT GITTS ME OUT OF A TIGHT SPOT, BRONC -- BUT LONGHORN AN' HIS VARMINTS ARE ON THEIR WAY TUH DYNAMITE THE DAM -- CLEAR AT THE OTHER END O' MUSTANG LAKE! IF WE TAKE THE ROCKY TRAIL THAT CIRCLES THE LAKE -- WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT IN TIME!



BUT S'PPOSIN' WE DOW'N RIDE! LONGHORN FIGGERED HE'D FINISH ME OFF WITH THIS WAGON-- BUT I'M NOT THROUGH GITTIN' USE OUT OF IT YET-- NOT BY A LONG SIGHT!



THIS'LL TAKE JEST A FEW MINUTES! NOW THAT I'VE GOT THE WAGON TONGUE BACK IN PLACE-- THE NEXT STEP IS TUH TIE THE TOPSIDE OF THIS CANVAS HOOD TO A POLE!



IT'S BEGIN-NIN' TUH TAKE SHAPE!



GITTIN' ACROSS THE LAKE WILL TAKE A HEAP LESS TIME THAN GOIN' AROUND IT-- AN' I'VE GOT JEST THE KIND O' RIG I NEED-- A SAILBOAT!

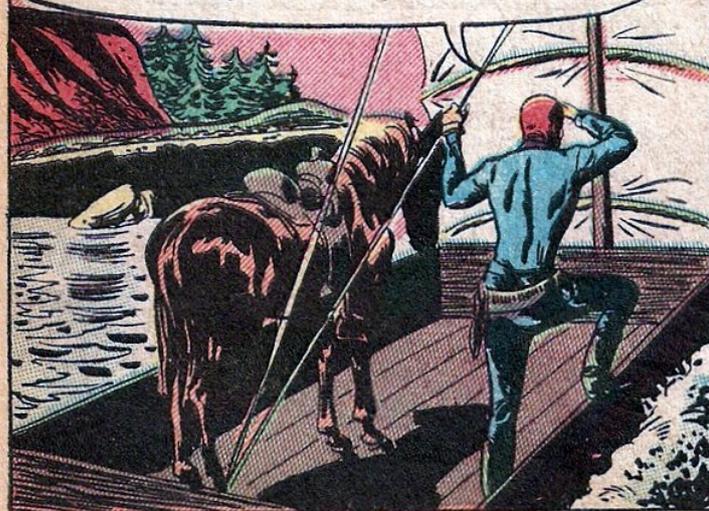


CLIMB IN, BRONC-- I FIGGER WE GOT JEST ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES TUH REACH THE DAM!



THEN-- WITH THE WIND PUSHING AGAINST THE MAKESHIFT SAIL--

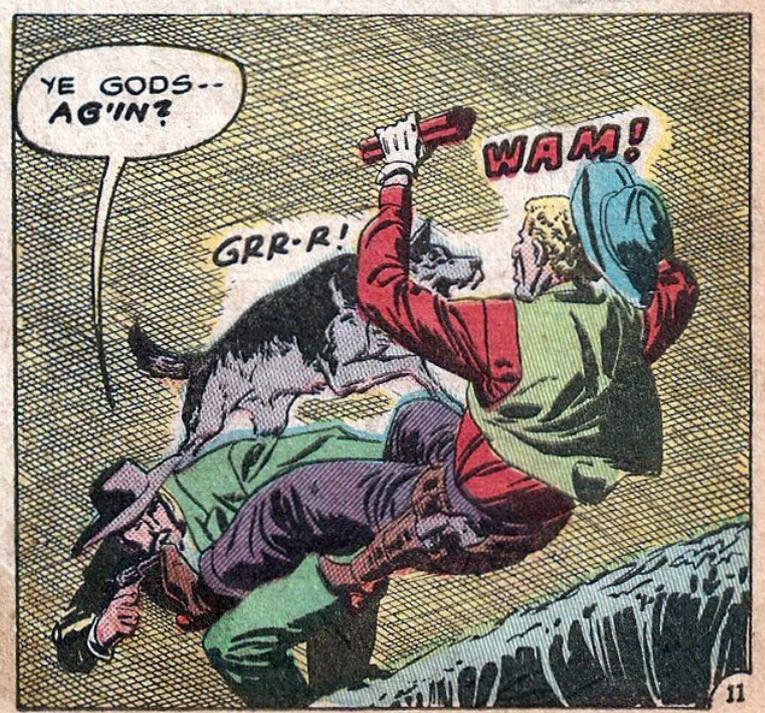
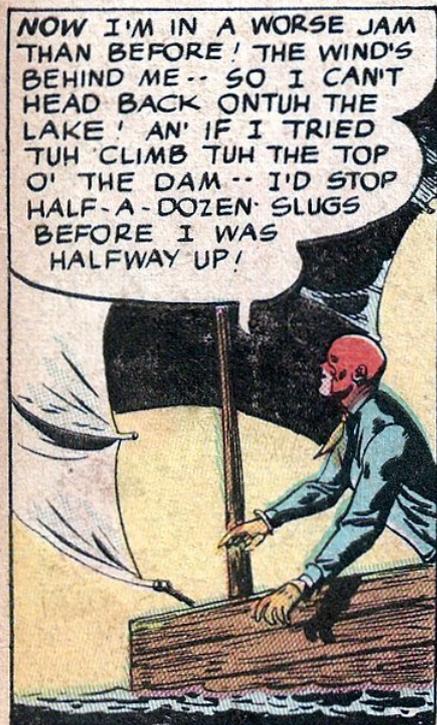
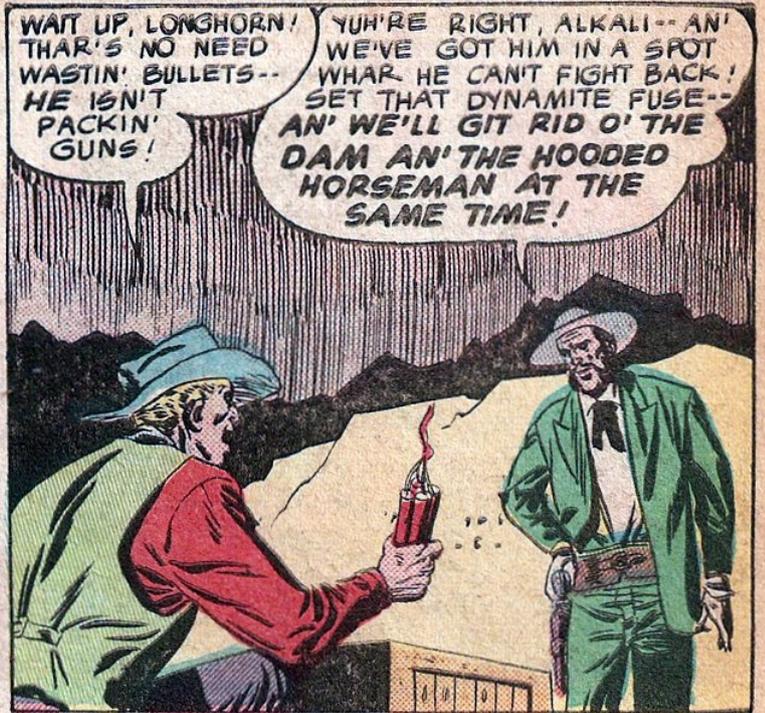
WE'RE GITTIN' THAR, BRONC! WHATEVER'S AHEAD OF US, I'M SHORE O' ONE THING-- IT'S TIMES LIKE THIS THAT I'M GONNA MISS FLASH MOST!



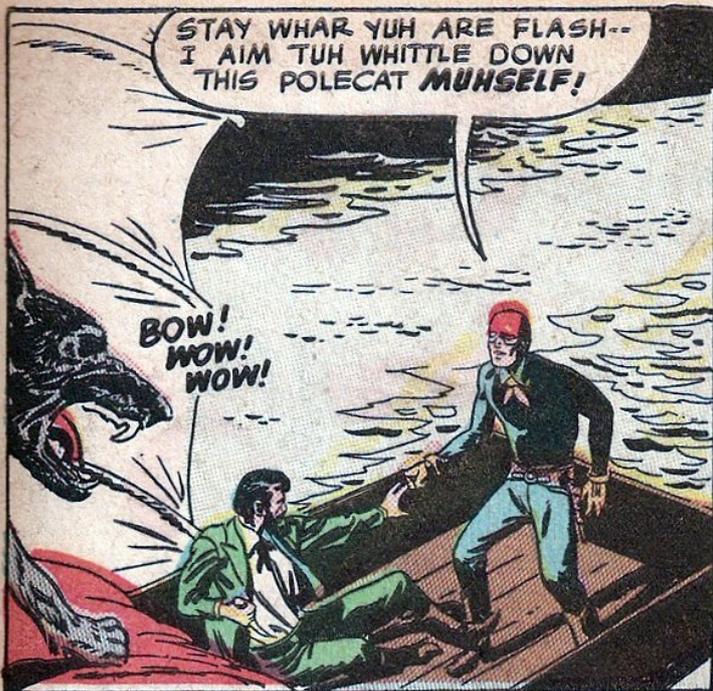
MINUTES LATER--

SUFFERIN' SASSAFRAS-- IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN CLOSER! THAR THEY COME!



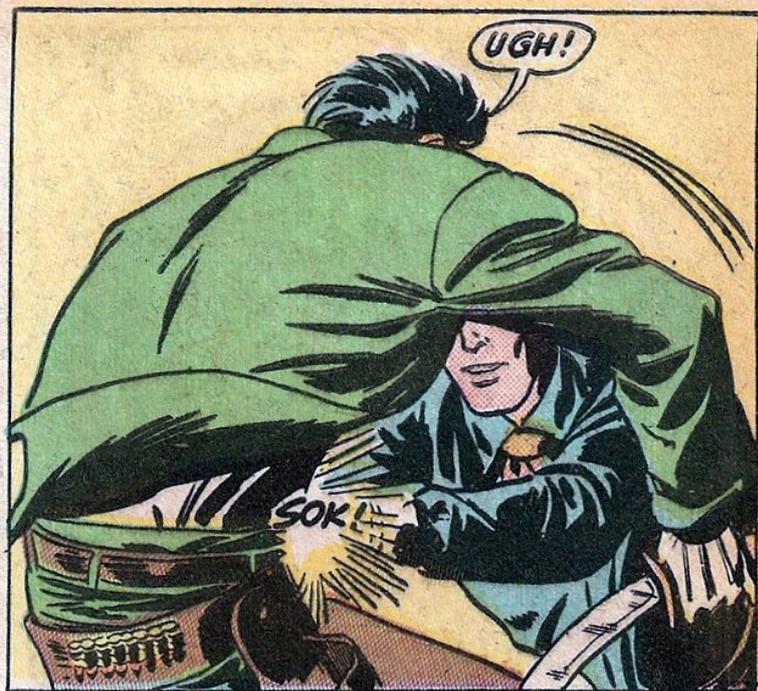






STAY WHAR YUH ARE FLASH--  
I AIM TUH WHITTLE DOWN  
THIS POLECAT **MUHSELF!**

**BOW!  
WOW!  
WOW!**



**UGH!**

**SOK!**



**POW**

A MOMENT LATER--  
THAT BLASTED  
CRITTER'S A JINX!  
I THOUGHT SHORE  
WE GOT RID O' HIM  
AFTER FAKIN' THAT  
SHEEP-KILLIN'  
STORY-- AN'  
HE WINDS UP  
TRAILIN' US!

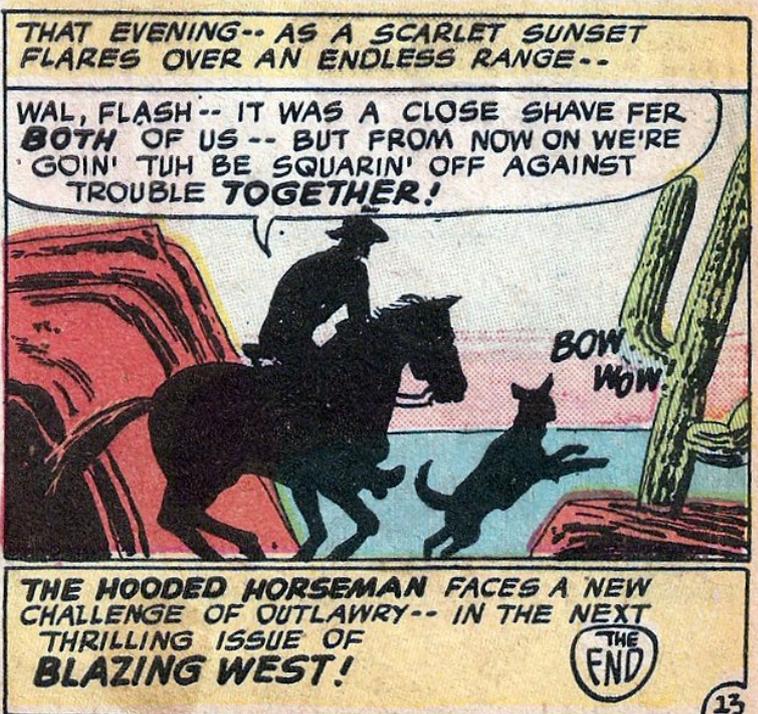
RECKON  
THAR'S  
SOMETHIN'  
ELSE THE  
SHERIFF, AN'  
BUD FRASER  
WILL BE IN-  
TERESTED  
IN HEARIN'  
ABOUT,  
LONGHORN!

LATER--  
AT THE  
HOOSEGOW--  
HOW COME  
YUH MANAGED  
TUH CORRAL  
ONE O'  
LONGHORN'S  
WADDIES,  
SHERIFF?

WAL-- I HAPPENED TUH  
BE ON HAND WHEN HE  
RODE INTUH TOWN TUH  
SEE THE DOCTOR! HE  
CONFERRED HE GOT  
HIMSELF PLUGGED  
WHILE THE GANG WAS  
GITTIN' RID O' THE  
HOODED HORSEMAN--  
AN' THAT LONGHORN  
HAD TRUMPED UP THE  
CHARGE AGAINST YORE  
DOG! THEN HE PASSED  
OUT-- BEFORE I HAD  
A CHANCE TUH  
L'ARN WHAT  
LONGHORN  
WAS UP TUH!



I UNTIED FLASH, THINKIN' HE'D HIGHTAIL  
BACK TUH YUH-- AN' WE'RE PLUMB LUCKY  
HE HATED LONGHORN ENOUGH TUH TRAIL  
THE GANG CLEAR TUH MUSTANG LAKE--  
IN TIME TUH HELP THE **HOODED  
HORSEMAN!**



THAT EVENING-- AS A SCARLET SUNSET  
FLARES OVER AN ENDLESS RANGE--

WAL, FLASH-- IT WAS A CLOSE SHAVE FER  
**BOTH** OF US -- BUT FROM NOW ON WE'RE  
'GOIN' TUH BE SQUARIN' OFF AGAINST  
TROUBLE **TOGETHER!**

**BOW!  
WOW!**

THE HOODED HORSEMAN FACES A NEW  
CHALLENGE OF OUTLAWRY-- IN THE NEXT  
THRILLING ISSUE OF  
**BLAZING WEST!**

THE  
**END**