

DELL  
7 CENTS

NO. 48

10c

# Johnny Mack Brown

5000

## Comics

2/13



# California's Desert Posse



Throughout the remote and unsettled regions of the West, inaccessible by automobile, the law still takes to the saddle.

Typical of this is California's famed desert posse. From the San Bernardino Sheriff's office, these rough-riding lawmen ride into

the desert on the trail of outlaws, or to the rescue of persons lost in the burning heat.

Though the years have brought with them many changes in western living, the mounted posse of armed lawmen is still of vital importance to the law and order of the West.



# JOHNNY BLACK BROWN

The  
RACE TRACK  
TRICK

EASY BOY! WHAT DO YOU MEAN SAYING LIKE THAT? I DON'T SEE ANYTHING WRONGS!

NOW I SEE WHAT'S WORRYIN' YOU, REBEL! IT'S A MAN!

AND HE'S BEEN KNIFED IN THE BACK! THE POOR FELLOW DON'T HAVE A CHANCE... BUT WHAT'S THIS?

SO HE WAS A RAILROAD SURVEYOR? I DIDN'T KNOW THEY WERE WORKING THIS FAR SOUTH! BUT THIS VALLEY IS A LOGICAL RIGHT-OF-WAY!

HEY! THAT FELLOW'S ABOUT TO GO OVER THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF! COME ON, REBEL!



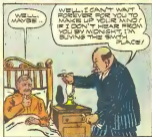














SO YOU CAN BREED THROUGH - BE BORN FOR STOCK WORK, ANDERS?

WHY, UH - CERTAINLY! WHAT ELSE?



SKY AS I THOUGHT! ANDERS DOESN'T KNOW A THING ABOUT BREEDING! HE'S NOT BUYING THIS RANCH FOR THE HORSES!



I'M GOING TO FIND OUT WHAT'S BEHIND ALL THIS, MISS PATT! AS SOON AS I REED EYES, I'LL LOOK FOR YOUR HORSE!

THANKS, JOHNNY!



THERE, BOY! YOU LOOK A SIGHT BETTER! I WISH I COULD CLEAN UP THE TROUBLES HERE AS EASILY AS I MAKE YOUR COAT SHINE!



LITTLE LATER...

ALL RIGHT, BEOWN! COME ALONG AND DON'T MAKE ANY TROUBLE!

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?



I DON'T TRUST YOU FROM THE START, BEOWN! NOW THAT YOU HAVE TURNED OUT TO BE A THIEF, IT DOESN'T SURPRISE ME AT ALL! HEAD ON INTO THE HOUSE!



THAT'S HIM! THAT'S THE MAN! I KNOW HIM THOUGH HE DID WEAR A MASK! HE TOOK MY MONEY AND MY RINGS!

I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE IT WAS JOHNNY!



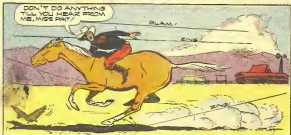
AND THIS TAKES CARE OF YOU, FLY!



REBEL! HERE, BOY!



DON'T DO ANYTHING TILL YOU HEAR FROM ME, MISS PATT!



HE'S OUT OF RANGE NOW! LET'S GO GET HIM!

I'M GOING, TOO!



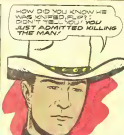
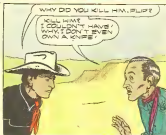
YOU CAN'T GO WITH THEM, MISS! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!

I DON'T CARE! I CAN'T BELIEVE JOHNNY IS GUILTY! I'VE GOT TO FIND OUT FOR MYSELF!













SINCE THE VALLEY IS THE ONLY LOGICAL ROUTE, HE KNEW HE COULD DEMAND A TRENDSOME PRICE FOR IT, ONCE HE OWNED IT! SO HE HIRED RUP!



RUP PULLED ALL THE NASTY LITTLE TRICKS TO MAKE YOUR RANCH SEEM JUNKED, MAKING IT EASY FOR ANDERS TO BUY THE SPREAD CHEAPLY!

"N DRAW CANYON" ANDERS MADE ME. HE SAID HE'D TELL JAVIS."

NOW, WHERE'S THE BODY, RUP?



WHY YOU DIRTY, SNAKIN'!

WANT A WAUTE / STOR RED? RUP ALSO PALMED THAT ROLL OF BILLS ON ME!



YOU MEAN YOU DIDN'T TAKE THAT MONEY!

COURSE NOT, RED? IT WAS OBVIOUS ANDERS TAKED THE ROBBERY WHEN HE RETURNED WEARING HIS GOLD WATCH AND CHAIN! ANY THER WOULD HAVE TAKEN THAT FIRST!



AND HE WANTED YOU OUT OF THE WAY, JOHNNY, CAUSE HE WAS AFRAID YOU'D KEEP US FROM SELLING!

RIGHT, PAT? ALSO HE HAD RUP KILL THE RAILROAD SURVEYOR BECAUSE HE WAS AFRAID THE RAILROAD WOULD COME TO YOU BEFORE HE COULD BUY THE RANCH!



JOHNNY ANDERS IS WITH RATHER NOW! LET'S GET BACK!

RED, YOU BRING RUP IN YOUR ROSE, AND MAKE HIM WALK!







When the two reflections fell across the swirling river water, Ned looked up in surprise. Two men, both dark and sour-faced—probably brothers—sat motionless in their saddles, staring down at him from the riverbank.

"Howdy!" the tallest of the pair called out. "Pannin' for gold?"

Ned straightened up and turned around. The strangers' horses, he noted instantly, were streaked with sweat and matted with dust. The shorter of the men had his right thumb hooked in his gun belt, near the holster. The other glared impatiently, then tried again.

"Any luck, old-timer?"

Ned's wrinkled face remained impassive, but his eyes roamed over every inch of the men, their horses, their equipment.

Suddenly his eyes opened wide. Then, just as quickly, they crinkled back into their usual squint.

"WELL?" the tall stranger's smile evaporated in a surge of rage. "Speak up, you old fool!" he shouted, his right hand fingering his gun butt. "Answer me!"

Ned's face was expressionless.

The tall stranger leaned forward in his saddle and whipped out his gun. "All right!" he yelled down at Ned. "I'm through playin' nicey-nicey!"

Deliberately, he thumbed back the hammer of his six-shooter and aimed down at Ned. "I just want you to tell me one thing! And, if you don't—!" He left the sentence hanging in mid-air, punctuated by a wave of his gun.

"Now tell me, you old geezer," he said softly, stressing every word. "IS THIS THE TRAIL TO THE BORDER?"

Ned stared at him, then pulled a

sand-smeared plug of tobacco from his shirt pocket. Biting off a small hunk, he replaced the plug. Then he stared back up at the man, chewing calmly.

The tall stranger's lips tightened, white with anger. He raised his gun abruptly, pulling down on Ned with a slow, steady motion. "I'm gain' to KILL you, old man," he declared through clenched teeth.

"Wait, Deuce!" the other man shouted. "WAIT!"

"What for?" his companion asked, without taking his eyes off Ned. "I'm mad! KILLIN' mad!"

"Maybe he CAN'T talk, Deuce! Maybe he can't even hear!" The shorter man snorted. "Sure looks deaf and dumb to me!"

The tall stranger hesitated. He glared down at Ned for a moment.

"We're in enough trouble already, Deuce!" the other persisted. "Don't make it any worse! Come on!"

Slowly, reluctantly, the tall man put his gun away. "You're lucky, Mister," he growled at Ned, "MIGHTY lucky!" Turning to the other man, he spurred his horse. "Let's go!"

Ned stood peering after them as they rode down the steep trail toward the valley beyond. Then, after a good five minutes, he went back to work.

He was still there when Sheriff Jim Weston rode up late that afternoon, followed by a posse of almost a dozen men. "Hi, Ned!" the Sheriff yelled cordially as they all drew up at the riverbank.

Ned nodded silently, by way of greeting, waved at the posse and sloshed over to the edge of the river. He stood there, waiting.

"I know it's no use tryin' to chew the

“cud with you, Ned!” the Sheriff grinned. “Talkin’ to you is always like talkin’ to an adobe wall!”

His grin faded. “Hate to tell you this—but your old prospectin’ pal, Lefty Dawson, is dead! Murdered! Shot in the back!”

Ned moved his head to aim a stream of tobacco juice into the river, then turned back, his face still expressionless.

“I know how you must feel,” the Sheriff continued, “’cause I know how close you two’ve been nigh onto thirty years! And, Ned, I just want to say—” The Sheriff choked up, then pulled at his nose.

When he spoke again, his voice was determinedly rough and official. “But we know who it was, Ned—them Barker brothers! Deuce and Lefe Barker! One of ‘em dropped a letter out of his pocket!” The Sheriff jerked at his gun belt. “So don’t worry—we’ll get ‘em! They got about five hours’ start, but—”

He broke off, following Ned’s eyes. “What? Oh! I get it—those tracks! The Barkers’ve been here! They must’ve gone on down this trail!”

No one spoke for a few minutes. Then the Sheriff said softly, “The Forks, Ned—did you tell ‘em which trail to take there?”

Before the old man could reply, one of the posse yelled over. “What Forks, Sheriff?”

“The Forks at Dry Run,” the Sheriff

answered, still watching Ned. “One trail,” he explained, “goes across the border, to Mexico. The other one hasn’t been used for years. Used to go right through a swamp—only the swamp took over. Now, that trail goes through the worst quicksand swamp in Texas—and you’d never know it!”

He raised his voice. “DID YOU, Ned—did you tell ‘em which trail to take? If you sent ‘em into that quicksand, it’s MURDER!”

Ned held up a gnarled hand. “Thought I was deaf and dumb, they did!” His voice was hoarse and cracked.

“The tall one,” he declared slowly, jaw muscles pulled tight, “was wearin’ Lefty’s ring! And I knew Lefty wouldn’t give up that there ring of his’n—less he was plumb dead!”

Ned looked straight into the Sheriff’s eyes. “No, I didn’t send ‘em into the quicksand—and I didn’t send ‘em to Mexico. I didn’t tell ‘em WHICH trail to take!”

He smiled gently. “Lefty was my only friend on this earth. But there’s a bigger Judge out there in the mountains, Sheriff—bigger’n me, or your badge, or your town judge. He already decided which trail them varmints would take at Dry Run!”

Ned scratched at the back of his neck. “You can go see for yourself, Sheriff. But me, I’m sure! I just KNOW which trail them killers took—AND IT WARN’T TO MEXICO!”



# Johnny Mack Brown and THE Glass SCAVENGER

HEH, NOTHIN' LIKE A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP IN A HOTEL ROOM, I ALWAYS SAY! ...HEY, WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

AFTER A NIGHT SPENT IN THE GOLDEN NUGGET HOTEL IN TETON, JOHNNY MACK BROWN PREPARED TO LEAVE...

LESSO ME! OUCH! HELP!

SOUNDS LIKE SOME POOR HONKERS IN TROUBLE! MAYBE I'D BETTER OFFER HIM A HAND! HEH...THE DOOR'S LOCKED, I'LL HAVE TO BASH IT!

CRASH!

WHAT IN BLAZES!

NO! DON'T HIT ME AGAIN! I SWEAR I HAVEN'T GOT THE MAP!

WHO ASKED YOU T' BUTT IN? ... YOWW!

TWO AGAINST ONE SHT MY IDEA OF FAIR ODDS!

I'LL TAKE CARE O' THE MAD HONKERS SLEEPS! / OPEN TH' HALL DOOR!

YEAH, OPEN IT FAST, MISTER!



AND HAVE YOU LOST THE MAP?

OF COURSE NOT! I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMEONE TRYING TO GET INTO MY ROOM LAST NIGHT SO I HAD THE MAP IN A BOTTLE! LOOK OVER HERE!

THEN I TIED A STRING AROUND IT AND LOWERED IT ONTO A PILE OF EMPTY BOTTLES BEHIND THE SALOON DOWNSTAIRS, JUST BELOW MY WINDOW!

WHAT PILE OF OLD BOTTLES, DARWIN?

WELL? GREAT SCOTT, ALL THE BOTTLES HAVE DISAPPEARED!

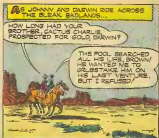
MINUTES LATER...

WHAT HAPPENED TO TH' BOTTLES? WELL, IF IT'S ANYBODY'S BUSINESS, A JUNK MAN COMES BY EVERY MORNIN' AN' CARTS 'EM AWAY! I'M DOBBONS GLAD T' GET 'EM!

WHERE DOES HE TAKE THE BOTTLES, BARKEEP?

AW, TH' OLD COOT'S. BUILDS HIMSELF A BOTTLE HOUSE OUT ON TH' DESERT ABOUT FIVE MILES FROM HERE! HE'S TIED IN TH' HEAD, IF YOU ASK ME!

C'MON, DARWIN, LET'S GO OUT AN' SEE TH' BOTTLE 'SCAVENGER!







HOLD ON, OLD-TIMER! WE WANT T' INSPECT THEM BOTTLES YUH POKED UP BEHIND TH' GOLDEN NUGGET!

WHAT FOR? THEY'RE ALL EMPTY!



ONE OF 'EM AIN'T EMPTY! IT'S GOT A PEECE O' PAPER INSIDE!

DO TELL! AN' WHAT'M I S'POSED T' DO WHILE YUH PEER INTO EACH BLAMED BOTTLE? I GOT WORK T' DO!



HAW, WE GOT A QUICKER WAY T' LOOK FOR TH' NOTE!

HEY, DAD, BLAME IT, STOP!

SURE, WE'LL BLAME 'EM ALL!



WOH! SOUNDS LIKE A BATTLE ROYAL AT THE BOTTLE HOUSE, DARWIN! LET'S TAKE A HAND!

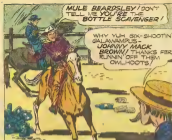
IT'S GARP HAGEN AND G-URPLE! THEY MUST KNOW ABOUT THE BOTTLE!



BLAST YUH, Y' THEVIN' VIVANTS! YOU BROKE ALL MY BOTTLES!

LET'S GET OUT O' HERE! THAT COWBOY MEANS BUSINESS!

WONDERS WHAT HAPPENED TO TH' MAP! IT WASN'T IN ANY O' TH' BUSTED BOTTLES!



MULE BEARDSLEY! DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE THE BOTTLE SCRAVENS!

WHY YUH SHOOTIN' SALAMUNDUS - JOHNNY MACK BROWN! THANKS FER BLINN' OFF THEM GUN-FOOTS!



WHAT'S YORE FRIEND DOIN'?

LOOKIN' FOR THE SAME THING THOSE TWO GUN-GLUCKS WERE AFTER--A MAP WE HAD IN A BOTTLE LAST NIGHT!



WELL, I GIVE UP! I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MAP!

YOU SURE YOU DON'T AND ANY OTHER BOTTLES YULE?

WELL, I FOUND TH' ONE ON TH' TABLE!



I SALVAGED THAT BOTTLE 'CAUSE SOMEBODY USED IT FER A CANDLE HOLDER! AIN'T TH' WAX ON TH' GEESE PURTY?

THAT'S IT! IT'S THE SAME BOTTLE FROM MY HOTEL ROOM!



I EVEN STUCK A CANDLE IN IT!

GARWIN, WHY THE HOGGINS DON'T YOU SAY YOU USED A CANDLE BOTTLE?

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? A BOTTLE'S A BOTTLE! HOW'LL WE GET TH' MAP OUT?



LET ME SHOW YUH TH' EASHEST WAY!

THERE IT IS! THE MAP!

GRAB IT AN' LET'S HEAD FOR THE HOGGINS!



KEEP 'EM COVERED SHUFFLE, WHILE I  
HAVE A LOOK INSIDE TH' MINE! IF THERE'S  
SIGN OF GOLD, WE'LL GET 'EM OFF 'EM FRONTO!

YOU CAN'T JUMP TH' CLAIM,  
CARP HAGEN! BY LAW, IT BE-  
LONGS TO DARWIN HERE, AND  
HE CAN PROVE IT!

SHUT UP, BROWN! CARP KILLED  
CACTUS CHARLIE AN' HE CAN DO  
TH' SAME TO TH' REST OF 'EM ON!



HEY, THIS WING A  
BLAKE! THERE AINT  
NO SIGN OF IT BEIN'  
WORKED BY...!



HE'S DEAD! THE  
MINE WAS BOBBED  
T' BLOW UP THE  
FIRST PERSON  
TO GO IN!

SOMETHIN'  
TELLS ME  
CACTUS  
CHARLIE BUSHED  
OUT A PLOT TO  
KILL HIS OWN  
BROTHER!



AINT NOTHIN'  
LEFT O' CARP HAGEN!  
TH' TUNNEL WAS MINED  
ALL RIGHT WITH  
PYNANITE!

THAT'S IT!  
THAT'S WHY WE  
SENT 'EM THE MAP!  
WE WANTED TO  
KILL 'EM BECAUSE  
I WOULDN'T  
FINANCE HIS  
CRAZY VENTURES!



THAT'S WHAT  
CHARLIE MEANT  
BY TH' WORDS  
WHAT'S MINE IS  
MINED!

YEAH, CHARLIE SET A TRAP.  
ALL RIGHT... GUESS HE  
SPENT A LOT OF THE FIG-  
URN' IT OUT! BUT I'LL GET  
WITH ALL HIS FIGURN, HE  
NEVER THOUGHT HE'D  
CATCH HIS OWN  
MURDERER!



# MURDER *in the* DARK



A SHORT TIME LATER AT  
THE S-BAR

SOUNDS LIKE POOR OLD  
CHARLEY BARNES, ALL RIGHT!

WHAT TIME WAS ALL THIS?

WELL, I'M NOT QUITE  
SURE! ALL I KNOW IS I RODE  
STRAIGHT HERE AFTER  
FINDIN' HIM!

HAHAHA! YOU  
GOT HERE 'BOUT  
MIDNIGHT AN' IT'S  
A THREE-HOUR  
RIDE... 'BOUT  
NINE, I'D  
RECKON! -

I WAS JUST  
THINKIN' ABOUT  
MAKIN' CAMP  
FOR THE NIGHT  
...WHEN I HEARD  
THE SHOT!

AND YOU RODE  
STRAIGHT UP  
TO THE CABIN?

THAT'S RIGHT!  
I THOUGHT THERE  
MIGHT HAVE  
BEEN AN  
ACCIDENT! THEN  
I HEARD SOME-  
ONE RIDIN' AWAY!

AND WHEN I WENT INSIDE, THERE  
WAS THIS OLD MAN, SPRAWLED  
OUT ON THE FLOOR... DEAD!!

AND THE STRONGBOX  
WAS ON THE FLOOR?

YES, RIGHT BESIDE  
HIM...  
EMPTY!













## The Prospector's Burro

**P**RACTICALLY ALL OF THE PROSPECTORS OR OLD-TIME "DESERT RATS," WHO ROAM THE WILD AND DESOLATE COUNTRY OF THE SOUTHWEST IN SEARCH OF GOLD OR OTHER PRECIOUS MINERALS, USE BURROS FOR PACK ANIMALS. THEY ARE PARTICULARLY SUITED FOR THIS PURPOSE. THE BURRO IS AN EXTREMELY HARDY ANIMAL. HE IS CAPABLE OF TRAVELING

GREAT DISTANCES WITHOUT WATER AND WILL THRIVE ON THE SCANTY DESERT VEGETATION WHERE A HORSE WOULD STARVE TO DEATH. HE CAN CARRY HUGE LOADS AND NEVER SEEMS TO TIRE. THE BURRO'S HOOFS ARE HARD AND HE DOES NOT REQUIRE SHOES, EVEN WHEN GOING THROUGH MALARIA OR LAVA ROCK. AND THE BURRO IS A FAITHFUL ANIMAL. HE SELDOM NEEDS TO BE HOBLED OR TIED UP WHEN CAMP IS MADE. HE CAN BE TURNED LOOSE TO GRAZE AND HE ALWAYS RETURNS TO CAMP, ESPECIALLY IF HE IS GIVEN A HANDFUL OF BARLEY WHEN TURNED OUT. MOST BURROS ARE NOT VERY BIG, USUALLY WEIGHING AROUND FOUR HUNDRED POUNDS, BUT OCCASIONALLY

A MUCH LARGER ONE IS FOUND. THESE BIG FELLOWS MAKE FINE-SADDLE ANIMALS. THE BURRO HAS A SMOOTH, EASY GAIT. THERE ARE STILL A LOT OF WILD BURROS ROAMING THE DESERT TO THE SOUTH OF DEATH VALLEY.



