

The Nebbs

By Sol Hess

THE NEBBS

A Hidebound Detective

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By SOL HESS



A CATTLE RUSTLER IS JUST A CATTLE THIEF—ONE WHO TAKES YOUR CATTLE WITHOUT BUYING OR PERMISSION.

DADDY, WHAT IS A CATTLE RUSTLER?



ONE TRIP WHEN I WAS VISITING GRIZZLY IKE'S I FOUND HIM HELPING OUT ON BAR X RANCH SO I WORKED WITH HIM—ONE DAY AS I WAS SKINNING A SMALL STEER FOR THE COOK—



ONE OF THE COWBOYS RODE IN AND INFORMED IKE THAT CATTLE RUSTLERS HAD DRIVEN AWAY SOME OF THE HERD—THIS HAD BEEN GOING ON FOR SOME TIME—



SO AN IDEA CAME TO ME—IN SKINNING THIS STEER I HAD LEFT THE HEAD AND FEET ON THE HIDE—I CONCEIVED THE IDEA TO CONCEAL MYSELF IN THE HIDE AND STAND AMONGST THE HERD AND FIND OUT WHO WAS STEALING THE CATTLE.



IKE POON-POOED THE IDEA AS I LEFT ABOUT DUSK SAYING MAYBE THE CATTLE WOULD RESENT SUCH COMPANY—HOWEVER I WENT AHEAD REACHING THE HERD AT NIGHT-FALL—



AFTER STANDING AMONGST THE HERD FOR SOME TIME I SAW THE RIDERS APPROACH AND CUT OFF A NUMBER OF CATTLE IN THE LOT—I MANAGED TO HIDE MYSELF AMONG THEM—



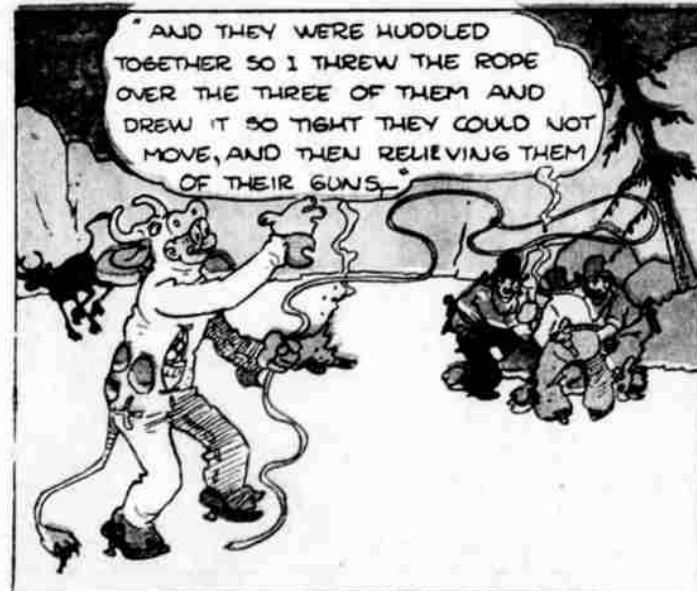
AND WITH THEM WAS DRIVEN TO A CANYON THAT HAD A SECRET TUNNEL ENTRANCE UNDER A WATER FALL—A PLACE NO ONE WOULD EVER FIND—



I RECOGNIZED THE LEADER OF THE THREE WHO WAS THE FOREMAN OF A RANCH NEAR US—OURS WAS THE X RANCH AND THIS RANCH WAS CALLED THE DOUBLE CROSS SO THEY BRANDED THE CATTLE WITH ANOTHER CROSS—



I WATCHED THEM BRANDING THE CATTLE WONDERING WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WHEN THEY CAME TO ME WHEN FORTUNATELY I PICKED UP ONE OF THEIR LARIATS AND AS THEY WERE BUSY WITH AN UNRULY STEER—



AND THEY WERE HUDDLED TOGETHER SO I THREW THE ROPE OVER THE THREE OF THEM AND DREW IT SO TIGHT THEY COULD NOT MOVE, AND THEN RELIEVING THEM OF THEIR GUNS—



I SECURELY TIED THEM TO A TREE—YOU CAN IMAGINE THEIR SURPRISE AND ANGER—AND THEN TELLING THEM NOT TO LEAVE, BUT STAY THERE AND LOOK AFTER THE CATTLE, AND WISHING THEM A GOODNIGHT AND PLEASANT DREAMS I LEFT FOR THE RANCH.



WHAT HAPPENED THEN, DADDY? DID THEY GET LOOSE OR WERE THEY THERE WHEN YOU GOT BACK?

OH THAT'S A LONG STORY—I'LL TELL THE REST SOME OTHER TIME. I NEARLY GOT IN SERIOUS TROUBLE OVER THIS.

CONTINUED NEXT SUNDAY

