



THE MOVIES' MOST COLORFUL WESTERN STAR~

10¢

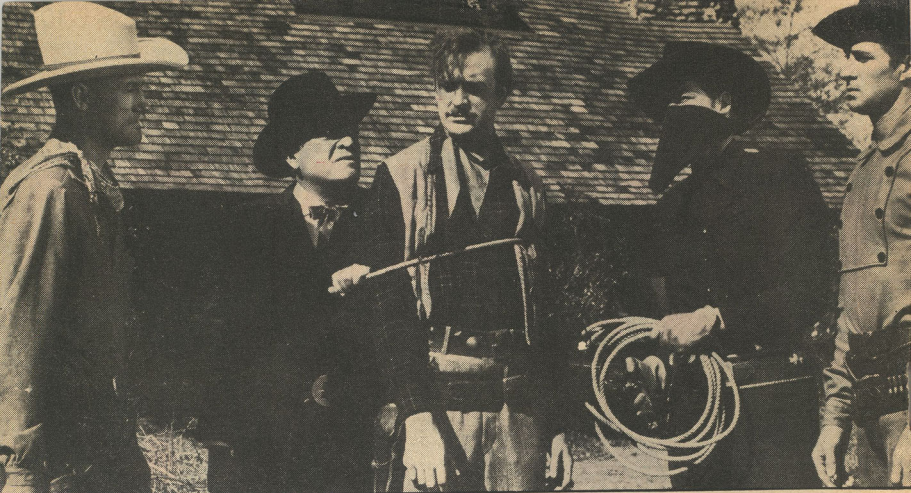
CHARLES STARRETT *as*

The

DURANGO KID

No. 2





DURANGO ropes them in! Two badmen—being good now—share a single loop of Durango's taut-hitched lasso. Their expressions show how they feel.

FLYING through the air with the greatest of ease, the Durango Kid sails towards a rifleman who is all set to pick off an unsuspecting victim in the stable.

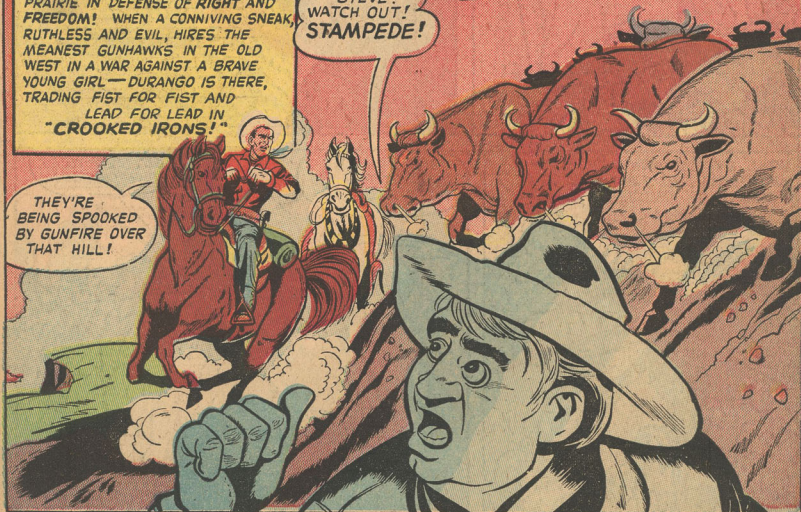


The DURANGO KID

THE DURANGO KID—
FLASHING ACROSS THE WESTERN PRAIRIE IN DEFENSE OF RIGHT AND FREEDOM! WHEN A CONNING SNEAK, RUTHLESS AND EVIL, HIRES THE MEANEST GUNHAWKS IN THE OLD WEST IN A WAR AGAINST A BRAVE YOUNG GIRL—DURANGO IS THERE, TRADING FIST FOR FIST AND LEAD FOR LEAD IN "CROOKED IRONS!"

STEVE!
WATCH OUT!
STAMPEDE!

THEY'RE
BEING SPOOKED
BY GUNFIRE OVER
THAT HILL!



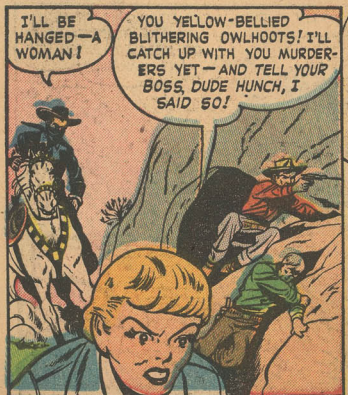
IF I CAN PERSUADE THIS LEAD STEER
I MEAN BUSINESS, I'LL HEAD OFF
THE HERD!



THAT DID IT! THEY'LL HEAD DOWN THIS TRAIL,
WHERE THEY CAN'T
DO US OR THEMSELVES
ANY HARM...



THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID

...I'M NOT A GUNHAWK!
I'M A MAN OF PEACE AND
JUSTICE, NOT OF WAR... AND
I TAKE PAY FROM NO ONE!
WHEN I RIDE, I RIDE ALONE!
AND WHEN I FIGHT, I
FIGHT ON THE SIDE OF
RIGHT!

AND I DON'T KNOW WHO'S
RIGHT YET! SO FAR, I JUST KNOW
YOUR SIDE OF THE STORY-- AND
THAT'S NOT ENOUGH
FOR THE
DURANGO KID!

BUT LATER! SHE SURE WAS SOME
SPITFIRE, THAT GIRL--
BUT I GUESS SHE'S IN
REAL TROUBLE. I THINK WE
OUGHT TO PAY A VISIT TO
THE BAR THREE RANCH,
MULEY...
SHUCKS--
SOUNDS
LIKE WORK
TUH ME!



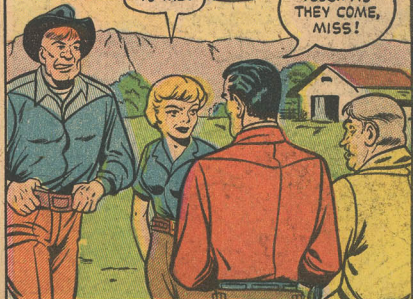
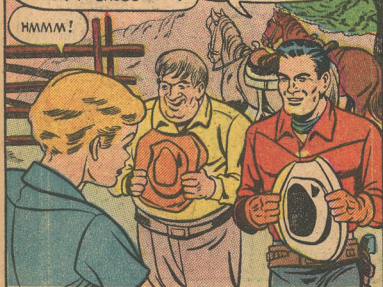
NEXT MORNING, AT THE BAR THREE RANCH...

STEVE BRAND AND MULEY PIKE, MA'AM-- TWO
TOPHANDS DRIFTING THROUGH AND LOOKING
FOR A GRUBSTAKE.

HMMM!

I NEED MORE THAN JUST COWPOKES, MISTER! I NEED
GUNSLINGERS AROUND HERE --AND
YOU DON'T LOOK SO TOUGH
TO ME!

I'M AS
TOUGH AS
THEY COME,
MISS!

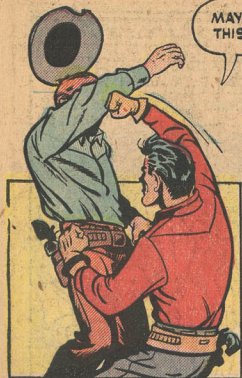


THIS RANNY SAYS
HE'S TOUGH, BULL!

IZZAT SO?
HOW
TOUGH?



THE DURANGO KID



MAYBE THIS...



... WILL GIVE YOU...

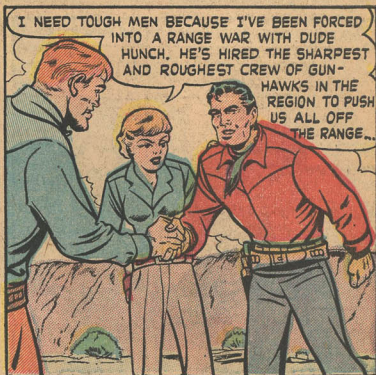


... A SLIGHT IDEA!



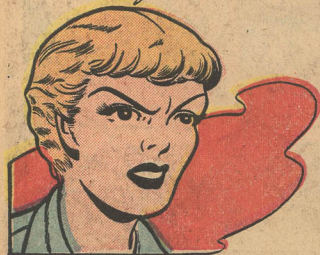
I GUESS YOU PASSED **THAT** TEST ALL RIGHT, STEVE BRAND - YOU AND YOUR SIDEKICK ARE IN!

AND HE'S HANDSOME TOO!



I NEED TOUGH MEN BECAUSE I'VE BEEN FORCED INTO A RANGE WAR WITH DUDE HUNCH. HE'S HIRED THE SHARPEST AND ROUGHEST CREW OF GUN-HAWKS IN THE REGION TO PUNCH US ALL OFF THE RANGE...

... AND UNLESS WE FIGHT HARD AND FAST, HE'LL DO IT, TOO! MY CATTLE'S BEING RUSTLED OFF EVERY DAY AND I KNOW DUDE IS DOING IT, BUT I CAN'T PROVE A THING BECAUSE MY BAR-3 HERDS JUST VANISH WITHOUT A TRACE - INTO THIN AIR!

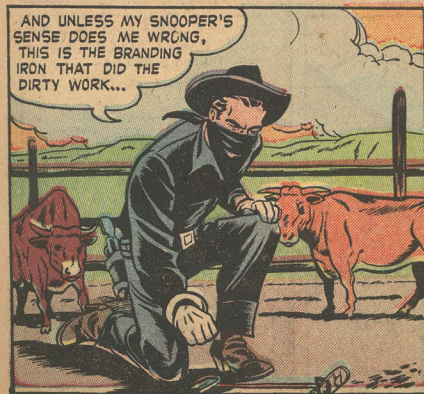
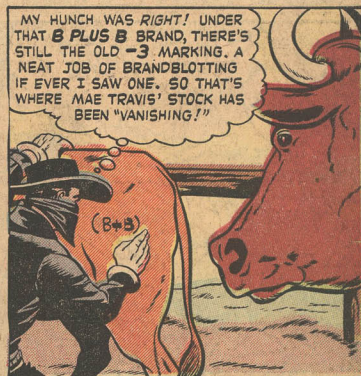
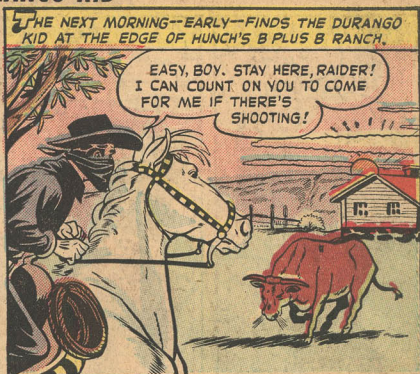
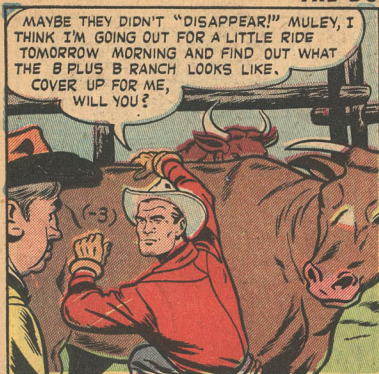


LATER...

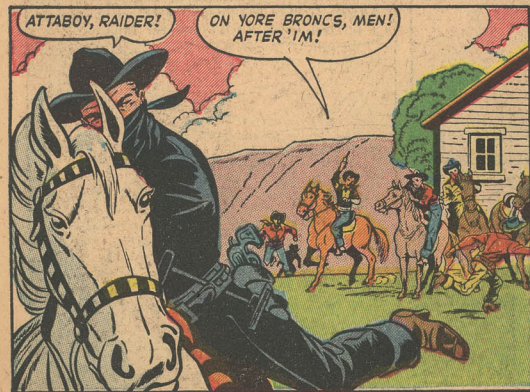
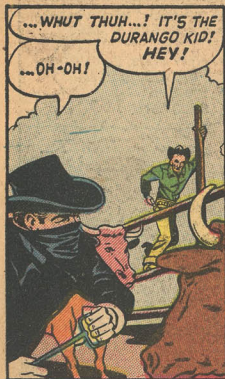
THEM STEERS IS MIGHTY BIG TO TAKE TO DISAPPEARIN' INTUH THIN AIR!

I'VE BEEN THINKING THE SAME THING, MULEY - LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THEIR MARKINGS!

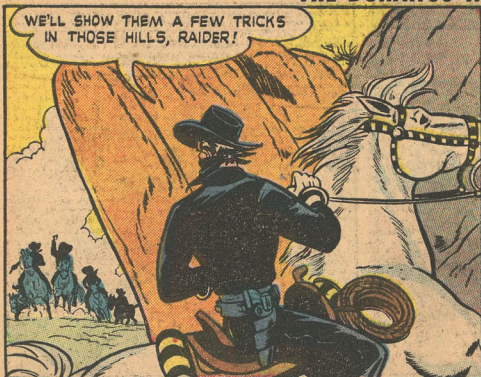
THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID



WE'LL SHOW THEM A FEW TRICKS IN THOSE HILLS, RAIDER!



THIS STREAM TUNNELS RIGHT THROUGH TO THE OTHER SIDE— JUST THE THING I'M LOOKING FOR!



WE'LL JUST LET **ONE HALF** RIDE INTO THE TUNNEL. OKAY, RAIDER—**NOW!**



HUNCH'S FORCE IS SPLIT IN HALF—!

GOING THE WRONG WAY, BOYS!

THAR HE IS! GIT 'EM!



—EACH HALF GOING IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION!

KEEP GOING, RAIDER—**FAST!**

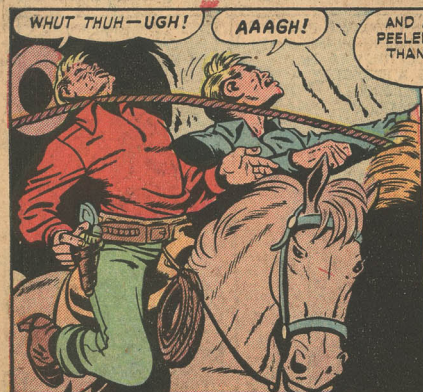
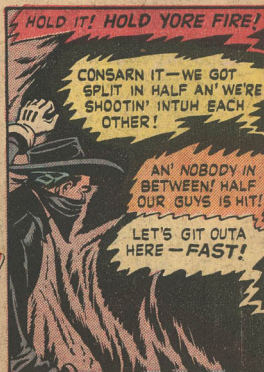
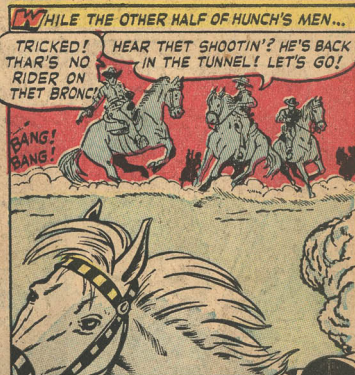
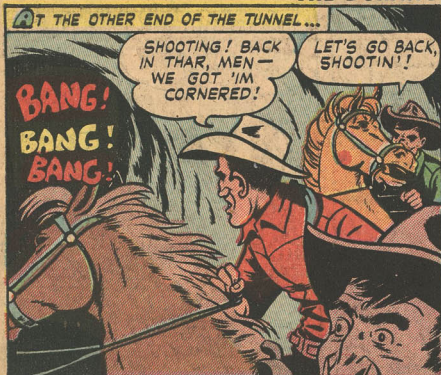


THEY OUGHT TO COME BACK IN A BLISTERING HURRY WHEN THEY FIND THEY'RE ONLY CHASING A HORSE! NOW TO DOUBLE BACK TO THE TUNNEL...

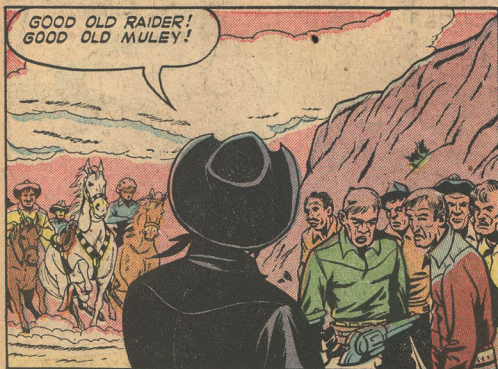


THE OTHER HALF OF HUNCH'S MEN OUGHT TO BE AT THE OTHER END BY NOW. THIS'LL SURPRISE THEM!

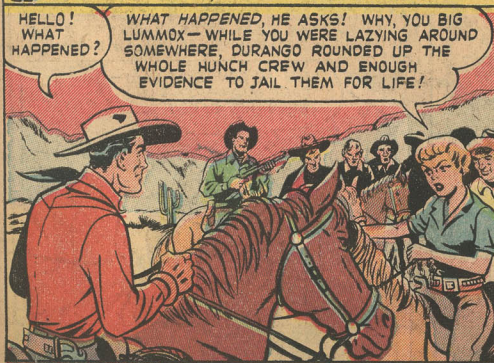
THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID



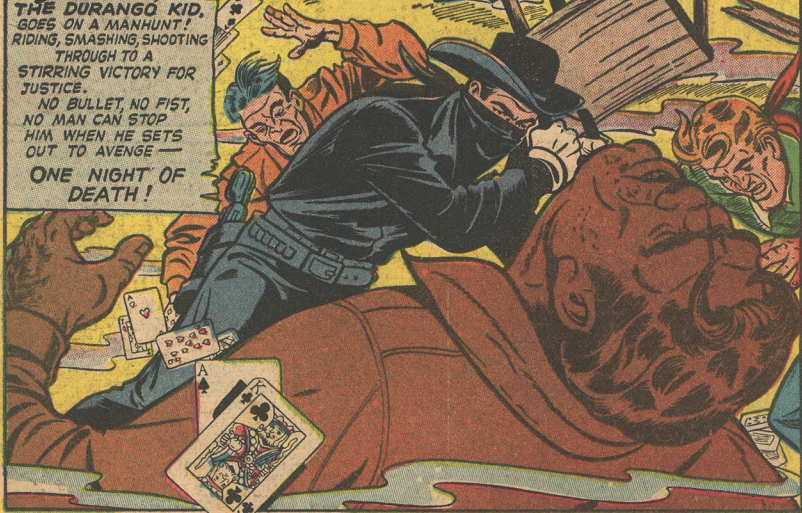
A SHORT TIME LATER, ON THE WAY TO THE JAIL...



The

DURANGO KID

STEVE BRAND, THE DURANGO KID, GOES ON A MANHUNT! RIDING, SMASHING, SHOOTING THROUGH TO A STIRRING VICTORY FOR JUSTICE. NO BULLET, NO FIST, NO MAN CAN STOP HIM WHEN HE SETS OUT TO AVENGE — ONE NIGHT OF DEATH!



TELL ME, MISS MAY — HOW IS IT YOU'RE RUNNING THIS RANCH ALL BY YOURSELF?

IT WASN'T ALWAYS THIS WAY, STEVE BRAND. THERE USED TO BE DAD AND ME. BUT ONE NIGHT...



"... ALMOST FIVE YEARS AGO, I SAT UP WAITING FOR DAD TO COME HOME FROM TOWN. IT WAS HIS HABIT TO GO INTO TOWN EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT TO PLAY A FEW HANDS WITH THE BOYS. HE WAS LATE COMING HOME..."

HERE HE COMES AT LAST — PAST MIDNIGHT! I'LL BURN HIS EARS!



THE DURANGO KID

"DAD AND I WERE MORE LIKE BROTHER AND SISTER, I GUESS. I USED TO CALL HIM 'PARDNER'—"

ALL RIGHT, PARDNER—
WHAT'S THE IDEA OF BEING SO LATE. IT BETTER BE A WHOPPER THIS TIME!

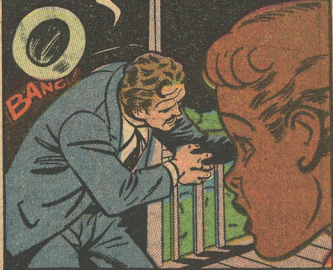
NOW MOP THAT SCOWL OFF YORE FACE, HONEY— AH GOT WUNNERFUL NEWS TO TELL YUH!



"SUDDENLY FROM THE DARKNESS—A SHOT RANG OUT!"

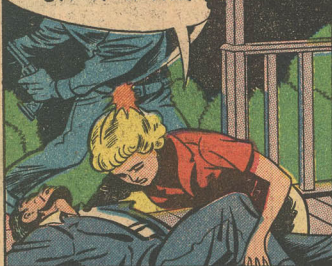
I—UGH!

DAD! DAD! DAD!



"I RAN TO HIM. THEN—"

DAD! SPEAK TO ME!
SPEAK TO—
OH-H-H-H...



"THE BLOW KNOCKED ME UNCONSCIOUS. I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I WAS OUT. BUT THE SHOT HAD AWAKENED THE BOYS IN THE BUNKHOUSE AND THEY REVIVED ME."

SHE'S COMIN' TO! PORE KID!

I HEARD A BRONC GOIN' OFF THE 'AWAY!

AH GUESS THUH BOSS IS DAID, BOYS— AND ROBBED! HIS POCKETS IS TURNED INSIDE OUT!



THERE WERE NO CLUES, NOTHING TO HELP UNCOVER THE KILLER...

FIVE YEARS IS A MIGHTY LONG TIME FOR A KILLER TO GO UNPUNISHED, MISS MAY. MAYBE NOW THAT MY FRIEND, THE DURANGO KID, IS AROUND THESE PARTS, SOMETHING CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT!

IF ONLY HE COULD! I'D BE ETERNALLY GRATEFUL! PERHAPS—IF THAT KILLER WERE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE—I'D BE ABLE TO LOSE SOME OF THE BITTERNESS AND HARDNESS THAT'S EATEN AWAY AT ME DEEP DOWN INSIDE!

LATER THAT NIGHT...

NOW, TOMORROW MORNING I'LL...
BZZZZ... BZZZ... THE DURANGO KID...
BZZZZ... GET IT?

YUP... YUP... I GET IT!



THE DURANGO KID

NEXT MORNING—A BLACK-CLAD FIGURE ON A WHITE HORSE SCUDS ACROSS THE PRAIRIE TOWARD THE TOWN OF SHAWNEE CREEK. IT'S THE DURANGO KID AND RAIDER!

I SURE HOPE MULEY PLAYS HIS HAND RIGHT! IF THIS PLAN WORKS, IT'LL WORK QUICK AS LIGHTNING—OR NOT AT ALL! I'VE REALLY GOT TO BE ON MY TOES THIS TIME!



AN OMINOUS HUSH SETTLES OVER THE TOWN AS THE DURANGO KID RIDES DOWN THE CENTER OF MAIN ST...

HEY THERE, OLD FELLOW— I WANT TO TALK TO YOU!

IT'S THE DURANGO KID— OH, OH! SOMPIN'S GOIN' TUH HAPPEN!

WHO— ME?



YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S GOING TO TELL ME WHERE TRAVIS WAS THE NIGHT HE GOT MURDERED!

NOT ME, DURANGO! I LIVED THIS LONG AN' I AIM TUH LIVE LOTS MORE!



H-H-HE WUZ IN THUR S-S-SALOON PLAYIN' CARDS WITH ROCK SHAUNESSEY AN' HE WON A P-P-POWERFUL LOT O' GREENBACKS. BB-B-B-BROKE THUH BANK, HE DID!



SHAWNEE CREEK AMUSEMENT EMPORIUM AND SALOON

IN THAT CASE THE SALOON'S MY NEXT STOP!

HE'S AFTER TRAVIS'S KILLER! YEOW— I'M GOIN' HOME 'N' BAR THUH DOORS!



WHICH ONE OF YOU RANNIES IS ROCK SHAUNESSEY?



THAT'S ME, DURANGO— WHAT'S YORE BEEF?

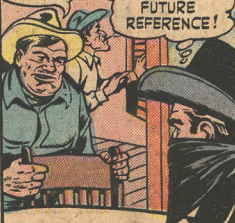


THE DURANGO KID

I HEAR A MAN NAMED TRAVIS WON A PILE OF MONEY FROM YOU SOME TIME AGO, SHAUNESSEY. I'VE BEEN WONDERING IF I COULDN'T DO THE SAME.



I GUESS WHUT'S GOOD ENOUGH FER TRAVIS IS GOOD ENOUGH FER YOU, DURANGO! CALL YORE CARDS!



I SAW THAT HOMBRE SIGNAL SHAUNESSEY JUST BEFORE HE TOOK OFF — I'LL JUST FILE THAT AWAY FOR FUTURE REFERENCE!

ANY SPECIAL INTEREST IN TRAVIS, DURANGO?

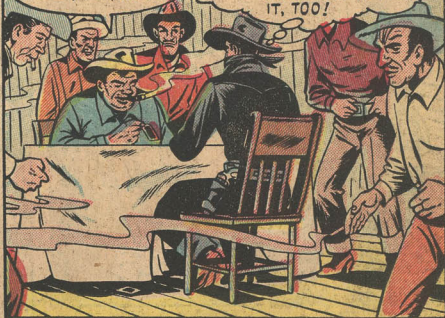
A VERY SPECIAL INTEREST, SHAUNESSEY — I'M LOOKING FOR THE RAT WHO KILLED HIM!



EF YUH AIN'T KEERFUL, YUH MIGHT EVEN FIND 'IM!



ONE O' YORE CARDS JUST FELL OFF THUH TABLE, DURANGO.



BLOWN OFF, YOU MEAN! ALL RIGHT, IF THAT'S THEIR GAME — I KNOW HOW TO PLAY IT, TOO!

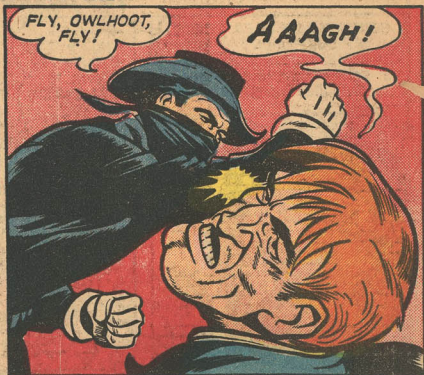


UM-HMMM!

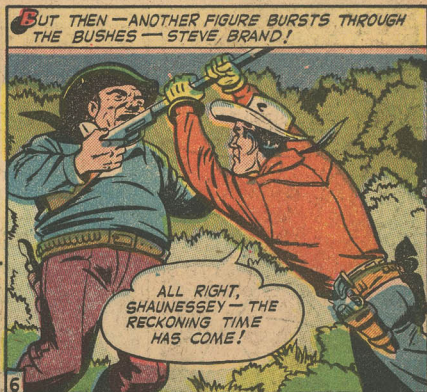
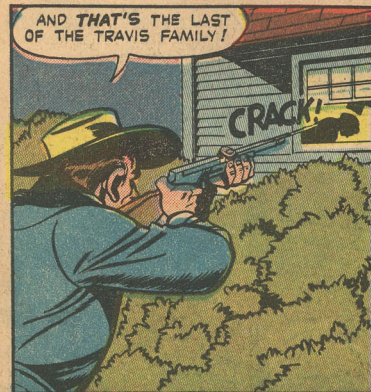
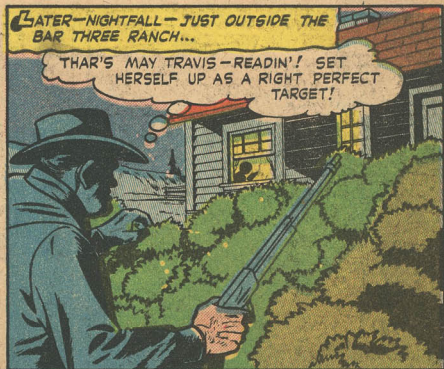


MIGHT JUST AS WELL UPSET ALL THE CARDS, SHAUNESSEY!

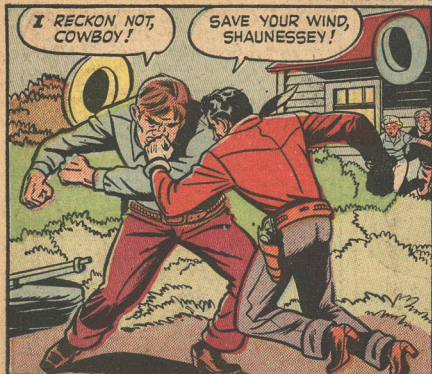
THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID



I RECKON NOT, COWBOY!

SAVE YOUR WIND, SHAUNESSEY!

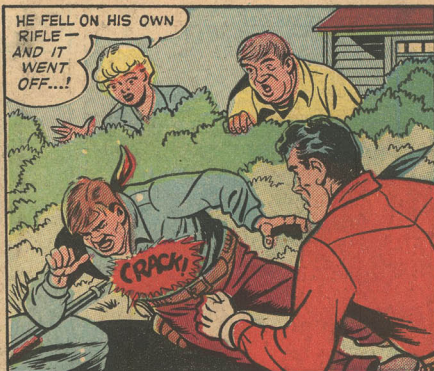


GOT ANY WIND TUH SPARE?

UHH!



SURE! HERE'S A BLOW!



HE FELL ON HIS OWN RIFLE — AND IT WENT OFF...!



DAID! RIGHT THROUGH THE HEART!

THE DURANGO KID AND I FIGURED THAT IF DURANGO WENT INTO TOWN AND LET IT BE KNOWN HE WAS LOOKING FOR THE KILLER, THINGS WOULD START POPPING...



...AND THE KILLER WOULD MAKE A TRY TO GET RID OF THE LAST REMAINING WITNESS — YOU! IT WAS MULEY'S JOB TO GET THIS RIG TOGETHER.



DON'T FORGET YOUR PART IN THIS, STEVE! YOU WERE SO BRAVE, SO—SO HEROIC! I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO THANK YOU ENOUGH!

THAT'S A GOOD BEGINNIN', MISS TRAVIS...!

THE DURANGO KID

The DURANGO KID

I'VE COME FOR YOU, "WHISPER"—AND I AIM TO FINISH YOU!

I GOT AN AIM, TOO, DURANGO—AN' I NEVER MISS!

OF ALL THE BADMEN IN THE OLD WEST, THE DEADLIEST WAS "WHISPER" ROURKE—a stone-hearted scavenger riding death on his saddle! AND OF ALL THE HEROES OF THE WEST, THE GREATEST WAS THE DURANGO KID! IT WAS A BATTLE OF GIANTS WHEN THESE TWO LOCKED IN COMBAT! IT WAS A GIVE-NO-QUARTER, BITTER AND RELENTLESS DUEL TO THE FINISH!

ONE DAY STEVE BRAND WAS IN TOWN PICKING UP THE BAR THREE MAIL...

I JUST SEEN HIM A FEW MILES OUTA TOWN, I TELL YUH!—"WHISPER" ROURKE 'N A PACK UV HIS OWLHOOTS—HEADIN' THIS WAY, FAST!

HVAR HE, COMES! THUH MEANEST, ROUGHEST, TOUGHEST OWLHOOT IN THUH TERRITORY! HE'S AFEAUD UV NO MAN—HE'S A KILLER WITH A HEART AS CURDLED 'N EVIL AS THUH HEART UV A RATTLER!

I'M A GITTIN' THUH 'HOME AN' STAYIN' THERE!

THE DURANGO KID



NOW, **NOBODY'S** GOT A RIGHT TO BE AS TOUGH AS **THAT!** WE'LL JUST MOSEY ALONG TO THE SALOON AND SEE HOW ROUGH THIS RANNY IS!

YIPPEE!
BANG!

BANG!



MUH NAME'S "WHISPER" ROURKE AN' I'M THUH IRON-JAWED, STEEL-BELLIED CORPSE-MAKER WHUT EATS A BUSHEL UV RATTLESNAKES FER BREAKFAST! MUH BROTHERS IS DEATH 'N DESOLATION! WHEN I SAY "DIE!"—**EVERYBODY** DIES! AN' WHEN I SAY "DRINK!"—**EVERYBODY** DRINKS! NOW, ALL YUH CHICKEN-LIVERED SPALPEENS—**DRINK!**



WHUT THUH—? HOW COME YOU AIN'T DRINKIN', STRANGER?

I'M PARTICULAR ABOUT WHOM I DRINK WITH, ROURKÉ!



BARKEEP! POUR THIS HOMBRE A DRINK! NOW SPILL IT DOWN, STRANGER—**FAST!**



I THINK I'LL SPILL IT **OVER**, ROURKÉ!

WHY, YUH DIRTY—!

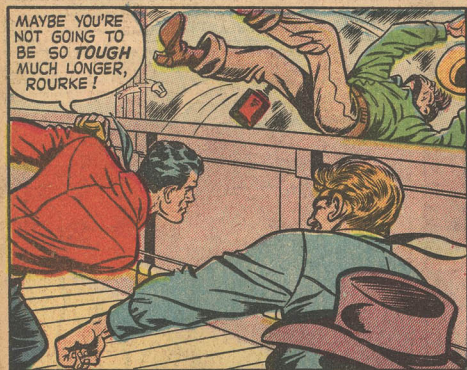


I'LL PULVERIZE YUH AN' THROW THUH CRUMBS THU THUH VULTURES! I'LL MASSACRE YUH! I'LL TEAR YUH —!



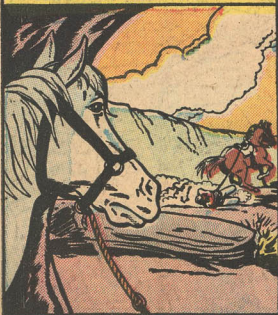
HOLD IT! KEEP YORE HANDS IN THUH AIR, BOTH UV YEZ! LONG AS I'M SHERIFF 'ROUND HYAR, THAR AIN'T GOIN' TUH BE NO MASSACRES! NOW GIT OUTA TOWN, ROURKÉ—**FAST!**

THE DURANGO KID

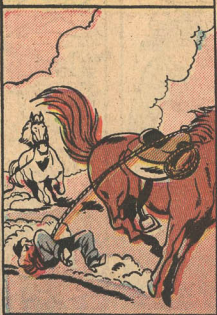


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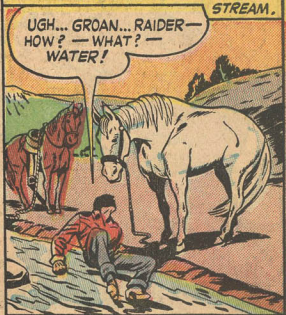
A SHORT TIME LATER—RAIDER, LOOKING OUT OF HIS CAVE, SEES A STRANGE SIGHT!



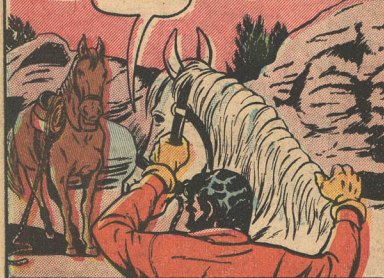
THE WISE ANIMAL BURSTS HIS TETHERS AND TAKES AFTER THE SPOOKED MARE!



CALMING THE MARE, RAIDER CHEWS THROUGH THE ROPE AND DRAGS HIS BELOVED MASTER TO A NEARBY STREAM.

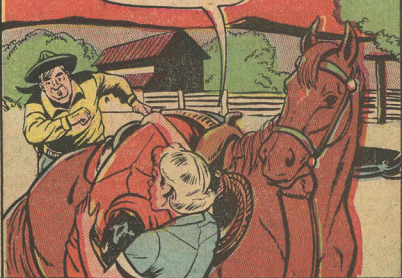


THAT WATER HELPED—GOOD BOY, RAIDER!
IF ONLY I CAN GET ONTO THAT MARE'S
BACK BEFORE I PASS OUT AGAIN... SOMETHING
UNDER HER SADDLE... GOT TO GET
IT OUT...



AND A SHORT TIME LATER!

MULEY! MULEY! QUICK!
IT'S STEVE! HE'S
BEEN HURT!



MEANWHILE—IN SHAWNEE CREEK...

NOW LISSEN TUH ME, YUH PACK UV CHICKENS—
YORE 'SHERIFF'S DONE FER! I HEREBY DECLARE
MUHSELF SHERIFF, MAYOR AN' BOSS! ANY-
THING GOES ON IN THIS HERE TOWN'S GOT
TUH BE CLEARED
WITH ME—HEAR?



I'M PUTTIN' A TAX UV TEN GREENBACKS
RIGHT NOW ON EVERY MAN, DAME AND
KID! ANYBODY WHUT WON'T PUT UP OR
WHO DON'T MOVE FAST ENOUGH GITS
SHOT AN' **STRUNG UP!** I'M TOUGH—
HEAR? AN' I AIN'T AFEAARD UV
NO MAN...



THE DURANGO KID

...AN' THET GOES FER THUH DURANGO KID, TOO! ANY UV YUH RANNIES SEE HIM, YUH KIN TELL HIM FER ME THET I'M CHALLENGIN' HIM TUH A SHOWDOWN FIGHT!



FEW DAYS LATER, AT THE BAR THREE RANCH...

WELL, I RECKON I'VE BEEN IN THIS SOFT BED LONG ENOUGH, MISS MAY.

YOU'RE AN AMAZINGLY STRONG MAN, STEVE. I DON'T KNOW ANYONE ELSE WHO WOULD RECOVER SO QUICKLY FROM SUCH A TERRIBLE MAULING!



I RECKON NO OTHER MAN HAD SUCH A DEVOTED NURSE, MISS MAY! YOU WERE AT THIS BED-SIDE NIGHT AND DAY. I'M SURE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR FRIENDSHIP!

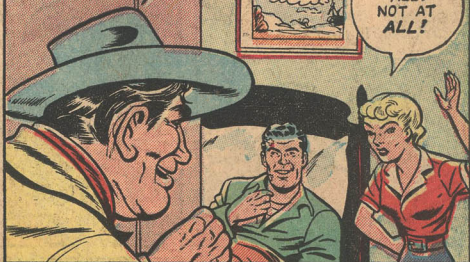


MAYBE IT WAS MORE THAN JUST FRIENDSHIP, STEVE. MAYBE IT WAS... THAT IS, I-I THINK I... I MEAN, I FEEL THAT...



HYA, STEVIE! HOW YUH FEELIN', BUDDY? HEY, DID YUH HEAR WHUT'S GOIN' ON IN TOWN? THUH WHOLE TOWN'S... OH-OH! AM I INTERRUPTIN' SOMEPIN'?

NOT AT ALL! NOT AT ALL! NOT AT ALL!



NOW WHUT IN TARNATION'S GOT INTUH HER?

NEVER MIND, MULEY!... YES, I'VE HEARD WHAT'S GOING ON IN TOWN — AND IT'S TIME THE DURANGO KID SETTLED THE SCORE. AND THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO DO IT...!

I WANT YOU TO RIDE INTO TOWN AND GET THIS MESSAGE TO ROURKE: "I'M COMING FOR YOU AT NOON TOMORROW! IF YOU'RE ANY PART OF THE MAN YOU BRAG TO BE, YOU'LL SHOOT IT OUT WITH ME ALONE!" SIGN IT, "DURANGO."



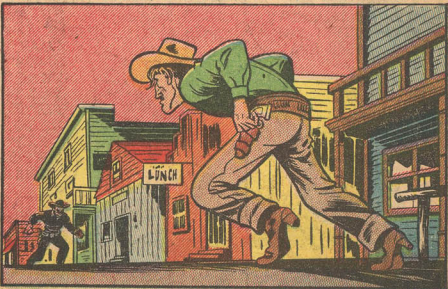
THE DURANGO KID

THE NEXT DAY — NOON!

HYAR COMES THUH DURANGO KID!
I SURE WISH HIM LUCK WITH THAT
DOG, ROURKE! KEEP THUH KIDS LOW,
MOMMA — THERE'S GOIN' TUH BE PLENTY
HOT LEAD FLOATIN' ROUND IN JEST A
FEW MINUTES!



AND AT THAT MOMENT, AT THE OTHER END OF THE STREET, ANOTHER LONE FIGURE COMES OUT OF THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE... IT IS ROURKE! THE TWO MEN WALK TOWARD EACH OTHER DOWN THE CENTER OF THE MAIN STREET, STEALTHY AND ALERT AS CATS!



I'M GOIN' TUH MAKE MINCE PIE OUTA YUH AN' HAVE YUH FER DINNER, DURANGO!

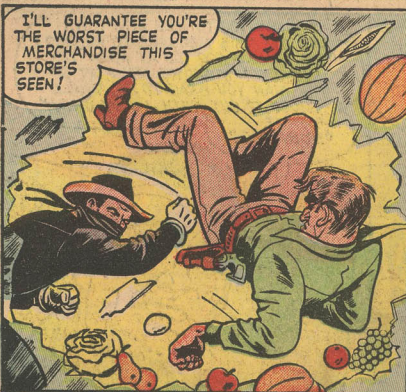
CUT THE BRAGGING, YOU FAKER — AND GRAB IRON!



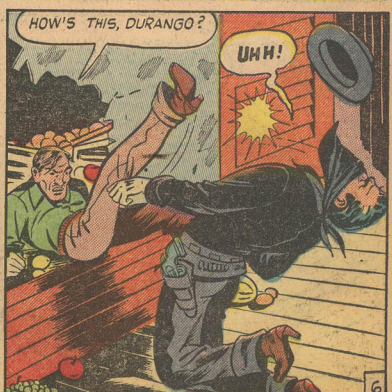
TWO LIGHTNING DRAWS!



A BULLET'S TOO CLEAN FOR YOU, ROURKE. NOW I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU THE LICKING THAT'S BEEN DUE YOU FOR A LONG TIME!



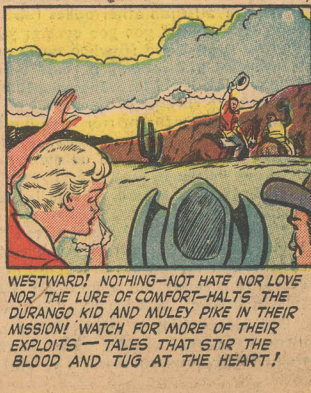
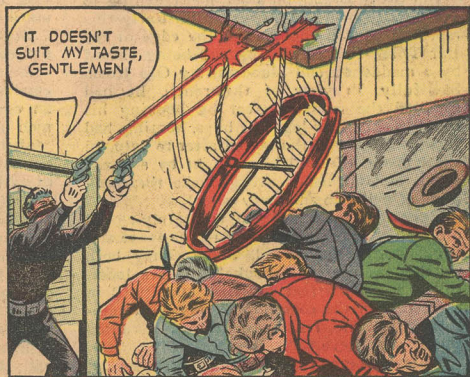
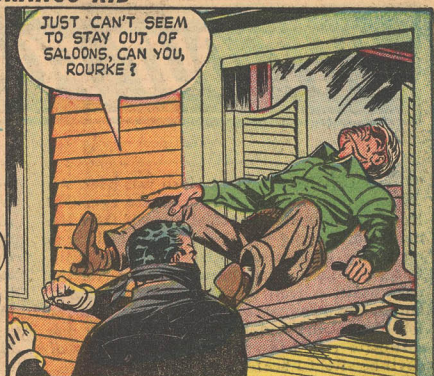
I'LL GUARANTEE YOU'RE THE WORST PIECE OF MERCHANDISE THIS STORE'S SEEN!



HOW'S THIS, DURANGO?

UHH!

THE DURANGO KID



CUT OUT FOR COURAGE

THE LEGEND of Old Horn was over. An enormous bull of indeterminate age, Old Horn had long ago detached himself from the herd and, obeying some ancient call, had taken up a lone man-hating existence in the hills. For years no one had been able to corral the wily beast. A trail of snapped lariats, gored horses and men marked his path. And now for some years, he had been left alone, no one caring to risk life and limb for that ton of devil-bewitched beef.

But Steve Brand, on a bet, had taken off to the hills to bring in the creature. Early this morning he had appeared at the edge of the Bar Three Ranch, chasing and being chased by a maddened and blood-thirsty Old Horn. Skillfully, in view of the ranch, he had tumbled the monster steer by hooking his lariat to the bull's leg. The boys, hooting, had jumped horse and thundered after to help. In short order, the bull was caught by a dozen ropes, and all hands dragged the thrashing hunk of evil into an empty corral.

Only after the corral gate was safely closed did Muley Pike saunter over to the fence and stand beside his friend, Steve. They both watched as the bull shook his traces loose, rolled up on his feet and then stood still in the center of the corral, quivering with helpless rage. The red eyes balefully studied Muley and Steve.

Muley scratched his head. "Dawgonnit!" he said, "now here yuh are covered with glory an' puttin' all tuh other pokes tuh shame an' Miss May lookin' goo-goo eyes at yuh!"

Steve turned and frowned down at his pal. "Now what kind of talk is that?"

"Aw!" Muley lifted his shoulders to his ears in a big shrug. "Why can't I be like you, Stevie? What's the matter with me, anyway? I'm skeered uv guns an' I'm skeered uv wild animules an' I'm skeered uv owlhoots. Cain't fight my weight in pussy cats!"

"Everybody's afraid, inside," Steve said softly.

"Now, they ain't," Muley retorted. "Jist me! I got a heart uv butter! Ain't never done nuthin' that turned out brave and dignified—everything comes out a joke. I'm jist plumb sick uv muhself this mawnin'!"

Old Horn charged then. Muley promptly turned and ran, putting small faith in the wood fence between them. The bull crashed

into the fence at the same time that Muley tripped and fell flat on his face. The fence rocked and shuddered, but held. Old Horn stood groggy, a trickle of blood creeping down into his eye. Hoots of laughter swept the yard as Muley got up, dusted himself off and stood looking at his feet, shame burning him up inside.

The cowhands crowded around Steve. "Lookee here, Stevie," said Crusty, "I'm willin tuh double muh money ef'n yuh're willin' tuh take on another bet. I says yuh can't stay sixty seconds on that critter!"

Steve grinned. "Lay out your money, you old codger!"

Amid the howling and the yahoo-ing of the cowhands, the bet was made. Muley watched, an ominous feeling growing in him, as the men prodded Old Horn into the chute.

Muley tried to imagine himself astride the animal, tried to imagine the feel of that ton of evil between his knees and the thought of it made him sick. He forced himself up to the corral, climbed the fence and waited.

Steve dropped onto Old Horn's back at the same moment the boys flung open the chute gate. For a split second the bull stood like outraged stone. Then, roaring like a hurricane's coming, he went hurtling into the corral, Steve clinging like a loose adhesive plaster to his back. The beast came to a stiff-legged halt, sent up a cloud of dust that obscured them both, and then came jackknifing through the cloud, crazy for blood. Muley's heart curdled. Crusty studied his watch. Finally, he called, "One minute, Dad blast! Time's up, Stevie! Git off, man—git off!"

Steve let go and jumped. He rolled, came up standing and went sprinting for the fence. The flashing hooves of the careening steer caught, somehow, on a branding iron that lay on the ground, caught it and hurled it into the air. There was the sickening *thunk* as it hit Steve on the back of the head. And suddenly, Muley and the others found themselves staring at Steve lying flat on his face, unconscious, in the center of the corral, while the bull, turning at the end of a run, stopped, lowered his head and studied the prostrate figure. They saw the muscles ripple along the bull's shoulders, saw the stomach gather for the charge, saw the horns level off like cannon a few inches above the ground.

THE DURANGO KID

Just how Muley got inside the corral, he never found out. There was a hot flash that ran through his body, partly fear, partly anger, partly the agonizing image of his friend helpless and in danger. But there he was in the corral, advancing upon Old Horn and shouting, "Come on, you old snickerin' critter—here I am! Here I am!"

Slowly, the bull turned his head. The red eyes met Muley's and it was like looking into the mouth of a furnace. The great nostrils flared like trumpets. Froth dripped from the corners of cruel lips. Muley's heart turned, quite suddenly, to stone. Then the bull charged Muley.

Muley held back the desire to run until the very last moment. Then he quickly stepped aside. The bull ripped past. Muley felt a sour wind on his face. "Please," he thought, "don't let me get sick and faint!" From the corner of his eyes he saw that Steve was moving, coming to, and that the boys were coming over the fence for him.

The bull skidded, scrambling, at the end of his run, arched around and came plunging for Muley again, howling as though in pain. Muley sidestepped, this time parting with a square foot of pants and the major part of his courage. He felt he would faint any moment. But yet he held on, for the boys had not yet got the groggy Steve over the fence.

He ducked another onslaught and at last he saw that Steve was being hauled over the fence. And then panic took hold of him completely. He knew that it would be wisest to wait and side-step. But knowledge is of small consequence when panic dictates, "Run!" Run he did, heading for the fence and taking, in his panic, the longest route. He heard the calls of "Duck, Muley—duck!" He heard the gathering thunder of hammering hooves behind him. And then he felt the jolt in the seat of his pants, stunning and hard. There was a brief glimpse of the great horns to either side and a hasty gladness that that was a good place for them to be, a sudden flash of the fence below, tumbling clouds, and then a quick sense that he was drowning and all was lost and gone.

They fished him, spitting and blowing, out of the water trough. And when they were sure he was only bruised, they howled with laughter, rolling over the ground and holding their bellies and mopping their eyes. Muley stood a moment, dripping wet, watching them laugh and it seemed to him that there was a hole in the bottom of his heart. He turned and stalked into the bunkhouse where he sat on his bunk and put his head in his arms.

Then there was a soft touch on his arm. Steve stood over him smiling. "You saved my life, Muley," he said. "Thanks, pardner!"

"An' even so," mourned Muley, "I managed to make a laughin' stock uv muhself! Cain't do nuthin' right! I git so scairt I don't know whut I'm doin'. I'm no good, I'm jist a fool!"

Steve bent and brought his face very close to Muley's. "Listen, Muley," he said, "there's only one kind of a fool—and that's the man who's *too dumb* to be afraid. But when a man's afraid and does what he has to do anyway—he's the real hero, the biggest kind of hero! You're a man I'd trust my life to, anytime, and I'm right proud to be your pal!"

Muley looked up. Then, slowly, a grin spread across his face. "Aw, shucks," he said.

THE END

Although the Chisholm Trail is famed in song and story, it was only the first of many trail herd passageways to Kansas and the railroads of the '70s and '80s. There were other trails, like the Western, the Chisum, the Texas and the Snake River. More than five million steers went up the trail to market in the score of years following the Civil War. Truly, the cattle ranches of the southwest can be said to have fed the nation!

* * *

The Colt revolver played a big part in the opening up and eventual development of the West. When it was first invented, however, it received little credit. It was only when Captain Walker of the Texas Rangers heard of the new type pistol and paid a visit to Samuel Colt that the "sixgun" came into its own. Walker shrewdly realized the value of such a weapon on the western plains. He made certain suggestions to the inventor as to how it might be improved. Colt was grateful for this assistance and named the resulting gun the "Walker Colt." With these weapons, the Texas Rangers proved themselves a scourge to the Comanche Indians.

* * *

The desert is believed to be a dead, dry, hot place where no living thing exists. This is far from the case with the deserts in the American Southwest. Great, towering cactus plants, the leafless greasewood, the yucca and ocotilla, form a lovely background to the sand. Big, red or white blossoms perfume the air in spring and early summer. Snakes and pack rats, chaparral cocks and lizards live their strange, lonely life under a temperature that can kill a man in a matter of hours; deadly to the uninitiated, the desert is beautiful to those who know it.

* * *

Dan Brand and Tipi

WOODSMEN OF THE NEW WORLD

ONE DAY IN 1754 AT FORT NECESSITY...*

LIEUTENANT WASHINGTON, SOME DAY WE'LL FREE THIS COUNTRY FROM TYRANNY! OTHER MEN FEEL THE SAME AS—HEY! WHAT'S THIS?

INJUNS SIR! TUSCARORAS ON THE WARPATH!



MURDER, HATE AND PASSION RAN HOT RIOT OVER THE PENNSYLVANIA BACKWOODS—AND HAD TO BE CONQUERED BEFORE THE GREAT UNTAMED FRONTIER COULD GROW. FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT FOR PEACE AND PROGRESS WERE THE IMMORTAL DAN BRAND AND TIFI, WHO FOUND THEMSELVES TEAMED UP WITH A YOUNG ARMY OFFICER NAMED GEORGE WASHINGTON, WHEN EVIL MEN BROUGHT DOWN **BLOOD ON THE FRONTIER!**

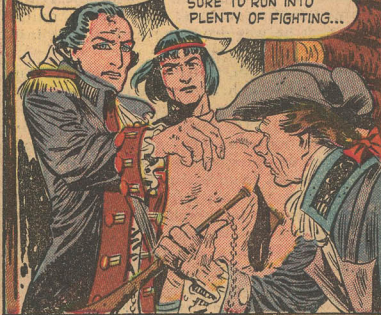
* FORT NECESSITY, NEAR PRESENT DAY UNIONTOWN, WAS THE FIRST COMMAND OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

ALL THE SETTLERS IN THE AREA HUSTLED TO THE STOCKADE AT MONONGAHELA BEND, FIGGERIN' T'MAKE A STAND THERE! BUT THEY NEED HELP OR THEY'RE DONE FER!

THEY'LL GET HELP...!

BUGLER! SOUND THE CALL TO ARMS!

JUST A MOMENT, LIEUTENANT! IF YOU TAKE THE REGULAR TRAILS, YOU'RE SURE TO RUN INTO PLENTY OF FIGHTING...



THE DURANGO KID

...WHICH WILL ONLY DELAY AND EXHAUST YOUR FORCES—HARMING YOUR MAIN OBJECTIVE OF REACHING THE STOCKADE QUICKLY WITH FRESH TROOPS!

YOU'RE QUITE RIGHT, DAN. WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?

TIPI AND I KNOW THE FORESTS WELL! LET US GO ON AHEAD AND BLAZE A NEW TRAIL FOR YOU TO FOLLOW— ONE THE INDIANS WON'T HAVE TO GUARD!

GO TO IT, DAN! WE'LL BE RIGHT ON YOUR HEELS!

BUT NOT TOO CLOSE, WE HOPE!

RIGHT, TIPI! WE'VE GOT TO MOVE FAST—MAYBE WE CAN SETTLE THIS AFFAIR BEFORE THE TROOPS GET THERE. AND PREVENT NEEDLESS SLAUGHTER ON BOTH SIDES!



DAN AND TIPI BLAZE A NEW TRAIL...

THIS WAY, DAN!

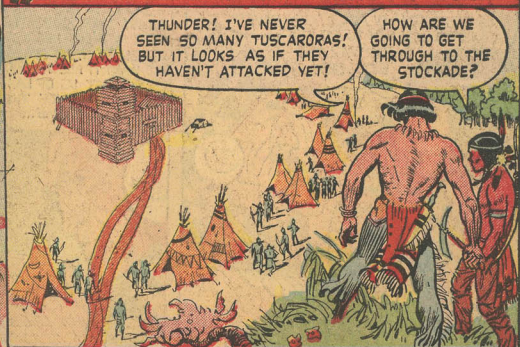
GOOD LAD, TIPI—STRAIGHT AS THE CROW FLIES!



AFTER A DAY AND A HALF OF BORING THROUGH THE WILDS...

THUNDER! I'VE NEVER SEEN SO MANY TUSCARORAS! BUT IT LOOKS AS IF THEY HAVEN'T ATTACKED YET!

HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET THROUGH TO THE STOCKADE?



THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY, TIPI! BOLDNESS DOES IT! LET'S GO, LAD!



THAT MUST BE THE CHIEF'S TENT UP AHEAD! THAT'S WHERE WE'RE GOING!

IF WE GET THAT FAR!

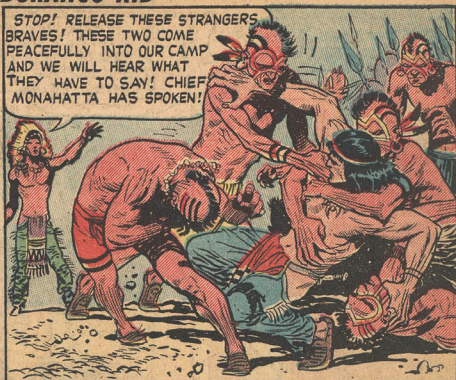


THE DURANGO KID



SEIZE THE INTRUDER!

WHO ARE THESE BOLD ONES?



STOP! RELEASE THESE STRANGERS, BRAVES! THESE TWO COME PEACEFULLY INTO OUR CAMP AND WE WILL HEAR WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY! CHIEF MONAHATTA HAS SPOKEN!



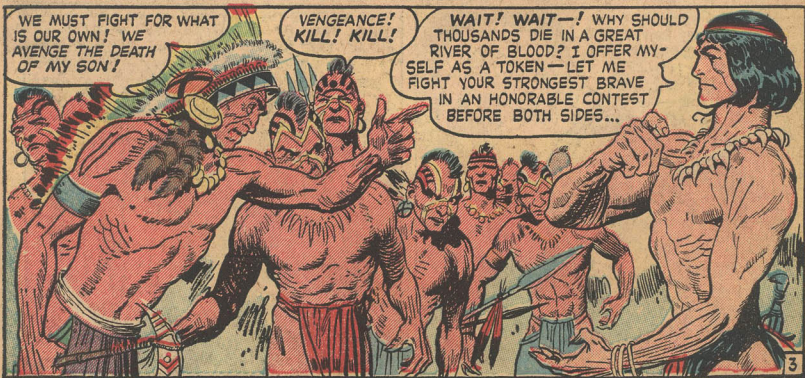
I AM DAN BRAND AND THIS IS TPI, A PRINCE OF THE CATAWBAS. WE LIVE AS BROTHERS-IN-PEACE! WE HAVE COME TO ASK YOU TO DO THE SAME WITH THE SETTLERS!



NO! THE WHITE MEN KILL US IN BLIND HATE OF OUR RED SKINS! THEY SLAUGHTER THE DEER WITHOUT NEED. THEY WILL NOT SHARE THE HUNTING GROUNDS, BUT WANT IT ALL TO THEMSELVES! THEY CHEAT US OF LANDS THAT WERE OURS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME...



WHEN MY OWN SON, LONELY FOX, APPROACHED YOUR SETTLERS TO TRADE SKINS, HE WAS MURDERED IN COLD BLOOD BY "RED" MURPHY! WE CAN ENDURE NO MORE!



WE MUST FIGHT FOR WHAT IS OUR OWN! WE AVENGE THE DEATH OF MY SON!

VENGEANCE! KILL! KILL!

WAIT! WAIT—! WHY SHOULD THOUSANDS DIE IN A GREAT RIVER OF BLOOD? I OFFER MYSELF AS A TOKEN—LET ME FIGHT YOUR STRONGEST BRAVE IN AN HONORABLE CONTEST BEFORE BOTH SIDES...

THE DURANGO KID

SHOULD I LOSE—THEN THE DEATH OF LONELY FOX WILL BE AVENGED! AND SHOULD I WIN—I PLEDGE TO LEAD THE WHITE SETTLERS IN WAYS OF PEACE! AGREED?

AGREED! YOU ARE A BRAVE MAN AND I MUST MEET YOUR TEST OF HONOR! BY MY ANCESTORS—IF YOU BEAT TAWNY WOLF, THEN INDEED YOU ARE THE MAN WHO CAN BRING PEACE!



HURRY, TPI—GO TO THE STOCKADE AND TELL THEM ABOUT THIS AGREEMENT. WHATEVER HAPPENS—THEY MUST HOLD THEIR FIRE!

GOOD LUCK, DAN—MY BROTHER!

BUT—ON THE RAMPARTS OF THE STOCKADE...

LOOKEE, "RED" 'TIS A INJUN—A LAD!

DON'T SHOOT—YET! I'VE GOT OTHER PLANS FER THIS REDSKIN!



ALL RIGHT, MEN—LET 'IM THROUGH!

I HAVE A MESSAGE...

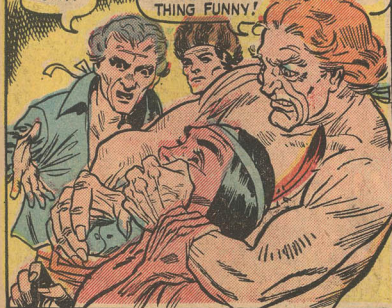


WAIT, RED—LET'S HEARKEN TO WHAT THE LAD'S GOT TO SAY!

I AIN'T TRUSTIN' ANY REDSKIN! WE HOLD 'IM FER HOSTAGE—JIST IN CASE THEM INJUNS TRY ANYTHING FUNNY!

HEY! C'MON UP HERE, QUICK—THEY GOT A WHITE MAN OUT THERE!

BY BLAZES!—EF'N THEY TOUCH THAT WHITE MAN, I'LL KILL THIS HERE INJUN!



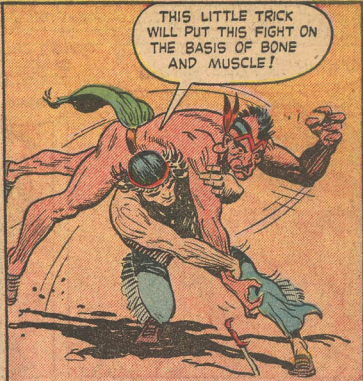
THE DURANGO KID

AND THIS IS WHAT THE SETTLERS SEE —

HERE GOES! I HOPE TAPI GOT THROUGH WITH HIS MESSAGE! IF THOSE FIREBRANDS START SHOOTING—EVERYTHING'S RUINED!



THIS LITTLE TRICK WILL PUT THIS FIGHT ON THE BASIS OF BONE AND MUSCLE!



MIGHTY QUICK ON THE REBOUND, TAWNY WOLF!



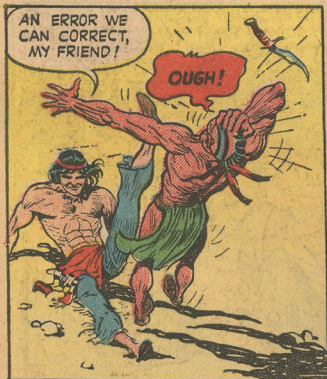
LET'S TRY ANOTHER BOUNCE!



YOUR ERROR, DAN BRAND!



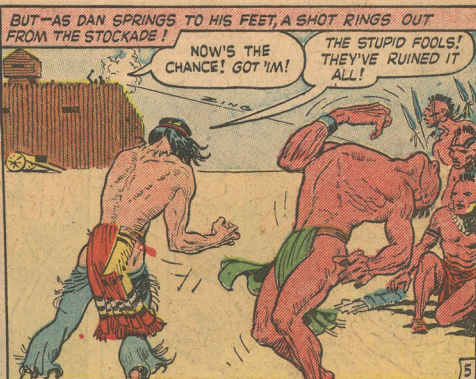
AN ERROR WE CAN CORRECT, MY FRIEND!



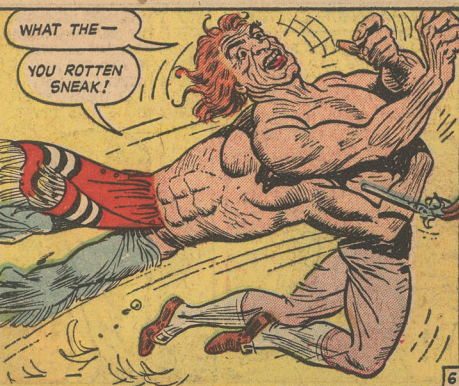
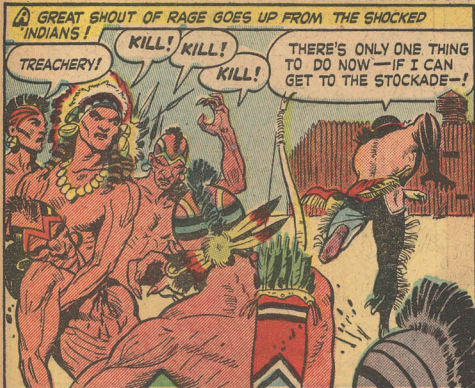
BUT—AS DAN SPRINGS TO HIS FEET, A SHOT RINGS OUT FROM THE STOCKADE!

NOW'S THE CHANCE! GOT 'EM!

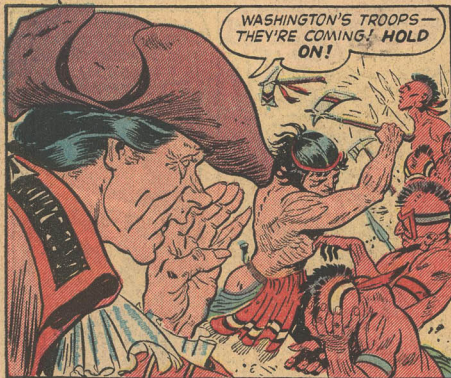
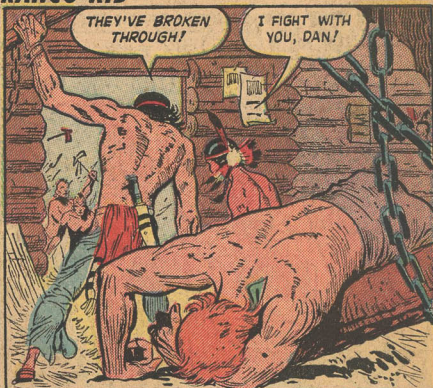
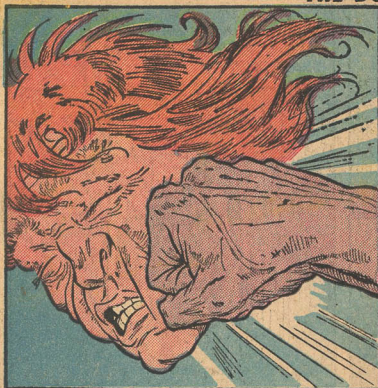
THE STUPID FOOLS! THEY'VE RUINED IT ALL!



THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID





Charles Starrett, star of Columbia's "Durango Kid" western movies.

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