

BELL

NO. 533

10¢

Johnny Mack Brown

**His gun
brought
justice
to a
lawless
trail**



RIDING on CHEESE



Division agents of the Overland Stagecoach Lines constantly reminded their drivers to have stagecoach axles greased at every station. This was to prevent wheels from locking when they became hot from the rough ride.



Occasionally someone forgot. One driver and his passengers found themselves stranded when the wheels of the stage became sizzling hot and locked solidly.



When the frozen parts had cooled, the driver removed the wheels and inspected the axle—it was bone dry, and there was not a drop of grease available on the stage.



Not relishing a long hike to the next station, one passenger came up with a bright idea! He had a large piece of cheese—and offered it as a substitute for the grease.



The axles were coated with cheese, and the coach rolled into the station without a trace of smoke. The passengers had been spared a long walk—by a piece of cheese!

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JOHNNY MACK BROWN

and the
TRAIL PIRATES

JOHNNY MACK BROWN IS RIDING WESTWARD, RETURNING HOME FROM A SCOUTING TRIP FOR THE ARMY...

A BUSHWACKER! LOOKS LIKE HE HIT ONE OF THOSE TRAILS!

BLAM!



QUICKLY JOHNNY RETURNS THE FIRE OF THE ESCAPING GUNMAN...

I THINK I WOUND HIM!



NO USE CHASING HIM, REBEL! HE'LL BE FAR AWAY BY THE TIME WE CROSS THE CANYON! LET'S SEE WHAT WOUND HE DID!



I SAW THE SHOOTING AND TRIED TO STOP THE BUSHWACKER... BUT HE GOT AWAY!

HE SHOT OUR GUN! FOR SURE IT'S PRETTY SERIOUS!

THE STRANGER'S A FRIEND! YOU CAN PUT DOWN YOUR GUNS!

WELL, I'LL LIVE, BUT HE'LL BE LAID UP FOR A WHILE! WE'LL CARRY HIM TO MY WAGON!







MEANWHILE, AT THE OTHER END OF THE CAMP...

EVERYTHING'S SET LIKE WE
PLANNED, JOE! THE WAGON'S
THE ONE WITH THE STAR ON
THE SIDE!

I'LL HANDLE THE GUARD!
WOL HIT THE WAGON SPUD!
LET'S GO!



JOE SLIPS NOISSELESSLY TOWARD THE GUARD...



THAT'LL KEEP YOU QUIET
FOR A LONG TIME, MISTER!



AT THE SAME TIME, IN DOC'S WAGON...

HE'S NOT THE DOC! MUST BE
THE GUIDE! JOE DIDN'T
FINISH HIM, AFTER ALL!



THIS'LL MAKE SURE HE
DOESN'T SEE ANYTHING
... IF HE WAKES UP!









WHY'S SHOOTING??
WHAT'S GOING ON??

FOUND TWO THIEVES AT
DOC'S WAGON! THEY'RE
GETTING AWAY!

GET 'EM!
COME ON!



MOMENTS LATER...

THERE THEY GO!

WE CAN'T CATCH 'EM
NOW! THEY'VE GOT
'OOD BAG & START!



WE'D BETTER
SEE HOW DOC
AND LANK ARE!

AND FIND OUT IF
ANYTHING WAS
STOLEN!



I'M PRETTY SURE ONE WAS THE
BUSHWHACKER I WISHED THIS
AFTERNOON! HIS LEFT ARM WAS
IN A SLING!



DID YOU SEE
WHO HIT YOU,
DOC?

NO! WHAT
ABOUT YOU,
LANK?

THE GUNTS HOOKED ME...
BLANKET OVER MY HEAD
... DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING...



IT'S SAFE! BROWN
DROVE THE WARDEN'S
MONEY AWAY BEFORE THEY
FOUND IT!!

FOUND
WHAT?

MIGHT AS WELL
TELL HIM, DAVE!
HE SEARCHED IT
FOR US!!



OUR MONEY! WE ALL SOLD
WHAT WE OWNED IN CALIF.
AND POOLED THE CASH TO
BUILD OUR COMMUNITY
SETTLEMENT IN CALIFORNIA!



WE NOTED TO HIDE IT
HERE : BUT WE'D
BETTER MOVE IT
NOW!

NO! THAT'S WHAT
THE THIEVES WILL
EXPECT YOU TO DO!
LEAVE IT IS!



HOW MANY PEOPLE
KNOW THE
HIDING PLACE?

ALL THE MEN... EXCEPT
LUKE! HE WAS JUST
HISSED FOR THE "JOB"
BUT DON'T TELL THE
WOMEN AND CHILDREN!



THEN ONE OF THE MEN
MURDERED! HE WORKING
WITH THE THIEVES!
THEY KNOW EXACTLY
WHERE THE MONEY
WAS HIDDEN!

OH, NO! I CAN'T
BELIEVE ANYONE
IN THIS OUTFIT
IS CRACKED!



OH, NO! I CAN'T
BELIEVE ANYONE
IN THIS OUTFIT
IS CRACKED!

I WILL! BUT DON'T
MENTION YOUR SUSPICIONS
ABOUT A TRAITOR! YOU'LL
THROW THE WHOLE OUTFIT
INTO A PANIC!

JUST BEFORE DAWN...

OUR MONEY'S SAFE!
WE'LL START MOVING AT SUNRISE
I'LL ACT AS GUIDE TILL LUKE'S
WELL ASK!

JAYBEE BROWN'LL
TAKE THE JOB! HE
KNOWS THIS COUNTRY!

GOOD IDEA!



YOU HEARD 'EM,
BROWN! WHAT
DO YOU SAY?

I'M HEADING YOUR
BOY... SO I'LL BE
GLAD TO GUIDE YOU
WHE' LUKE'S
LAIP UP!

I'LL DO IT ON THESE CONDITIONS—
MY WORD MUST BE FINAL AS TO THE
TRAIL WE FOLLOW AND THE PLACES
WE CAMP! AND I'LL DO ALL THE
MEAT HUNTING!

THAT'S FINE
WITH US!

YOU'RE THE
TRAIL BOSS,
JOHNNY!



THE NEXT DAY...

THIS IS GOOD GAMB COUNTRY!
I'M GOING AFTER FRESH MEAT!
FOLLOW THE TRAIL AND I'LL
CATCH UP BEFORE SUNDOWN!

HOW ABOUT SOME OF
OUR TRYIN' OUR LUCK
AT HUNTIM'?



NO! ORDER EVERYBODY TO STAY
CLOSE TO THE WAGON! THIS
IS WAGON COUNTRY! MEAT-HUNTING
IS PART OF *MY* JOB!



JOHNNY RETURNS TO THE WAGONS LATE THAT AFTERNOON...

IS DOC INSIDE WITH LUKE?

NOPE! HE'S SOME HUNTIN' FOR SOMETHIN'! HE TOLD ME TO WATCH LUKE!



DIDN'T DAVIS TELL EVERYBODY TO STAY CLOSE TO THE WAGONS?

I DON'T KNOW! I SAW HIM RIDIN' OFF INTO THE WOODS WITH HIS HUNTIN' GEAR!



HI, JOHNNY! I SEE WE BOTH HAD LUCK! YOU FOUND MEAT ... AND I FOUND THESE MEDICAL HERBS IN THE WOODS! I KEEP THEM FOR TEA AND PAINKILLERS!



Months Later...

DAVIS! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

NOT FAR! I WAS LOOKIN' FOR SMALL GAME! DIDN'T SEE ANYTHIN' WORTH SHOOTIN'!



MY ORDERS WERE FOR NOBODY TO LEAVE THE TRAIN!

YOU CAN'T GET AWAY WITH THAT, DROWN!



AFTER CHAP IS MADE THAT NIGHT, JOHNNY CALLS A COUNCIL...

I'M SORRY TO LEAVE YOU, FOLKS! BUT I WON'T BE RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING YOU SAFELY WHEN MY INSTRUCTIONS ARE DISOBEYED!





I'VE GIVEN DAVIS A MARKED MAP TO FOLLOW! BUT LET ME WARN YOU AGAIN... THIS IS INDIAN AND OUTLAW COUNTRY! SO BE ON GUARD CONSTANTLY! GOOD LUCK!



WE'LL CIRCLE BACK LATER AND KEEP WATCH, KID! IF EITHER DAVIS OR DOC WONT "MINTING" TO MEET THOSE THIEVES... THEY MAY TRY AGAIN TONIGHT!



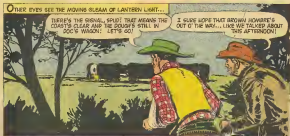
LATE THAT NIGHT, JOHNNY WATCHES CAMP FROM A HIDDEN KNOLL...

ALL IS DARK, EXCEPT FOR A DIM LIGHT IN BROWN PEEDE'S WAGON...



STILL LATER...

SOMEBODY'S SHEDDING A LIGHTED LANTERN! LOOKS LIKE A SIGNAL! YOU STAY HERE, KID!



OTHER EYES SEE THE MOVING GLEAM OF LANTERN LIGHT...

THERE'S THE SIGNAL, SPUD! THAT MEANS THE COAST'S CLEAR AND THE BOYS'S STILL IN DOC'S WAGON! LET'S GO!

I GIVE HOPE THAT BROWN HORNET'S OUT O' THE WAY... LIKE WE TALKED ABOUT THIS AFTERNOON!

JOHNNY MOVES NONCHALANTLY THROUGH THE SHADOWS TOWARD DOC BURE'S WAGON...



LIKE! IT'S ME... JOHNNY JACK BROWN! WHERE'S DOC?



AY PICKER'S WAGON... LODDIN' AFTER GERMAN! SHE WAS TOOK WORSE SICK!

WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' HERE, JOHNNY? DOC SAID YOU'D GONE!



I CAME BACK... BECAUSE I'VE GOT A BLANK THOSE THEVES WILL SHOW UP! YOU CAN HELP ME CATCH THEM, LARKE! HERE'S MY PLAN...

MEANWHILE...

I TOOK CARE OF THE GUARD!



GOOD! I SAW THE DOC IN THE LIGHTED WAGON! THAT WOUNDED GUY'S ALONE WITH THE DOUSE!

I'LL GO INSIDE! I CAN HANDLE THE GUY WITH ONE HAND!



I'LL COVER THE OUTSIDE... WHERE HE PUTS UP A SQUAWK AND SOMEBODY COMES NOSKY AROUND!

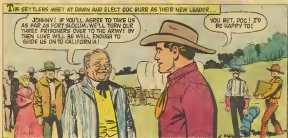
JOE MOVES QUIETLY TOWARD THE SLEEPING, BLANKET-COVERED MAN ON THE FLOOR OF DOC'S WAGON...











Johnny Mack Brown

THE
PAINT BOX

HERE COMES THE STAGE NOW, BILL! I'LL SURE BE GLAD TO SEE THE BOB BARRELY ON ITS WAY!

HEY! LOOKS LIKE WESS WAS HURT HIS ARM! HE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE DRIVING THIS TRIP!

AT THE SACRAMENTO STAGE STATION, JOHNNY WAITS WITH AGENT BILL BEALE FOR THE STAGE TO ARRIVE.

LOAFER HILL,
OF
LOAFER HILL

WHAT HAPPENED, WESS?

WE HIT A ROCK 'BOUT TEN MILES BACK-- I TOOK A TUMBLE!

LUCKY THING JOE VANCE, HERE, WAS WITH ME! I COULDN'T HAVE BROUGHT THE COACH IN BY MYSELF!

DOES THAT MEAN YOU CAN'T TAKE THIS BOX THROUGH TO LOAFER HILL?

IT SURE DOESN'T WITH A BUSTED ARM. WHAT CHANGED I STAND IF THERE WAS A HOLDUP?

THERE WOULDN'T BE ANY HOLDUP, WESS!

YOU WANT TO BET? I'M TELLING YOU THOSE TWO ROAD AGENTS SHALL OUT A PAROLE BOX THE WAY WESS SHALL MONEY! THEY'VE HIT AS FOUR TIMES ALREADY!!





*MIDWINTER, LYING IN WAIT
ON THE TRAIL—*

THAT STAGE SHOULD
BE HERE BY NOW!

MUST'VE
BEEN A
DELAY IN
STARTING!



NO—THERE IT IS!
NOW, TAKE IT EASY, SAM—
EVERYTHING'S FIXED LIKE
LAST TIME, SO THERE'LL
BE NO TROUBLE!



AND
REMEMBER—
NO GUNFIRE!
WE DON'T
WANT ANY
KILLING!



HEY! THAT'S
VANCE GOING!
THIS IS GOING TO
BE TOO EASY!

OH-OH!
HERE COMES
TROUBLE—
WELL WAS RIGHT
AFTER ALL!



GIVE ME THAT REFL!
I'LL TAKE CARE OF
'EM!





BUT WANCE'S WILD SHOOTING FRIGHTENS THE LEAD HORSE, AND...





HALF AN HOUR LATER, JOHNNY BRINGS THE COACH INTO LOOPER HILL WHERE RATT LEWIS, THE BANK MANAGER, AND SHERIFF MASON, THE OWNER OF THE STAGE LINE, ARE ANXIOUSLY WAITING.



HERE IT IS, BART—
AT LAST!

THAT ISN'T WERE
DRIVING—SOMETHING
MUST HAVE HAPPENED!



JOHNNY WASH BROWN!
WHAT'S HAPPENED?
WHERE'S MY REGULAR
DRIVER?

I'LL TELL YOU ALL
ABOUT IT WHEN WE
GET YOUR BANK
BOX DOWN, MR. MASON!



WHEN YOU DIDN'T
GET IN ON TIME, WE
THOUGHT THERE'D
BEEN ANOTHER
HOLDUP!

THERE WAS —
BUT VANCE
SCARED THEM
OFF WITH A
FOURTH OF JULY
BOMBARDMENT!



THANKS FOR GETTING THE
BANK'S MONEY THROUGH, JOHNNY!

YOU'D BETTER GET
SOME REST, VANCE. I'LL
GET THE NEWS FROM
JOHNNY!

AFTER JERRY HAS TOLD BART BARELY THE WHOLE STORY—







AN HOUR LATER,
ON THE FRONTIER ROAD
TO AGASSIC HILL:

SHOULD BE ANY
TIME NOW—YEP,
HERE THEY COME!



HERE I COME, REBEL! THIS TIME
WE'VE GOT TO CATCH THOSE HOGGERS!



YOU'RE LOOSE,
BOY! LET'S GO!



THEY'RE
SPLITTING UP!
I'LL TAKE THE
ONE HEADING FOR
THE CREEK!



YOU'VE GOT A DATE
WITH THE SHERIFF,
MISTER!

YOW!





MENTURE, EARL'S RIDING IN A TIGHT CIRCLE AND IS HEADING BACK TOWARD THE CORRAL!



5000—IN
LOOPER HILL—

JOHNNY! YOU'VE
CAUGHT ONE OF THE
ROAD AGENTS!

THAT'S RIGHT! BUT LET'S
GET OVER TO VANCE'S PLACE!
THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE!



WHAT MADE YOU SO
SURE THERE WOULD
BE ANOTHER HOLDUP,
JOHNNY?

I WAS NEVER
SURE! BUT
WHEN I FOUND
THOSE COMPANY
GUNS OF YOURS
WOULDN'T FIRE
ACCURATELY—

—I GUESSED VANCE
HAD CHANGED THE
SIGHTS! HIS TWO
BROTHERS KNEW THE
THE DRIVER'S SHOTS
WOULD ALWAYS GO
WIDE!

THAT MAKES SENSE!
AND VANCE ALWAYS
KNEW WHICH STAGE
WAS CARRYING MONEY,
TOO!



THAT'S VANCE'S PLACE,
DOWN THERE—AND
IT LOOKS LIKE
SOMETHING'S BURNING!







TRAPPERS' ARMOR



The word "armor" is seldom associated with the early west, but the best trappers and mountain men had an armor of their own design, used to protect them from Indian arrows.



The armor used by the trappers was not metal but was made from the heavy skins of the black-tail deer — and it served its purpose against the savagery of the west.



Prior to any anticipated encounter with hostile Indians, the deer-skin was soaked in water and wrung out — it was still wet when the trappers dressed themselves in it.



The crude armor offered fair protection for the trappers, because the Indians' flint and iron-pointed arrows seldom penetrated the tough water-soaked hide.



The skin was worn over the trapper's clothing and extended from the chin all the way to the thighs. It was either buttoned together or laced with buckskin thongs.

THE MINOR OFFENCE OF JOE SLADE



For years, the wagon trains of immigrants who traveled between Julesburg, Colorado and Salt Lake City, Utah, were terrorized by one of the most lawless men the west has ever known — *Joe Slade!*



With fast, well-planned maneuvers, Joe Slade's gang would strike an immigrant wagon train, steal the stock, and quickly disappear into the hills!



Joe Slade did a thriving business with his stolen livestock. Many times he even sold horses and mules back to the men he had originally stolen them from.



But Joe Slade's lawless past finally caught up with him, and in 1864, he was hanged by the vigilantes in Virginia City, Montana. Indeed, fate played a trick on Joe Slade — for he was not hanged for any of his more vicious deeds, but for the minor offense of riding his horse into a general store!