

TEXAS GUNS

By L. P. Holmes

SEVENTH INSTALMENT

"Mama," chirruped Johnny, blowing on his knuckles. "That was shore a satisfaction. I been itchin' to da that all mornin'."

"Heh—heh!" chuckled Tex coldly. "Yuh shore rung up a bulls-eye that time, kid. Go on Pink, yuh stick to Miss Ronny."

Spelle was gulping with fury and dismay. While Lange had been unable to finish his statement he had let out enough to advise Spelle that something was radically wrong concerning the Delevan mortgage. In his thwarted greed a modicum of courage returned to him and he advanced threateningly into the room.

"What's this?" he rasped. "What's this about the Delevan mortgage?"

"Nothin' much drawed Tex. 'Ceptin' its paid in full."

"What?" roared Spelle, his gaze working evilly. "I don't want it paid. I refuse to accept payment for it."

"Yuh're plumb out, o' luck hombre," said Tex imperturbably. "There's the money on the table—an' we got the mortgage. Jest let the fact sink in. We're gonna keep it. C'mon Johnny, the story's told. Let's rattle our hocks."

The two partners made their way to the street, Tex watching Spelle warily over his shoulder. Down the street Ronny and Pink Crosby were waiting at the backboard. Further on, tied in a line at the hitching rail before the Starlight Saloon, was a group of horses, all wearing the Double S iron. Tex's face was furrowed and serious as he reached the backboard.

"Pink, you an' Miss Ronny hop in that rig, an' light out for home. Them broncos have been wantin' to ramble all mornin'. Let 'em out. Pour the whip into 'em. Burn the hubs eff'n them wheels gettin' there. That mortgage won't be safe until Jim Delevan gets his hands on it."

"Tex," said Ronny, fearfully. "You don't think there will be trouble do you?"

"Don't think a thing, Miss Ronny," answered Tex. "I know there will. Soon as Spelle gets through snappin' at himself he's gonna turn that gang o' his loose on yore trail to try an' haid you off fore yuh get home."

"B—but, you and Johnny," objected the girl, her eyes on Johnny's grim, young face. "You can't fight them, all off. You'll get hurt." Johnny's face broke into a wide, beautiful grin. "Nemmine us, Miss Ronny. Me an' this ole sand rat been shot at before. We're jest too cussed onery to stop lead. Pink, shake them reins. See yuh while ago."

Pink spun the buckboard around on one wheel and turned the broncos loose in a wild run up the street. As the buckboard passed the bank Spelle leaped out into the street with a bawl of anger, shaking his fists above his head. Then he headed down towards the saloon at a clumsy run.

"Fork yore hull, kid," snapped Tex crisply. "Lead's due to fly in a minute."

In a moment Tex and Johnny were spurring after the rapidly disappearing buckboard. As they cleared the edge of the town the dim roar of voice reached their ears. "Shows on," yelled Johnny. "Whoopee! Look at that boy Pink drive will yuh. If that buckboard had wings it'd fly."

A half mile from town Tex looked back. He could easily see the black blot of hard riding horsemen.

"Slow up," he snapped. "We're pullin' up on Pink. We're out here to hold this gang back instead of haul 'em up. Git yore Winchester loose, kid."

Johnny pulled the rifle from the boot beneath his left thigh and levered in a cartridge. Then he and Tex hauled their nervous mounts down to a leisurely lope. The horsemen in the rear came up fast and Tex watching them closely, measured the distance.

"Four hundred yards," he announced finally. "Fan 'em a couple, Johnny."

Obediently Johnny turned and slammed five shots to the rear. It was hard shooting, twisted thus on a running horse, but the following band made a big mark and at the fifth shot a horse went headlong, throwing its rider spread eagling into the dust.

"Bueno" cried Tex. "That slow 'em up."

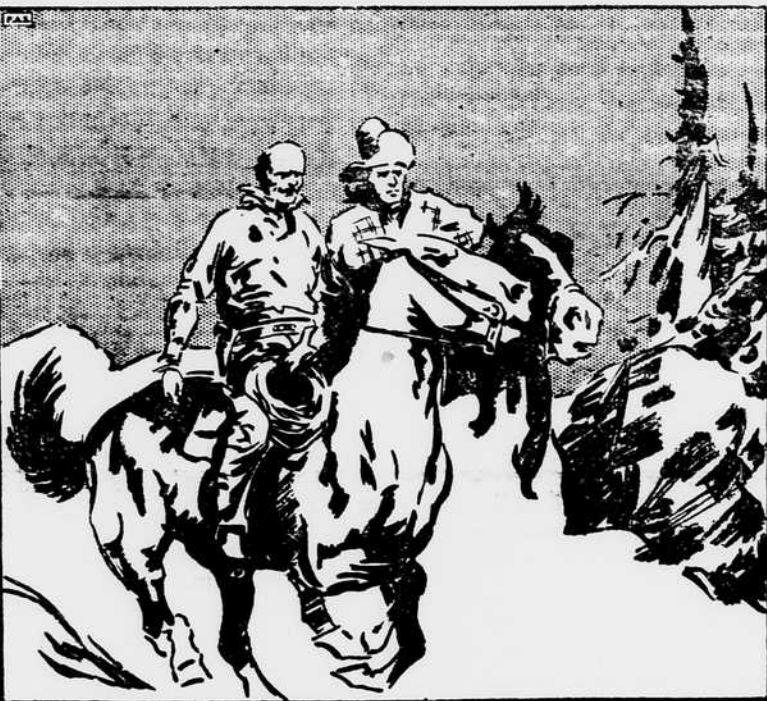
"Yeah, fer a minute," answered Johnny, feverishly plugging more shells through the loading gate. "But they're gonna spread out. Somebody's usin' his haid back there."

"Nemmine. Pink's almost out o' sight—an' that's the main thing."

As Johnny had said the pursuers had spread out and no longer presented a solid mass to shoot at. From now on any fire Johnny might give through his rifle would perform but merely haphazard with chances for a hit very small, at least while his own horse was in motion.

The dull thudding of gun-shots sounded in the rear but only one lone bullet sang past. Tex, quick to read this sign smiled grimly.

"Lucky fer us they ain't any o' them got Winchesters. They can plug away all day at this distance with their six-guns without doin' any harm. Kid yuh see Pink?"



Tex and Johnny spurred after the buckboard.

"Nope. Plumb outa sight. Reckon we done put a crimp in Mister Spelle today, Tex."

Then Johnny gave a yell of alarm. "Look et comin' in ahead an' on the right, Tex. Two riders comin' in to haid us off. Now how'n hell did they git up there?"

Tex turned and followed Johnny's pointing arm. Sure enough two riders were spurring in at an angle to the southwest, from the rim of the desert. They were coming fast on big, gaunt horses and each of the riders carried a rifle loose in their right hands.

"Hell," snapped Tex. "We're in fer it, kid. Pull up. You go after those two hombres with the rifles. I'll keep this other gang back. My ole hawk-laig will throw lead just as far as theirs. Now le's see yuh

do some o' that high-toned shootin' yuh've been braggin' about."

"If yuh'd only pack a Winchester," wailed Johnny as they drew their plunging broncos to a halt. "But yuh're so danged bull-headed yuh never will. Jest think what yuh could do with a .30-30 now."

"Nemmine me," snapped Tex. "Get busy—those two jaspers are within range."

Jonny slipped from his horse and threw up his rifle. It wavered, steadily, but when it crashed flatly the bullet went far and wide. Just as Johnny pulled the trigger Tex had leaned over and swept the barrel up.

"Fer gosh sakes," blazed Johnny. "What in hell did yuh do that fer? I was holdin' daid center."

Tex paid no attention. His keen old eyes were fixed on the two newcomers with a mingled expression of doubt and joy.

"Kid, yore eyes are better'n mine. Look close. Ain't that leadin' hoss a star faced black?"

"Yeah it is," snapped Johnny, raising his rifle again. "An' I'm gonna put me a slug right in the star."

But Tex shoved his rifle aside again. "Kid," he burst out delightedly. "That's ole Utah Lynch an' Al Burrows from the Bar B ouefit. I telegraphed 'em to come arunnin' an' shore they're doin' it. You fan hell outa Spelle's crowd. I'm goin' to meet Utah an' Al."

The somewhat bewildered Johnny whirled on the rapidly nearing Double S crowd and with his first shot downed one of the leading riders. His second shot brought a horse screaming to earth and the rest broke and rode back out of range, where they gathered in a council of war. It did not take them long to realize that this time at least they were outmaneuvered, for they saw Tex spur out to meet the newcomers and pump their hands delightedly. Two more rifles added to Johnny's deadly one were too much to face so they turned and rode back toward Grillion with their dead.

"I'm tellin' yuh," Utah nodded. "Fattest, happiest lil' geezer yuh ever saw."

"That's shore fine. Tex, me'n you gotta take a trip someday an' look in on that young gent."

"Mebbe so, someday," drawled Tex. "But right now we got our own dish o' hash to cook. Boys, yuh shore dropped in at the right

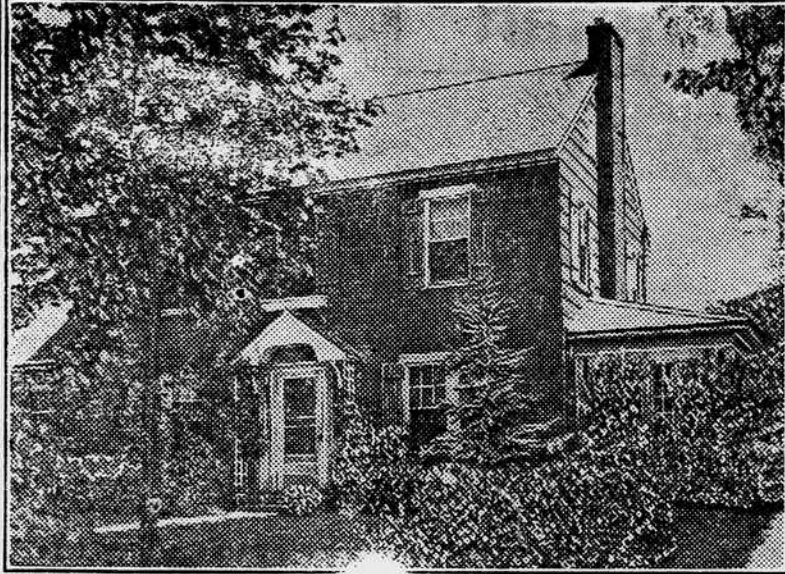
time."

Utah nodded. "Looks thataway. What's it all about, Tex? When Al an' me got them telegrams we took 'em to Bud an' told him we was driftin' down thisaway, pronto. Bud shooed us off on the run an' told us to let him know if you needed any more help. If yuh do, jest wire him an' he'll come afoggin' it with the whole outfit."

"Reckon that won't be necessary," said Tex. "But shore I'm thankin' Bud for feelin' so. Now let's amble along. I'll tell you fellers the story while we ride."

By the time they rode up to the

Hot Weather Tips Practical Hints On How To Make Your Climate To Order



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The historic house from which has emanated hot and cold weather comfort for millions of other homes in America. Located in Schenectady, N. Y., where it is hot in summer and cold in winter, this normal frame house has always inside it as perfect a climate as any ocean or mountain resort.

If everyone could loaf under the trees in hot weather, sipping cool drinks and making no effort, there would be no heat prostrations, and everyone would be happier. But this imperfect world does not permit the human animal to do that for more than a few moments at a time. We can, though, increase our comfort considerably by observing a few simple rules during the worst hot weather.

1. Don't wear clothes that are tight anywhere. You need easy circulation of the blood.

2. Eat light foods like salads and fruits as much as you can, and go light on hot and heavy dishes. Eat slowly.

3. Wear light clothes and wear a hat against the direct rays of the sun.

4. Watch yourself while taking heavy exercise on a very hot day. You needn't avoid it altogether, but be careful.

5. Since few things are more miserable than a sunburn in hot weather, treat the sunlight with great respect. A skin whitened by winter sheltering may flare up very swiftly after half an hour of Old Sol.

6. Drink plenty of water.

7. Place electric fans or air circulators in strategic positions in your house so that they create moving currents of air.

8. In general, take it easy and be as calm and philosophic as you can. The alligator offers a useful though somewhat impractical example; he just lies in water and shade and sleeps!

corrals of the Box D ranch Utah and Al had the whole story and had jointly expressed their satisfaction at the opportunity of sitting in on things. When Tex attempted to thank them for their prompt response to his messages they waved him off.

"Why thank us?" scoffed Al Burrows. "Shucks, Tex, we're the ones to render thanks. After you an' Johnny left our neck o' the woods things got so danged quiet Utah an' me began to ossify. This looks like one swell chance to take the kinks outa our trigger fingers an' keep up our eyes a leetle."

"You danged ole war-dogs," chuckled Tex.

Pink Crosby and Pod Fortune were unhooking a pair of meek, sweating broncos from the buckboard when the four riders drew up. After introductions were over Tex turned to Pink with twinkling eyes.

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

SUMMER HOUSEHOLD HINTS

Appetizing menus, cooling household hints for the summer are suggested in the splendid articles by Mrs. Christine Frederick and Mary Lee Swann, noted authority of home economics. Follow these articles in the American Weekly, the big magazine which comes regularly with the BALTIMORE SUNDAY AMERICAN.

Eight pure bred Red Polled dual purpose cattle were purchased recently by farmers of Transylvania County as foundation stock for future herds.

JULES VERNE NOVEL

"The Boy Castaway," a recently discovered novel by Jules Verne, master writer of adventure tales, will appear in the BALTIMORE SUNDAY AMERICAN (predate edition), beginning July 26. Don't miss this great story.

Acting P.M.G.



WASHINGTON... William W. Holmes (above), is now acting Postmaster General to fill the vacancy brought about by the resignation of Postmaster General Farley. Mr. Holmes was first assistant postmaster general to Mr. Farley.

INSURANCE RACKETS

An interesting story telling about fake accidents that swindle insurance companies. One of many feature illustrated articles in the July 26 issue of the American Weekly, the big magazine which comes regularly with the BALTIMORE SUNDAY AMERICAN.

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